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GÉZA DÁVID

IN MEMORIAM: GYŐZŐ GERŐ (1924–2011)

Editors' note: We are honored to publish Professor Géza Dávid’s touching memorial to the esteemed Professor Győző Gerő, who died in 2011. Professor Gerő was instrumental in advancing the archaeology and study of Ottoman architectural monuments in Hungary, as well as in preserving and safeguarding those monuments with great care and attention. His scholarly accomplishments and contributions as an archaeologist and Ottomanist, along with his exceptional personal qualities, are described below.

Győző Gerő, the dedicated and tireless researcher of Turkish monuments in Hungary, passed away during the night of October 10–11, 2011.

The grand old man of Ottoman-era archaeology in Hungary, Gerő was born in Budapest on May 16, 1924. In 1952, he earned his university diploma from the Department of Archaeology at Loránd Eötvös University, in the Hungarian capital. By then, he was already working at the Budapest History Museum, having joined its staff as a scientific assistant. He would remain there until his retirement in 1987, by which time he was a senior researcher. At the same time, he taught the archaeology of the Ottoman period at Loránd Eötvös University, reaching the rank of honorary associate professor there.

The archaeology of the Turkish period in Hungary was Gerő’s chosen field of research, within which he concentrated mainly on architecture. Understandably, his work focused principally on two geographical areas, namely, today’s Budapest and the southern Transdanubian region, although his interest extended to every part of the country. (For much of his career, it would have been practically impossible to investigate the somewhat scanty Ottoman-era remains located in territories that formerly belonged to Hungary but are now outside its borders.) In Budapest, the Türbe of Gül Baba, the Király Bath, and the Rác Bath were the focus of his attention. He took part in the mapping and excavation of the walls of the Buda Castle, as well as those of the palace and the private bath of the pashas of Buda, and of the Ottoman elements of residential buildings within the Buda Castle District. Gerő was prompt in sharing his findings: as well as publishing studies in specialized periodicals, he compiled, as early as 1957, a slim but useful volume entitled Buda török műemlékei (The Turkish monuments of Buda), on the principal buildings of the one-time administrative center of the Ottoman vilayet of Budin.

The Ottoman monuments of Baranya County, in southwestern Hungary, were especially close to Gerő’s heart. For many years, he and his wife, Mária G. Sándor, spent long periods at the guesthouse of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Pécs, concentrating on Turkish remains in the surrounding region. In Pécs, he took part in the restoration of the Yakovalı Hasan Pasha Mosque and the Türbe of Idris Baba, unearthed the ruins of the Memi Pasha Bath, and discovered the remains of mosques and dervish lodges. His works on the monuments of Pécs include Pécs törökkori emlékei (The Turkish-era monuments of Pécs) (Budapest, 1960), and A Jakováli Haszán Pasa Dzsámi és Mázeum kiállítási vezetője (The Yakovalı Hasan Pasha Mosque and Museum: A guide to the exhibition) (Pécs, 1979). In Szigetvár, Gerő investigated both the Sultan Süleyman Mosque and the Ali Pasha Mosque.

In the northern part of Hungary we should mention the town of Eger, where Győző Gerő tried to preserve the Valide Sultan Bath from further decay. His efforts in this regard, up to the time of his death, proved to be in
vain—although he managed to ensure that an inspection of its ruins was included in the itinerary of President Süleyman Demirel of Turkey during the latter’s visit to Hungary.

Particularly noteworthy are three cases in which Gerő was able to identify buildings hitherto undiscovered or known only slightly, perhaps merely from drawings and prints. Two of these successes were in Baranya County and one—the earliest—was in Esztergom (in Komárno-Esztergom County). Perhaps the most spectacular was his detection of a one-time house of worship in Síklós, considered to be the Mosque of Malkoç Bey. It was at the time being used as a farm building for storing carts, but Gerő’s keen eye noticed what the walls concealed. Because of his role in the first-rate restoration of the building (work that was awarded a Europa Nostra Prize), he was deservedly made an honorary citizen of the town. His second great find was his “conjuring up” of parts of the defenses of the castle of Szászvár, which served as the seat of a nahiye, or district, during the Ottoman period; up to that point, specialists had had no idea that these even existed. (The study in question was “Siedlungsgeschichte und Baugeschichte der bischöflichen Burg zu Szászvár. Szászvár—a püspöki vár településtörténete és építéstörténete. Die Bischofsburg zu Pécs. Archäologie und Bauforschung. Pécs püspökvár. Régészett és építőkutatás,” ICOMOS Hefte des Deutschen Nationalkomitees 22 [Budapest, 1999], 109–43.) Gerő’s third great feat was deducing the original function of the Özıçeli Hacı Ibrahim Mosque from those parts of it visible through the crumbling plaster of a residential building on the banks of the Danube. Gerő had to wait many years for the restoration of this mosque, which belongs to a building type unusual in Hungary. Here he was able to capitalize on his many decades of expertise, and at the opening of the restored building on March 21, 2008, it was he who gave the inaugural address. It was cold inside the unheated building and there was nowhere to sit down. He read out his speech unperturbed; he was eighty-two at the time.

Gerő was awarded a candidate of sciences degree (CSc) in 1975, for a study he wrote on the three main types of Turkish architectural monuments in Hungary, namely, mosques, türbes, and baths. The defining work of his career, it was published a few years later, and is still the only systematic discussion of the topic: *Az oszmán-török építészet Magyarországon: Dzsámik, türbek, fürdők* (Ottoman-Turkish architecture in Hungary: Mosques, türbes, and baths), Művészettörténeti füzetek 12 (Budapest, 1980). An outstanding feature of this work is that it offers a thorough survey of the research into all individual buildings, listing depictions of the structures from the time they were built and from later eras, and attempting to discover possible parallels for them in the Balkans. Since the data available on those who constructed these edifices was rather scant, in the last chapter, entitled “Az alapító-megrendelő, műhely és mester kérdése a magyarországi török építészetben” (“The question of founders and patrons, workshops, and masters in Turkish architecture in Hungary”), he broadened his inquiries to investigate those who had commissioned them. We can agree wholeheartedly with his conclusion: “In the final analysis, then, we may state that [Ottoman] architectural art in the province of Hungary cannot be regarded as autonomous. Rather, it is connected most directly to the monuments in Ottoman Bosnia-Herzegovina, forming an organic unit with them, and as such can be regarded from the artistic point of view as belonging to that province. By taking this into account, we can establish its place in Ottoman-Turkish architecture.”

In addition to the above-mentioned works, Győző Gerő published many other scholarly studies in Hungary and abroad, including works on Turkish ceramics. The earliest of his articles on the latter subject is “Türkische Keramik in Ungarn, einheimische und importierte Waren,” *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. G. Fehér (Budapest, 1978), 347–61. It was perhaps his last article in which he discussed the Esztergom Mosque (“The Place of Esztergom’s Özıçeli Hacı Ibrahim Cami in the Ottoman Architecture of Hungary,” *Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art: Proceedings*, eds. Géza Dávid and Ibolya Gerelyes [Budapest, 2009], 253–63). He participated in and gave presentations at many congresses in Hungary and elsewhere. In recognition of his work, he received the Ferenc Móra Prize, the Hungarian Historical Monument Protection Prize, the Pro Communitate Pécs Prize, and the Baranya County Scientific Prize. In 1997, he was awarded the Order of Merit (Liyakat Nişanı) of the Republic of Turkey.
by President Süleyman Demirel for his major achievements in protecting and publishing Ottoman historical monuments in Hungary.

Whenever we met, he spoke enthusiastically about his scholarly plans for the near future. He would have liked to undertake further investigations of architectural remains, whether these belonged to the Ferhad Pasha Mosque in Pécs, or to the Ottoman prayer house the remnants of which now form part of the fabric of the church on Ágoston Square in the same city. He even thought of writing a larger treatment of his field, giving it the working title “Az oszmán-török építészet Magyarországon a kutatás legújabb eredményei alapján” (Ottoman-Turkish architecture in Hungary on the basis of the latest research findings). This volume remained unfinished at his death, although he did write an outline of it.

Győző Gerő’s cheerful personality, his delightfully expressive use of the language, and his happy smile will long be missed by everyone who knew him. His devotion to his field of study and to the safeguarding of historical monuments from the Ottoman period in Hungary will be missed by experts in archaeology and in Ottoman studies internationally.

Géza Dávid,
Loránd Eötvös University
The earliest mosques gave expression to some of the most compelling facets of Islamic architecture. Decades of scholarship have focused primarily on two seminal buildings, the Mosque of the Prophet (al-Masjid al-Nabawi, 622) in Medina, and the Great Mosque of Damascus (Jāmiʿ Banī Umayya al-Kabīr), which was constructed between 705 and 715, during the reign of the Umayyad caliph al-Walid b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 705–15) (fig. 1). The mosques built during the intervening years at Kufa, Basra, and later Wasit (ca. 630–710), are certainly defined by these seminal structures, but also overshadowed by their prominence. For this eighty-year period the scholarship has pointed to a relative stasis in formal and decorative development within the mosque. I, however, will argue that the mosque underwent significant changes in this period, largely in relation to its movable elements, such as the introduction of the minbar (pulpit from which the imam delivers sermons [fig. 2]) and the maqṣūra (an enclosure screen in front of the qibla wall [fig. 3]). Although the physical remains of these movable elements did not survive within the archaeological record, it is in fact possible to unearth their history from primary source material.

I contend that in the period between circa 630 and 710 certain transformations in the area around the qibla and the minbar signaled a shift away from the simplicity of the Mosque of the Prophet, namely, the evolution of the minbar as a platform for the Friday sermon (khutba), the development of the enclosure screen (maqṣūra) in front of the qibla for the caliph, and the opening up of direct access to the palace via the qibla wall. These shifts represented a specific brand of Umayyad Arabo-Islamic authority, increasingly self-aware and evoking clear royal associations that served Islamic functions. The austerity of the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina thus eventually gave way to a space charged with and representative of the nature of the emerging caliphate and the contested authority of Islam’s early rulers. Challenges to this authority were expressed in terms of a ruler’s position within the mosque or palace, emphasizing the perceived qualities of these elements as metonyms of authority. This is clear in the case of the Umayyad governor of Iraq, al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf al-Thaqafi (661–714), whose entitlement to an elevated position upon the “minbar and sarīr (a movable couch or throne used as a seat for the governor at both the mosque and palace)” was questioned by a rival during a conversation in which the authority of the governor was being challenged.

THE EARLY MOSQUE AND THE PUBLIC AUDIENCE

It has been suggested that in the period following the death of the Prophet in 632, there was a deliberate attempt to maintain the simplicity of the mosque. According to this argument, the model of the Mosque of the Prophet was disseminated by the second caliph, ‘Umar b. al-Khattab (r. 634–44), in a bid to thwart unwanted innovation in mosque design that could lead to a perversion of orthodox ritual prayer. Imprinting a coherent architectural image for the emerging Islamic empire has also been suggested as a motivation. Further to this, it has been argued that the nature of the qibla area shifted as it took on more of the qualities of an audience hall and became more closely connected with the palace (Dār al-Imāra [House of Government]). There is evidence that development of early mosques in the provinces was driven by not only practical and
economic reasons but also cultural ones. Sources describe the efforts taken to avoid a whimsical approach to the architecture of the mosque, that is, an unbridled absorption of foreign ritual, practice, form, and ornament that would undermine the vision of Islam’s puritanical rituals and practices. These texts convey a general sense of anxiety surrounding innovation within the mosque. This is true in the case of the actions of Ziyad b. Abihi, governor, under the Umayyad caliph Mu’awiya b. Abi Sufyan (r. 661–80), of Basra, between 664 and 673, and then of Kufa as well, from 670 until his death in 673. Ziyad had the floors of the mosques at Kufa and Basra covered with pebbles to prevent the congregation from clapping dust from their hands following prayer on the dirt floor, lest the act eventually become a ritual of prayer.¹¹

Fig. 1. View of the courtyard of the Great Mosque of Damascus, built 705–15 by the caliph al-Walid I, showing the current and heavily restored dome above the qibla bay. (Photo: Heba Mostafa)

Fig. 2. The minbar of the vizier Badr al-Jamali (1091–92) under the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir (r. 1091–92) at the Mosque of Abraham, Hebron. Originally located in the Shrine of al-Husayn, Ascalon. (Photo: Heba Mostafa)
There may also have been a desire to discourage features designed to elevate the status of a mosque’s patron. For example, ‘Amr b. al-ʿAs (d. 664), the governor of Egypt, was scolded for sitting upon a minbar, leaving the Muslims seated “at his heels.” The caliph ‘Umar ordered the wooden door to the palace of the governor of Kufa, Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas (d. 674), burnt down so that nothing would separate the governor from his subjects. ‘Umar’s frugality and shunning of accumulated wealth may have also motivated many of his decisions regarding the austerity of the early mosque. He famously stated that accumulated wealth would “not affect [him] adversely, but it would be a temptation for those who came after [him].” It is not difficult to see how his austere manner may have driven his restraint. ‘Umar’s behavior reflects an awareness of the threat of surrounding cultural practices encroaching upon the nascent Islamic identity, and it seems to have manifested itself in attitudes towards the design of the mosque.

In early garrison towns the mosque served a critical function, providing not only a place for congregational prayer but also a public forum in which to discuss the affairs of the emerging community. Oleg Grabar described the early mosques at the garrison towns of Basra (635), Kufa (639), and Fustat (641–42) as “forums open on the sides somewhere in the center of the city.” Individual tribes within the garrison towns each had their own masjid (small neighborhood mosque), but it was at the centrally located congregational mosque that the Friday prayers took place and the entire community attended the all-important sermon. In this sense, the Friday mosque offered the ruler a critical public platform for the governance of the community, not unlike the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina. This becomes increasingly relevant in light of the fact that several of these early mosques were located in Iraq, a hotbed of ‘Alid counter claims to the Umayyad caliphate and later a major center of Shi’i presence, particularly in the case
of Kufa, which was a de facto capital of the opposition. In fact, the development of the mosques of Iraq coincides or is bracketed by watershed moments from this period, such as the First and Second Civil Wars, in 656–61 and 680–92, respectively. It could be argued that as arenas of public debate and leadership the congregational mosques in these cities may have been affected by the decades of political upheaval, religious factionalism, and contested legitimacy that prevailed during the middle of the seventh century. This overlap is also relevant in the context of the overarching contested nature of authority in early Islam, particularly in light of the religious and political strife pervasive during the Umayyad period and the dependency of this authority upon the public audience in the mosque. A grisly yet powerful illustration of this can be found in the infamous sermon that the governor Ziyad b. abihi gave in 665 following his appointment as governor of Basra in 664. Speaking from the minbar at the congregational mosque, he threatened to harvest the “ripened heads of his enemies,” thus using the mosque as a platform to broadcast his intention to suppress dissent at any cost.

Within this snapshot of the early mosque, the significance of the shifts outlined above becomes apparent. Take, for example, the development of the mosque at Kufa, which began its history delineated by ditches that were marked out by shooting arrows towards the qibla, as well as the north, south, and east. A simply built structure of reeds, it became an actual building only under the governor al-Mughirah b. Shu’bah (d. 670), on the orders of the caliph ʿUmar. The aforementioned Ziyad b. abihi is credited with rebuilding the mosque and the Dār al-Imāra at both Basra (665) and Kufa (670). He replaced the earlier mosque at Basra and constructed his new mosque of plaster and baked brick (al-jiṣṣ wal-ajurr). The ninth-century historian-geographer Ibn al-Faqih al-Hamadani captures the mixture of astonishment and criticism that characterized reactions to the construction of this mosque, one of the first that aspired to monumentality:

Ziyad built an edifice for the invocation of God of stone (sakhr) and plaster (al-jiṣṣ) not mixed with mud, Had it not been for the scarred hands of its erectors we would have thought it the work of demons.

Ziyad b. abihi’s rebuilding of the Dār al-Imāra as well as the mosque in the two major provincial cities of early Islam may be seen as part of a wider policy to create a more permanent residence as Islam secured control of the conquered territories. The rebuilding may also have served other commemorative purposes. The mosque at Kufa reportedly incorporated material from the castles of nearby al-Hira, the former capital of the Lahkmids, who themselves were vassals of the Sasanids. This was perhaps a bid to evoke the past glories of the pre-Islamic Arab rulers of the al-Mundhir clan, which was associated with the spoliated doors. Ziyad’s efforts, however, seem here to have transcended mere permanence and aspired to unprecedented monumentality, as illustrated by the aforementioned reaction to the construction of the mosque in Basra.

An intriguing aspect of the development of the mosque is its relationship to the governor’s palace or Dār al-Imāra. This relationship is one that evolved early, with the ensemble typically located in the center of the garrison towns at Kufa and Basra. The decision to relocate the Dār al-Imāra directly behind the wall of the qibla is credited not only to Ziyad b. abihi but also to the military commander and governor Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas at Kufa. Al-Tabari (d. 923) reports that the governor’s residence in Kufa was moved due to a theft in the treasury, located within the Dār al-Imāra, which at the time was situated behind the qibla but separated from the mosque by a street. On the advice of the caliph ʿUmar the move was intended to guarantee the safety of the treasury, since the mosque was in use both day and night. In the case of the Dār al-Imāra at Basra, Ziyad b. Abihi considered it inappropriate for the imam to walk through the congregation in order to lead the prayer; the relocation allowed the governor direct access from the palace into his maqṣura. The former Dār al-Imāra at Basra had originally been located in the open space (raḥba) near the mosque associated with Bani Hashim and known as al-Dahnāʾ. This earlier Dār al-Imāra was thus connected to the premier clan of Quraysh, that is, the clan of the Prophet Muhammad. The removal of the governor’s palace from a public space linked to the Bani Hashim to an area that consolidated the relationship between the governor’s palace and his public platform in the mosque may perhaps
signal a shift away from the tribal authority of the Bani Hashim and toward the centrally appointed caliphal governor.

Unlike the garrison-town Friday mosques of Iraq, the post-conquest Friday mosques of Greater Syria were mostly appropriated sites at the city center, as was the case in Damascus and Jerusalem. At Damascus the predecessor of the Umayyad Friday mosque was founded in 634, during the caliphate of ‘Umar, on the site of the Church of St. John the Baptist (formerly the Temple of Jupiter). Both Mu‘awiya and ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 685–705) were thwarted by the terms of the post-conquest treaty in their attempts to secure the purchase of the temenos (temple enclosure) that housed the church-cum-mosque, with the church operating until the construction initiated in 705 by the Umayyad caliph al-Walid I. As a result, the original post-conquest mosque did not change much from its foundation until it was rebuilt under al-Walid I, who reportedly bribed and threatened the Christian community into agreeing to the sale of the church within the temenos. Under Mu‘awiya, the post-conquest mosque in Damascus exhibited a relationship with the palace similar to that observed between the mosque and Dār al-imāra in the garrison towns of Kufa and Fustat. This relationship, however, was a pre-existing one, since the Dār al-imāra encompassed the former Byzantine governor’s palace, which was located at some distance behind the qibla wall. In other words, the link between the Damascus royal palace and the Friday mosque echoed a former Constantinopolitan imperial prototype, whose Byzantine provincial versions had been associated with governors.

Mu‘awiya, who was governor of Damascus from 640 to 661 before becoming caliph, further consolidated this relationship. According to the Damascene historian Ibn ‘Asakir (1105–75), Mu‘awiya’s palace while governor was either part of the former Byzantine governor’s palace or one he constructed himself in the pre-Islamic style at some point after his appointment in 640. He reportedly refurbished his audience hall in response to a scathing remark by a Byzantine envoy that the “upper part will do for birds and the lower for rats.” Descriptions of the remodeled domed audience hall, called the khadrā’ (lit. green, metaphorically the “dome of heaven”), suggest lavishness, with marble revetments and a garden setting of lush vegetation and fountains. Mu‘awiya constructed his own maqṣūra at the mihrab of the Companions of the Prophet in the Damascus Friday mosque, which he later connected to his palace complex through a door in the qibla wall. The palace was later bought by the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik from Mu‘awiya’s son and became an integral part of the complex under ‘Abd al-Malik’s son and successor, al-Walid I.

In 702–4 the aforementioned governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf constructed a mosque and Dār al-imāra in the newly founded city of Wasit, in Iraq. These structures warrant a category of their own, as Wasit cannot be considered a post-conquest city in the strictest sense. Like Mu‘awiya before him, in 703–4 al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf incorporated a qubbat al-khadrā’ into the Dār al-imāra to function as an audience hall, as at Damascus. This was done at the order of Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik. The tenth-century historian Ibn Rusta describes the dome of the palace as a lofty structure (qubba musharrafah khadrā’) that “could be seen from thirty miles away.” Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf also brought doors for his palace and mosque from a group of sites with possible iconic pre-Islamic associations; the ensuing protests of the local inhabitants echoed the reactions provoked by his predecessor, Ziyad b. Abihi, when he built a new mosque “of stone and plaster” in Basra.

It has been argued that this transformation of the qibla space in the early mosque may be related to a process of politicization occurring during the decades following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Certainly the development of the Dār al-imāra under the early governors and caliphs suggests that it, together with the mosque, formed the foundation for an evolving conception of Arabo-Islamic rulership. The historian-geographer al-Mas‘udi (d. 956) captures for us a vivid description of how the mosque space and palace worked together to allow for complementary forms of reception: the setting of the mosque allowed congregants more open access to the ruler, in contrast to the more formal type of audience held in the palace. Al-Mas‘udi describes how the caliph Mu‘awiya typically held court five times a day, first at the mosque and continuing at the
Described below are the first two of such audiences:

Coming out he would ask a page (ghulām) to have his kursī ready and he would go to the mosque. After his ablutions he sat on the kursī, leaning back against the maqsura, with his guards standing by. Anybody could come to him, poor people, Arabs from the desert, women, children, and whoever else was destitute. To the one who complained about an injustice, Muʿawiya would order comfort. To the oppressed he sent guards. To the injured he would order an inquiry. And this continued until there was no one left. Next he returned to his palace, and sitting on the throne (sarīr), he let people in according to their rank, but forbade anyone to prevent him from answering salutations. This visitor would say: How is the commander of the faithful? May God give him long life. and Muʿawiya answered: With the grace of God. Once they were seated he would say: Oh ye who are called nobles, because, to the exclusion of others, you are honored with sitting in this audience hall (majlis), tell us the needs of those who have no access to us. Muʿawiya negotiated the relationship between the public audiences held within the mosque and those held in the Dār al-imāra with great care, through the use of different seats for each location—a kursī for the mosque and a sarīr for the palace—revealing their specific yet complementary functions. The caliph thus preserved the pre-Islamic model of open access to the tribal leader, while adopting the practices of the late-antique ruler seated within a lavish audience hall. His nod towards open access even within his majlis is seen in the request he made of his nobles that they inform him of the “needs of those who have no access to us.” But when he co-opts the Byzantine governor’s palace and constructs what is described in the sources as a monumental dome—his qubbat al-khadrā—at his audience hall we are provided with perhaps the best illustration of his desire to address his parallel role as ruler of an empire. 

An account by al-Tabari vividly captures the caliph ʿUmar’s reaction to Muʿawiya’s behavior as governor in Damascus. According to al-Tabari, the caliph chided Muʿawiya for his use of ceremonial and his general conduct as a ruler, saying, “O Muʿawiya, you go with a retinue, and you leave in the same way. I heard that you start the day in your residence while petitioners are at your door.” Muʿawiya responded, “O Commander of the Faithful, our enemy is close to us, and they have scouts and spies, so I wanted, O Commander of the Faithful, for them to see that Islam has power.” The confounded ʿUmar conceded that his actions were indeed warranted and that it was “either the ruse of an intelligent man or the deception of a clever man.” Nevertheless, expressing an awareness of what amounted to an irreconcilable position regarding expressions of authority at the mosque and public spaces of the city, ʿUmar retorted, “Woe unto you! Whenever we discuss something which I disapprove of your doing, you leave me not knowing whether I should order you to do it or forbid it.” This conversation is extremely revealing not only of the sort of problems that early rulers of Islam confronted regarding expressions of their authority, but also of the direction the architecture of the mosque was taking. This is echoed in an account related by the medieval Arab geographer al-Muqaddasi (ca. 945/946–991), who described a conversation with an uncle in which the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik’s motivations for constructing the Dome of the Rock (691) were questioned and considered un-Islamic, due to the great expense incurred and the lavishness of the structure. This was seen as a violation of the Prophet’s order not to build in imitation of fallen pre-Islamic empires. In ʿAbd al-Malik’s defense, the uncle relates his actions to those of al-Walid I, the patron of the equally lavish Great Mosque of Damascus, and both men’s deeds are again explained in terms of psychological warfare against Byzantium. Here, buildings are considered necessary components in the war against the “seduction of the beauty of Christian churches,” as described by al-Muqaddasi.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MINBAR

This brings us to the earliest element deemed crucial to the qibla space—the minbar. According to the sources, the first minbar was introduced in the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina circa 628–30. Likely commissioned from a Byzantine carpenter, it was introduced into the mosque space in response to a request by the Companions that the Prophet be seated above visiting delegations. According to hadith, the Prophet both stood and sat on the minbar during the delivery of the khutba and when acting as judge. He also reportedly sat on a kursī,
or what was considered by commentators to be a throne. Under the first three of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the minbar seems to have been perceived as a symbol of caliphal authority. This is exemplified by the order of the second caliph, 'Umar, to his governor in Egypt, 'Amr b. al-‘As, not to erect a minbar at his mosque in Fustat, as “Muslims should not be seated beneath [his] heels.” That order has been interpreted as evidence of the evolution of the minbar as an exclusive caliphal prerogative, and by the time of the caliph al-Walid I, the minbar of the Prophet itself was being treated with the same veneration as other pre-Islamic thrones, such as that of the Sasanian ruler (kisra), despite opposition to its relocation from Medina to Damascus.

The location of the minbar in Friday mosques was not necessarily fixed throughout the Umayyad period. According to Ibn al-Faqih, Ziyad b. Abihi was the first to move the minbar in the mosque in Basra from the middle of the building to a location near the qibla. His master, the caliph Mu‘awiya, likewise attempted to move the minbar of the Prophet to a location near the mihrab, “like all other manābir (sing. minbar),” but abandoned the task following an earthquake and lightning. In another account, when he attempted to move it to Damascus, there was an eclipse of the sun. When both events were associated with each other, Mu‘awiya proclaimed that he only meant to preserve it. He abandoned the task and covered it instead. In another account, Marwan b. al-Hakam, governor of Medina (661–69 and 676–77), is credited with adding a wooden base and securing it to a built base near the qibla. This is further supported by evidence that under the Umayyads minbars were movable structures that may have been placed either in front of or within the mihrab, presumably once it became a niche mihrab.

Mu‘awiya was also reportedly the first to preach from a minbar at the haram in Mecca. Brought by him from Syria during the Hajj, it was described as a small, three-stepped structure, which was not fixed in place, judging by a reference to the governor of Mecca, Khalid al-Qasri (d. 743), who ordered the minbar brought to the haram when needed. It remained on site until it was replaced by a larger minbar commissioned by the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 786–809), who relocated Mu‘awiya’s minbar to Mount ‘Arafa in Mecca. Mu‘awiya also reportedly attempted to relocate the staff of the Prophet to Damascus, on the pretense that neither the minbar nor the staff should remain in Medina, the home of the “enemies and murderers” of his ancestor, the third caliph, ‘Uthman b. ‘Affan (r. 644–56). He was challenged again and compromised by instead adding six steps to the original two. When Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik similarly attempted to move the minbar, he relented when he was reminded of his predecessor’s actions and of the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad that, “Whoever swears an oath upon my pulpit sinfully, his resting place shall be in the fire.”

His son al-Walid I expressed a similar interest, but failed to secure the minbar’s removal to his newly refurbished mosque in Damascus. Al-Walid’s brother and successor, Sulayman b. ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 715–17), declared his disapproval of the way both his father and brother were disparaged for their failed attempts to move the minbar, and condemned the inconsistency and “arrogance” of the people of Medina in the face of the rightful claims of the Umayyad caliphs to the Prophet’s minbar. He further emphasized his dismay at the treatment of his father and brother in this regard, stating, “We took over the world, and it is in our hands and we want to support one of the symbols of Islam sent to it by transporting it to our presence. This is not righteousness.”

According to Sulayman, the supremacy of Umayyad caliphal authority entitled them to the minbar of the Prophet, whose authority had been ceded to them as the world emperors they saw themselves to be. From Sulayman b. ‘Abd al-Malik’s declaration we can also infer that he saw a parallel between the station of the caliph in his capital’s mosque and the station of the Prophet upon his minbar, in what had now become a universal “symbol of Islam,” rather than the seat of the Prophet inextricably linked to Medina and its people. These accounts illustrate once again the tensions within the community regarding the perceived usurpation of symbols of the Prophet’s authority by the Umayyads, while highlighting how important it was to the Umayyads to have possession of the minbar of the Prophet.

‘Abd al-Malik ascended the minbar when consulting on important matters, such as when he imposed the death sentence upon Yahya b. Sa‘id b. al-‘As (d. 689),
following the rebellion in Damascus between 688 and 689. Muttarrif b. al-Mughirah, who was made governor of al-Mada’in (Ctesiphon) in 697, likewise proclaimed from his minbar, before revolting against ‘Abd al-Malik, that he would “sit to receive [the people] morning and evening,” and urged the people to come to him with their grievances, again an echo of the practices of Mu’awiyah at both mosque and palace. He then received people in his iwan, probably the iwān Kisra (the Sasanian “Arch of Chosroes” in Ctesiphon). The minbar, however, was not the only seat used by the caliph within the mosque. It is reported that ‘Abd al-Malik also had his sarīr (couch or throne) brought into the mosque during his audiences and when he acted as judge, perhaps in imitation of Mu’awiyah before him. The references to the sarīr in the sources suggest that it may have been some sort of bench, not unlike the type of thrones depicted in later Umayyad frescoes such as at Qusayr ‘Amra. ‘Abd al-Malik is said to have stored the body of the governor ‘Amr b. Sa’id b. al-‘As, wrapped in a rug, beneath his sarīr, following his execution in the khadrā’ palace in 688–89. It seems to have been long enough to accommodate more than one person seated next to each other, as suggested by a reference to the anti-caliph Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 692) tossing Urwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 713) from it while seated next to him, and another reference to ‘Amr b. al-‘As (d. 664) being seated next to Mu’awiyah upon his sarīr. In an honorific act, when the Prophet’s Companion Abu Ayyub al-Ansari died in 674, he was reportedly carried upon the sarīr of Yazid b. Mu’awiyah (r. 680–83), which suggests that it must also have been long enough to support a body.

The minbar was the place from which to point out caliphal misconduct, as can be inferred from the proclamations of ‘Amr b. Sa’id, the Umayyad governor under the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik. Upon revolting and taking control of Damascus, he proclaimed from the minbar:

No one from Quraysh ever stood on this pulpit before me without asserting that heaven and hell were his, and that he would cause whoever obeyed him to enter heaven, and whoever disobeyed him to enter hell. But I tell you that heaven and hell are in the hand of God, nothing of that belongs to me, save that you have a claim to equal treatment and a good stipend from me.

By 665 the minbar had become the ultimate platform for the promotion of ideology. In that year Ziyad b. Abihi famously declared from his pulpit in the mosque of Basra that, “Indeed, lies from the pulpit remain well-known, so if you catch me in a lie it is permissible for you to disobey me.” He continued to proclaim the obligation of obedience from the people in return for justice on his part. Upon completing his speech, ‘Abdallah b. Ahtam asserted that he had “been granted wisdom and unmis-takable judgment,” to which Ziyad b. Abihi responded, “You have lied. That was the Prophet of God, David,” in reference to Koran 38:20. Ideologically charged conversations between rulers and the Muslim community occurring within the mosque in this period are to be expected, but the association with the minbar is certainly worth noting. The prominence of the minbar in these exchanges enforces the argument that the mosque space operated as the ultimate locus of audience, well before it became articulated in the architecture as such under later Umayyad caliphs, such as al-Walid I. The hegemonic nature of these sermons, with their threatening tenor, references to the Prophet Muhammad, and invocation of the authority of the Prophet-King David, only enhances the position of the minbar as the ultimate platform for spreading ideology.

The ruler, however, was not always in a position of power within the mosque space, and in these cases the maqsura took on a more utilitarian purpose. Take, for example, the events that occurred in Kufa when Ziyad b. Abihi was governor, a position he would hold in addition to his existing position as governor of Basra, splitting his time between both locations by residing for six months in each city. Upon his arrival in Kufa he spoke to the community from the minbar only to be pelted with pebbles. He responded by “making use of the maqsura” and then adjudicating from upon a kursī at the gate of the mosque, punishing the wrongdoers by cutting off their hands. This event provides insights into the very practical impetus behind the introduction of measures meant to protect the ruler in the mosque space. I would argue here that the precedent of open access conflicted with the tendency towards autocratic rule, and the mosque responded accordingly.

The minbar naturally also became the place from which to present a crucial message in times of conflict,
or to curse an opponent, an act that stirred even more controversy given the sanctity of the seat. Mu‘awiya only refrained from cursing ‘Ali b. Abi Talib (who was eventually declared the fourth Rightly Guided Caliph) from the minbar in Medina following the death of the latter’s son and the Prophet’s grandson, Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Abi Talib (d. 670), when Sa‘d b. Abi Waqqas threatened to leave the mosque, never to return. After Sa‘d b. Abi Waqqas died, however, Mu‘awiya not only cursed ‘Ali b. Abi Talib unrelentingly but also ordered others to do so. The Umayyads were not the only ones to curse their enemies from the minbar; the ‘Alids did so as well. The anti-caliph Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 692) reportedly cursed his opponents from the minbar in Mecca following the death of one of his supporters, and refused to praise the Prophet to spite his enemies within the mosque, so as not to “bring pleasure to their hearts.”

Caliphs were expected to conduct themselves appropriately at the minbar, and any transgression was heavily criticized. When al-Walid I visited the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, he delivered the first sermon seated, and the second one standing. When the caliph’s companion and advisor Raja’ b. Haywah (d. 730) was questioned as to the validity of al-Walid I’s standing and sitting during the delivery of his sermons, he answered, “Yes, Mu‘awiya did it this way and so on.” In fact, Mu‘awiya is considered the first to have sat down between sermons. Raja’ b. Haywah went on to explain that when ‘Abd al-Malik was also challenged on his delivery of the Friday sermon, he insisted that ‘Uthman had delivered it in a similar fashion. To this the challenger responded, “We have not seen any [Umayyad caliph] prouder than [al-Walid].”

The minbar was also where the oath of allegiance (bay’a) to a new caliph was sworn. In 661 Mu‘awiya acceded to power in Jerusalem, most likely in the al-Aqsa Mosque, which he had rebuilt. Mu‘awiya “refused] to go to Muhammad’s throne,” presumably a direct reference to his minbar in Medina, and instead placed his own “throne” (probably an allusion to his capital), in Damascus. The communal nature of this event is emphasized by the description of “the emirs and many nomads” who gathered to pledge their allegiance to Mu‘awiya. It is also likely that Jerusalem was one of the locations where ‘Abd al-Malik received the bay’a. Mu‘awiya is said to have solicited the bay’a for his son Yazid, whom he declared as heir apparent from the minbar in Medina, surrounded by his entourage from the ahl al-Shām (people of the Levant).

The minbar as a seat of authority seems to have been reserved exclusively for caliphs and their governors, who represented caliphal authority within provincial centers. It would seem that no one else could make proclamations from the minbar. After the death of Mu‘awiya in 680, one of his followers and former commanders, al-Dahhak b. Qays al-Fihri (d. 684), stood next to the minbar bearing the caliph’s shroud as he eulogized him. There is also evidence to show that the role of the caliph as preacher (khaṭīb) within the mosque had become increasingly important as part of the Umayyad caliphs’ image as rightful rulers. It has been suggested, for example, that the image of the ruler flanked by two attendants on the “Orans” drachm of Bishr b. Marwan (ca. 694–95) may have been a representation of the caliph preaching within the mosque. If so, this would be a further affirmation that the mosque space was cultivated as a metaphor for the vital role the caliph played within Islamic society while the qibla space emerged as the arena for the expression of this identity.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE MAQSURA**

The introduction of ritual into the mosque space seems to have begun as early as the reign of the third caliph, ‘Uthman, who belonged to the Banu Umayya clan of the Quraysh tribe of Mecca. He reportedly covered the Prophet’s minbar in the Medina mosque with cloth in an act of veneration, possibly an echo of how the Ka‘ba was venerated. He is also credited with the introduction of the first maqsura, which he constructed at the mosque in Medina. Built of brick and pierced with windows, it seems to have been more monumental than a mere wooden partition, as has been generally assumed. The maqsura would become an almost fixed feature of the Friday mosque, its continuation justified by contemporary commentators not so much as a partition to separate the caliph from his congregation, but as a security precaution against assassination attempts. After ‘Uthman, Mu‘awiya constructed a maqsura at the
Great Mosque of Damascus in 664–65. Ibn al-Faqih largely ignored the earlier maqsura of ʿUthman and considered Muʿawiyah to be the first caliph to introduce maḥārib (sing. mīhrāb) and maqāṣir (sing. maqṣūra), along with other innovations such as guards and eunuchs, in reference to the Great Mosque of Damascus. This is perhaps an allusion to the introduction of ceremonial into the mosque, likewise attributed to Muʿawiyah in other sources. The term maqāṣir is also used outside the context of the mosque, and may allude in general to some form of private enclosure or space, with connotations of distinction and privacy. Al-Azraqi, an early historian of Mecca writing during the ninth century, refers to maqāṣir constructed within the Dār al-Nadwa (House of Deputies) in Mecca for the use of women. The ninth-century historian al-Baladhuri (d. 892) refers to a further example of maqāṣir outside the context of the mosque: the construction of maqāṣir within city walls. However, the precise meaning of the term is not clear from the context.

Ziyad b. Abihi, Muʿawiyah's governor, constructed a maqṣūra at his Friday mosque in Kufa that was later renovated by the Umayyad governor Khalid al-Qasri. Other governors under the Umayyads also constructed maqsuras in Kufa and Basra. Muʿawiyah's governor in Medina, Marwan b. al-Hakam (623–83), the father of Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan, rebuilt the maqṣūra at the Mosque of the Prophet in 664–65, prior to being discharged in 669. During his governorship of Medina (705–12), ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Aziz (the future Umayyad caliph ʿUmar II [r. 717–20]) again rebuilt this maqṣūra, this time as a raised structure of teak wood, rather than of unbaked brick, as in the time of ʿUthman. Although this may not seem to be in keeping with his austerity, the sanctity of the Mosque of the Prophet may have been a motivating factor in his decision. The maqṣūra that ʿAbd al-Malik's notorious governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf built in the Friday mosque at Wasit may have been topped with a dome, based on the thickened foundations. What emerges from this brief survey of the use of the maqṣūra is that nearly every governor and caliph invested in building one for himself, in an unending cycle of refurbishment and perhaps also competition. This suggests that the maqṣūra may have operated as a metonym of authority within this context, in light of its pre-Islamic use in the Dār al-Nadwa in Mecca and its association with demarcating seclusion and privilege within large, open-plan hypostyle mosque spaces.

This challenges the views of both the primary sources and contemporary scholarship, which present the caliph Muʿawiyah and later the caliph al-Walid I as the ones who introduced aspects of the “palace into the mosque.” Rather, the evidence here suggests that the introduction of the maqṣūra was the result of a more gradual and ubiquitous process, going back to the caliphate of ʿUthman b. Affan (an ancestor of the Umayyads), who departed from the austere policies of his predecessor, ʿUmar al-Khattab. That process related more to the evolving role of both caliphs and their respective governors as both imam and khaṭīb within Friday mosques, and to how they were perceived and treated by the public. Such a conclusion is further supported by evidence that shows how, over time, the maqṣūra came to function as a space reserved exclusively for the inner circle of the caliph. For example, under the Umayyad caliph al-Hakam II (r. 961–76) in Cordoba, the maqṣūra had its own private entrance connected to the palace. As we have already seen, Muʿawiyah's governor Ziyad b. Abihi reportedly relocated the Dār al-Imāra at Basra behind the qibla wall in order to provide the caliph, governor, or imam direct access to the front of the Friday mosque. An entrance connected the maqṣūra at al-Walid I’s Great Mosque of Damascus with the khadrāʾ palace of Muʿawiyah. Similarly in Wasit, a doorway connected the maqṣūra constructed by al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf to his newly built palace, also known as al-khadrāʾ, in a direct echo of the ensemble at Damascus.

The presence of a private entrance allowing access between the palace and the maqṣūra would have essentially created an exclusive intermediary space that combined the security of the palace with the public spectacle aspect of the congregational mosque. Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, like his predecessors, was able to privately exit the mosque to his palace using a similar entrance. It is also suggested in the sources that al-Hajjaj's commanders and close circle would have gathered within the maqṣūra while his troops assembled outside. For example, it is implied that when armed conflicts spilled into the mosque, as they did during the revolt of ʿAmr b. Saʿid b. al-ʿAs, the door of the maqṣūra was locked and had to be
Introduction of the Minbar and Maqṣūra

11 broken down.133 Seclusion is implied again in a later part of the account, when the maqṣura was broken into again after the “sons of Marwan” (i.e., the Marwanid branch of the Umayyads) locked themselves within it.134 What emerges here is an impression of the maqṣura as an architectural feature that evolved over time to accommodate the inevitable tension between separation and exposure at the qibla of the mosque. The maqṣura is also often connected to subsequent developments at the caliphal palace, for example, the introduction of the curtain or ḥijāb used to limit visual access to the later Marwanid Umayyad caliphs such as al-Walid II (r. 743–44) at his audience hall in the Khirbat al-Mafjar (724–74).135 Nevertheless, the maqṣura does seem to present its own unique history within the context of the evolving nature of the public audience at the Friday mosque.

CONCLUSION

The evidence presented here suggests that the Friday mosques constructed during the period between the first mosque in Medina in 622 and the emergence of the prototypical domed Umayyad caliphal mosques (in Medina, Damascus, and Jerusalem) under al-Walid I reveal a process of experimentation intrinsically linked to the contested nature of early Islamic governance. That process resulted from the often-conflicting religious and political agendas of the early governors and Umayyad caliphs. The shift away from the austerity and simplicity of the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina seems to have occurred gradually, beginning perhaps as early as the second half of the seventh century under Ziyad b. Abihi in Kufa and Basra, rather than under the Umayyad caliphs in Damascus. This development is particularly worthy of attention. The mosque and palace complexes that Ziyad constructed in two vital urban centers of Iraq exuded an air of unprecedented monumentality—his mosque in Basra was described as resembling “the work of demons.” This is in striking contrast with attitudes towards architecture only a few decades earlier, when the wooden doors of the Dār al-Imāra at Kufa were burned upon the order of Caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khattab, and the governor ‘Amr b. al-‘As was scolded for sitting upon a minbar in Fustat. Unlike his predecessors, Mu‘awiya’s governor Ziyad b. Abihi not only sat upon a minbar but also ruled from within a fortified Dār al-Imāra and prayed within a maqṣura, previously believed to be a right reserved for caliphs. It seems possible that the actions of Ziyad b. Abihi at Kufa and Basra may have been related to his elevated position and the powers vested in him by Mu‘awiya, as exemplified by his inclusion in the clan of Umayya as the caliph’s kinsman and brother. Thus, in 665, while governor of Basra, Ziyad b. Abihi became Ziyad b. Abi Sufyan, losing the moniker for illegitimacy (abihi, son of his unknown father)136 and the brand of shame resulting from his mother’s promiscuity.137 This context, along with the shifts in attitude towards the mosque and palace under Mu‘awiya, may explain his ambitious architectural pursuits in contrast to his predecessors, shifts that paralleled those of his master in Damascus. This is not to argue that the efforts of caliph and governor were necessarily in competition with one another but they could be interpreted as part of a broader attempt at the Umayyad consolidation of authority through the establishment of secure centers from which to govern. They can also be interpreted as indicative of how architectural configurations such as the maqṣura may not have been operating solely on a symbolic level but rather emerged as a result of the reality of governing within the mosque space.

The inherent vulnerability of the ruler standing unprotected within the Friday mosque was mitigated by a series of measures that allowed the mosque to continue to function as a platform for the promotion of a political agenda, a tradition necessitated by the immutable importance of preaching from the minbar. In the development of the maqṣura and the relocation of the governor’s residence (Dār al-Imāra) or caliphal palace (the Qubbat al-Khadrā’ Palace in Damascus) behind the qibla we seem to find parallel attempts to resolve the tension between the conflicting needs for security and access to a public audience within the mosque. The open access to the ruler that had been allowed at the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina clearly could not be maintained in the turbulent political environment of the first decades of Islam. This, of course, is not to deny in any way the symbolic weight of both the minbar as a pseudo-throne...
and a relic of the Prophet Muhammad, and the enclosure screen as a pre-existing and ubiquitous architectural feature of the early church and even the pre-Islamic Dār al-Nadwa. The maqṣūra did not emerge exclusively in response to these dynamics, nor does the evidence presented here negate the symbolic impact of creating a physical and psychological barrier between the caliph/governor and the congregation.

There also seems to have been a drive towards a more sophisticated maqṣūra, from the earliest brick version under ʿUthman to the raised teak wood iteration of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Azīz and the massive and possibly domed maqṣūra of al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf at his mosque in Wasit. The maqṣūra may have been intended as a precaution against assassination attempts, but the history of maqṣūra construction suggests that at some point it transcended what may have originally been a purely functional role. It is probably not coincidental that every Umayyad caliph and governor invested in a maqṣūra in the mosques under their control. The governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf perhaps took this process further by adding a dome above his maqṣūra in Wasit, something that the window-pierced brick maqṣūra of the caliph ʿUthman did not yet have. Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf similarly added a qubbat al-khadrāʾ at his nearby palace, in emulation of its counterpart in the caliphal palace of Damascus, likely as an echo of the caliphal precedent in Damascus and perhaps as a stamp of Umayyad hegemony in a more general sense.

With the veneration of the Prophet’s minbar as a symbol of Islamic authority, this feature symbolically became the platform for the voice of authority. This is reflected by the increasing importance of preaching from the minbar, as expressed in Ziyad b. Abīhi’s statement that “lies from the pulpit remain well-known.” The attempts to relocate the minbar of the Prophet from Medina to Damascus only seem to have been successful once the Umayyad caliphs had secured their position as the legitimate leaders of the community. We recall how Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik vented his frustration over the caliph’s inability to secure what had become a universal symbol of Islam. The untenable position of the early governors and caliphs seems to have been largely resolved through their use of architecture. The shift towards the more prescribed form of audience at the Friday mosque at Damascus that was championed by the caliph Muʿawiya still maintained vestiges of the Prophet’s audiences in the Medina mosque. For example, the use of the mosque space as a gathering place for tribesmen to rally freely under Muʿawiya certainly evoked the Prophet’s model at his mosque in Medina. It is also important to consider how Muʿawiya secured the bay’a in Jerusalem among his fellow tribesmen even as he shunned the vestiges of mulk (sovereignty, kingship), such as a crown, during his accession and “refus[ed] to go to the throne of Muhammad” in Medina.

Furthermore, by the end of Muʿawiya’s reign, little had changed at the mosque in Damascus, save for the introduction of various “seats” for use in the qibla space and the introduction of a maqṣūra, whatever its form may have been. The mosque still bore traces of the early post-conquest adaptations begun in 634, and of course the Dār al-Imāra underwent a major refurbishment. This is paralleled by the work of his governor, Ziyad b. Abīhi, who undertook ambitious architectural projects at both the mosque and Dār al-Imāra during the same period. What emerges here is a surprisingly consistent architectural setting, in terms of sophistication, for both caliph and governor. In this sense, the works of the governor Ziyad b. Abīhi seem to warrant further examination in this specific context.

Nevertheless, by the end of the reign of the caliph Muʿawiya a series of subtle transformations had occurred within the qibla space and with respect to how that space was used. The inclusion of a monumental Dār al-Imāra should also be noted, topped by a qubbat al-khadrāʾ at both the caliphal palace in Damascus and, later, at Wasit, under the governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf. These elements can be seen as operating together to address the complementary yet contradicting roles of the caliph and of the governor who was his representative. It seems the architecture was sensitively responding to complex and delicate issues regarding the nature of caliphal authority. The view in the sources that Muʿawiya whimsically introduced ceremonial at the mosque therefore seems to have been an oversimplification. The tension expressed architecturally in early mosques connected with him was best articulated by the parting words of the caliph ʿUmar when he sparred with Muʿawiya over the use of ceremonial within the city and
mosque: 'Umar left “not knowing whether [he] should order it or forbid it.”

The Kress Foundation Department of Art History,
The University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas

NOTES

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2. Grabar counts a total of twenty-seven throughout the empire: Oleg Grabar, Islamic Art and Beyond (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 110.

3. For the most recent examination of the architectural form of the early mosque, see Thalèlein Antun, The Architectural Form of the Mosque in the Central Arab Lands, from the Hijra to the End of the Umayyad Period, 1/622–1/750, British Archaeological Reports 2790 (Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2016).


5. This, of course, is not to suggest that this pattern remained fixed throughout the empire, but it is considered to be the point after which these elements were more consistently found.


9. Ibid.


12. Ibid., 438. Al-Baladhuri implies that the act may have been related to accusations that Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas was derelict in some of his duties. G. Fehérvari, EI2, s.v. “Miḥrāb.”


19. For a discussion of the early mosque in the appropriated cities of the classical world and their use as public spaces, as well as their adoption of some of the properties of the pre-Islamic agora, see Hugh Kennedy, “From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antiquity and Early Islamic Syria,” Past and Present 106, no. 1 (February 1985): 3–27, at 15–16.


25. Ibid., 436.

26. This occurred following his appointment as governor of Kufa by the caliph Muʿawiya in addition to his existing role as governor of Basra: see Ahmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Faqqih al-Ḥamadhānī, Kitāb al-Balūḍīn, ed. Yûṣūf al-Ḥāḍī, 3 vols. (Beirut: ’Ālam al-Kutub, 1996), 1:230. See also Morony, Iraq after the Muslim Conquest, 74–78.


28. Ibid.

34. Ibid.
39. Flood, Great Mosque of Damascus, 147. The evidence suggests that the palace in Damascus in which Mu’awiyah resided as governor ca. 639, following his appointment, was located behind the qibla wall of the temenos. The Dār al-Imāra at Kufa was relocated ca. 640, roughly two years after the foundation of the mosque in 638, following a fire. It is difficult to state with certainty whether one may have influenced the other, but in Kufa the relocation of the Dār al-Imāra involved joining the mosque and palace with no physical separation between the two (AlSayyad, Cities and Caliphs, 56–57), while there is no evidence that this was the case in Damascus. In fact, it has been convincingly argued that the mosque and Dār al-Imāra in Damascus were separated by a courtyard: see Flood, Great Mosque of Damascus, 147–59. What seems likely, however, is that the advantage of having direct access to the qibla wall from the Dār al-Imāra was recognized early in the development at both sites.
40. Flood, Great Mosque of Damascus, 147.
41. Ibid.
43. Flood, Great Mosque of Damascus, 148.
44. Ibid., 150.
45. Ibid., 147.
46. Ibid., 149 and 154.
47. Al-Balādhurī, Origins of the Islamic State, 449.
49. Creswell, Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture, 40–41.
50. Creswell describes this excavation but it is unclear whether any evidence of physical remains exists or whether records of this excavation may be available.
52. Creswell, Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture, 459.
53. See Khalid Keshk, “When Did Mu‘awiyah Become Caliph?,” Journal of Near Eastern Studies 69, no. 1 (April 2010): 31–42. Keshk proposes that before the battle of Siffin Mu‘awiyah had already consolidated his authority to the point where he was in fact “an acting caliph.” This suggests the possibility of a correspondence between the construction of the qubbat al-khadrāʾ and the timing of his accession.
54. Creswell, Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture, 459.
55. Ibid.
56. See Khalid Keshk, “When Did Mu‘awiyah Become Caliph?,” Journal of Near Eastern Studies 69, no. 1 (April 2010): 31–42. Keshk proposes that before the battle of Siffin Mu‘awiyah had already consolidated his authority to the point where he was in fact “an acting caliph.” This suggests the possibility of a correspondence between the construction of the qubbat al-khadrāʾ and the timing of his accession.
57. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh, 18:218.
58. Ibid.

60. Koran 11:95: “as if they had never dwelt and flourished there! Ah! Behold! How the Madyan were removed (from sight) as were removed the Thamud!” (trans. Yusuf Ali).


62. Pederson, EI2, s.v. “Minbar.”

63. Ibid.

64. The terms kursî (pseudo-throne) and sarîr (couch/bedstead) in the sources are not necessarily associated with a specific use at the mosque or palace. It is, however, worth noting that sarîr, which has also been interpreted as a bedstead, may have associations with certain funerary functions in early Islam, as some form of bier. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “Death, Funeral Processions, and the Articulation of Religious Authority in Early Islam,” Studia Islamica 93 (2001): 27–58.

65. G. Fehérvari, EI2, s.v. “Mihrâb.”


68. Al-Muqaddasi, Ahsan al-taqaṣîm, 83.

69. Ibn al-Faqih, Kitâb al-Bul’dân, 80.

70. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh, 18:101.


72. Ibid., 173.


75. For a discussion of this type of bench/throne, see Garth Fowden, Quṣayr A’mra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 115–18.


77. Ibid., 3138.

78. Ibid., 3128.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., 21364.


82. Ibid., 21363.

83. For a discussion of this type of bench/throne, see Garth Fowden, Quṣayr A’mra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 115–18.


85. Ibid., 3138.

86. Ibid., 3128.

87. Ibid.


89. Ibid., 21356.

90. Ibid., 18:79–80.

91. Ibid., 18:89–91.
This is at least what Creswell surmised from the excavations of the site: see Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, 2:323–38. See also Fuad Safar, Wāsit: The Sixth Season’s Excavation (Cairo: L’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1945), 25–32, and Johns, “House of the Prophet,” 59.

THE FOUNDATION OF A TABRIZI WORKSHOP IN CAIRO:
A CASE STUDY OF ITS INFLUENCE ON THE MOSQUE
OF EMIR ALTUNBUGHA AL-MARIDANI

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The Bahri Mamluk period (1250–1382) in Cairo witnessed the spread of artistic and architectural styles that were clearly unique to the Cairene tradition. The new decorative forms were unprecedented not only stylistically but also technically, introducing new expertise and skills previously unfamiliar to Cairene craftsmanship. The introduction of new techniques has generally been accounted for by the prosperity of trade or by diplomatic relations, where a general milieu of economic and political stability and peace encouraged the exchange of not only objects but also artists and artisans. The introduction of Persian influences to Cairene Mamluk architecture is a case in point. Ilkhanid influence on Mamluk art and architectural decoration is well documented, and accounts of chroniclers often refer to architects, masons, and calligraphers, as well as Sufis, who came to Cairo from the Ilkhanid domain.1

THE FOUNDATION OF A TABRIZI WORKSHOP IN CAIRO: EMIR SAYF AL-DIN AITMISH AL-ASHRAFI AL-MUHAMMADI

Emir Sayf al-Din Aitmish al-Ashrafi al-Muhammadi (d. 1336) was one of the mamlûks (owned slaves) employed by Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad (r. 1293–94, 1299–1309, and 1310–41) in his diplomatic relations with the Ilkhanid state. He was originally purchased by al-Mansur Qalawun (r. 1279–90), who gave him to al-Ashraf Khalil (r. 1290–93), and was therefore commonly referred to as Aitmish al-Ashrafi (a nisba [adjective indicating a person's place of origin, affiliation, or ancestry] indicating his connection to al-Ashraf Khalil) al-Mughuli (the Mongol). He first came to attention as a trusted envoy of al-Nasir Muhammad during the latter's exile in al-Karak in 1309–10. When al-Nasir Muhammad left al-Karak to regain the throne during his third rule, he appointed Aitmish as governor of the city, where he remained until 1311.2

Emir Aitmish is known to have had excellent diplomatic skills and was well acquainted with the Mongol language and Mongol lands, as well as Mongol laws, culture, and traditions, assets that were primary considerations for choosing him as a diplomatic envoy.3 He became a trusted member of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad's circle, although never rising above the rank of an emir of forty.4 Following the proposed peace negotiations, the Ilkhanid ruler Abu Sa'id (r. 1317–35) stipulated that the Mamluks' representative be a man of “confirmed religion and honesty.”5 Based on these credentials, Aitmish was sent by al-Nasir Muhammad on a number of diplomatic missions to the Ilkhanid state, which ultimately led to the Peace of Aleppo in 1322–23.6

Following the peace treaty, many decorative objects were exported to Cairo, some of which were intended as gifts for the sultan, while others may have been sold in local markets. The Egyptian historian Maqrizi (d. 1442) records the valuable gifts taken by Aitmish on his diplomatic missions, but the gifts he received in return for the sultan are frequently not documented.7

In his account of the year 1330, Maqrizi records that a banna (master mason) accompanied Aitmish from Tabriz and was responsible for the foundation of a court workshop in Cairo during the 1330s and 1340s, where he
trained artisans in the Tabrizi tradition. The craftsman was additionally accredited with the construction of the two minarets at the Mosque of Qawsun in Cairo (1329–30), which he built on the model of the minarets of the Mosque of ‘Ali Shah (ca. 1318–22) in Tabriz. Interestingly, ‘Ali Shah was the Ilkhanid vizier who signed the peace treaty that Aitmish brought back from Tabriz in 1323.9 Centuries later, the Ottoman traveller Evliya Celebi (d. ca. 1682) remarked that the minaret located at the southern entrance to the mosque was decorated with tiles.10

THE INFLUENCE OF THE WORKSHOP ON BUILDING AND DECORATION IN CAIRO

Michael Meinecke has conducted a detailed study of the influence of the Tabrizi workshop on tile decoration in Mamluk Cairo, and Laila Ibrahim has additionally examined the possible influence of the workshop on the stuccowork of the Khanqah of Emir Qawsun (1335) in Cairo. Aspects of their research will be briefly summarized and analyzed during the course of this study.

The minarets of the Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Cairo Citadel (originally built in 1313; reconstructed in 1335) are unparalleled in Egypt. Both are decorated with tiles of navy blue, turquoise, and white mosaic. Meinecke attributes these minarets to the same craftsman who worked on the construction of the Qawsun minarets. Behrens-Abouseif, quoting Ulku Bates, additionally suggests that another source of inspiration may have been Anatolia, where tile mosaics were extensively used and often combined with masonry, as opposed to the brick common in Iran.11

The form of these minarets, topped by a bulbous crown, was clearly an innovation in Cairo, inspired by those commonly seen in mosques and mausolea in Ilkhanid lands. The minaret of the Shrine of ‘Abd al-Samad in Natanz (1299–1312), and those crowning the entryway of the Friday mosque of Yazd (originally built in the twelfth century, but largely rebuilt between 1324 and 1365), are similar examples. Both structures were built in the Ilkhanid period, but the minarets at Yazd unfortunately do not retain much of their original decoration. The decoration at Natanz, however, is completely original. The shape of the minarets, although not necessarily the types of tiles used, is clearly linked to the minarets of al-Nasir’s mosque at the Citadel.

The introduction of a new repertory rapidly led to the infiltration of Ilkhanid architectural decorative styles in Cairo, as well as the introduction of new techniques, primarily in tile decoration and stuccowork, another Ilkhanid specialty.

THE TILE DECORATION OF THE MOSQUE OF EMIR ALTUNBUGHA AL-MARIDANI

The use of color and glazed tile decoration became increasingly important during the Ilkhanid period, primarily for the embellishment of exteriors. In Cairo, the earliest known example of tile decoration appears on the minaret of the Khanqah of Baybars al-Jashankir (1306–10); it was also seen on the Mosque of al-Malik

Fig. 1. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), general view. (Photo: © K.A.C. Creswell Photographic Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections Library, The American University in Cairo)
The Foundation of a Tabrizi Workshop in Cairo

The mosque of al-Maridani, which was built in 1334–39/40, follows the riwāq plan, with an open courtyard and a dome in front of the mihrab (a prayer niche found in religious buildings indicating the direction to the Ka'ba in Mecca). Three axial entrances lead into the courtyard, which is separated from the prayer hall by a fine mashrabiyya screen (a wooden screen that covered windows of medieval houses) (fig. 2). Despite the mosque’s poor state of conservation today, it still manages to retain a great deal of its original splendor and remains one of the most beautiful mosques of fourteenth-century Cairo.

The tile decoration in the Mosque of al-Maridani, which is of a technically high standard, appears on only four architectural parts of the structure. Rectangular tile panels are found on the inner sides of the windows over the northeastern and southwestern entryways (figs. 3 and 4). Tile roundels occupy the inner (facing the courtyard) and outer (facing the street) sides of the

al-Jukandar (1319). Those precedents, which were technically still primitive, have largely been destroyed.

In the 1330s, however, one begins to recognize the evolution of a technically advanced tile decoration that was clearly foreign to the Cairene tradition; it was used monumental and displayed in a variety of colors, two practices previously unknown in Egypt. Meinecke identified thirteen Bahri Mamluk monuments in Cairo with tile and faience mosaic decoration, most of which were built between 1330 and 1350. One of these is the Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani, which the contemporary historian al-Yusufi (d. 1358) praised as one of the most lavishly and finely decorated buildings in the city (fig. 1).

The mosque, construction on which began in 1334 and was completed in 1339–40, follows the riwāq (an arcade carried on columns or pillars) plan, with an open courtyard and a dome in front of the mihrab (a prayer niche found in religious buildings indicating the direction to the Ka'ba in Mecca). Three axial entrances lead into the courtyard, which is separated from the prayer hall by a fine mashrabiyya screen (a wooden screen that covered windows of medieval houses) (fig. 2). Despite the mosque’s poor state of conservation today, it still manages to retain a great deal of its original splendor and remains one of the most beautiful mosques of fourteenth-century Cairo.

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Fig. 2. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40). (Plan: courtesy of Nicholas Warner)
Fig. 3. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), tile panel over northeastern entryway. (Photo: © Matjaž Kačičnik)

Fig. 5. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), tile roundel facing the courtyard over northwestern entryway. (Photo: © Diana Bakhoum)

Fig. 4. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), tile panel over southwestern entryway. (Photo: © Diana Bakhoum)

Fig. 6. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), tile roundel facing the street over northwestern entryway. (Photo: © Diana Bakhoum)
central medallion of the northwestern entryway (figs. 5 and 6). All the panels are strategically placed in prominent positions above the entryways to the mosque.

The panels feature an arabesque design set on a vegetal scroll background. These patterns had earlier precedents in Cairene architecture, which were produced in stone or stucco, but in the Mosque of al-Maridani we find the earliest extant example in glazed tile. The design and structure of the rectangular tile panels are comparable to the stucco grille at the Madrasa of Emir Qarasunqur (1300) (fig. 7); they also very closely resemble the stone screen at the funerary complex of Sanjar al-Jawli (1303–4) (fig. 8). In terms of decorative repertory, it is quite obvious that the designs chosen for the decoration drew upon local rather than international motifs. The panels look very different from other tilework in Cairo; at the same time, there is no evidence of any Iranian parallels, in either design or technique. The same can be said of the tile roundels adorning the northwestern portal.15

*The rectangular tile panels above the northeastern and southwestern entryways*

As mentioned above, in both panels, vegetal scroll ornaments form the basis of the design. Above the northeastern entryway, white and navy blue tile panels were combined to form an overall arabesque design
framed by a navy blue rectangle (fig. 9). The same technique was used in the panel above the southwestern entryway, this time to create a different arabesque composition, executed in white and turquoise glazed tiles surrounded by a cobalt blue rectangular framing (fig. 10).16 While both panels are the same width, the one above the northeastern entryway is longer, which allows for the display of a larger portion of the arabesque pattern.17

Tile roundels above the northwestern entryway

A tile roundel is found on each side of the northwestern entryway, one facing the courtyard, the other facing the street (figs. 11 and 12). At the center of the panel on the inner side, which combines three different colors—white, turquoise, and dark blue18—is a roundel with the name “Muḥammad,” a reference to the Prophet and perhaps also an allusion to Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad (fig. 11). The inscription is placed in a strategic location opposite the mihrab, where it is visible from different parts of the mosque.

The outer roundel combines the same three colors in a highly concentric design (fig. 12). According to a drawing by Jules Bourgoin (1892), the central medallion contained the word Allah in naskh script (a type of calligraphy in which the letters are rounded and clearly formed). Meinecke thus suggests that the general layout of this roundel with the surrounding inscription band resembles the roundel above the entryway of the Mosque of al-Aqmar (1125). He uses this example to support his hypothesis about the local origins of the design repertory for these panels.19

ANALYSIS

These panels are very fine and highly advanced examples of Cairene tilework. Due to the sophisticated technical skills needed for their production, similar panels are quite rare. One earlier example discussed by Meinecke is at the Sahib Ata Mausoleum in Konya (1283),20 but the design is composed of a geometric pattern and was probably executed in one color. In terms of vegetal ornamentation, a number of Cairene precedents could
be discussed, but these were mainly executed in stone or stucco.  

The main question is whether these panels are made up of separate pieces of tile attached together or whether they form one unit composed of different colors. Polychrome tiles were generally much harder to produce and required the presence of skilled master ceramists. A number of techniques were developed to prevent the colors from running over and rendering the designs illegible. In the tiles in question, one can see clear lines between the different colored pieces, which could be indicative of actual joints or might just be incised lines drawn to separate the oxides and prevent the colors from running over one another (figs. 13–16). Although the indented lines or incisions are quite defined on the decorated side of the panels, no joints are clearly visible on the rear side of the panels, which look as though they were produced out of a single block (fig. 17). It is, however, also possible that a plaster coating may have been added to the backs of the tile panels to strengthen the adhesive attachment of the different pieces to one another.

Another peculiarity of the panels is the use of sgraffito (lit. “scratched” in Italian) for the swirls of the vegetal ornamentation. This technique was first used at the Gunbad-i Qabud Mausoleum (1196–97) at Maragha, where the background was scratched away, thereby making the glazed foreground stand out. It was later used in the Şifaiye Madrasa (1220) in Sivas, as well as at the mihrab of the ‘Ala’ al-Din Mosque (ca. 1235) in Konya.

It is still unclear where the craftsmen found their inspiration and techniques, but Anatolia, rather than Iran, may be a plausible source. A very similar design is found in the tile panels framing the iwan of the Sirçalı Madrasa in Konya (1242–43). The pattern used at al-Maridani for the rectangular tile panels closely resembles the one executed at the Anatolian madrasa in turquoise and dark blue. In Konya, however, the design is composed of carved tile panels embedded in a plaster coating. The technique is not entirely different from the Cairene examples, except that the ones at al-Maridani are executed on a much larger scale and are not embedded in plaster. Given the scarcity of Anatolian Seljuk tilework parallels, however, further research is needed to support this hypothesis.

According to Meinecke, Azerbaijan may have been another possible source of inspiration. He suggests that the technique used in Konya was also found at the Mausoleum of Uljaitu (1305) at Sultanıyya and the tomb
tower (1322) at Barda. On the basis of the connection with Ilkhanid decoration, Meinecke thus suggests that the craftsmen working on these panels were those trained by the Tabrizi master brought to Cairo in 1323.26 The two rectangular panels and the internal north-western roundel should generally be considered integral parts of the overall decorative program of the mosque. The walls surrounding these panels are covered with a low-relief carved stone revetment, which would originally have been painted (figs. 3–5). Relief carvings such as these forming an overall wall pattern were not very common in Cairo and should therefore be examined in terms of their connection with the tile panels.27 Meinecke thus suggests that the designs of the panels and their surrounds were products of the Tabrizi master, who, he consequently infers, worked at the royal court workshop, under the supervision of a muʿallim (literally “teacher,” but generally used in reference to a master craftsman), Ibn al-Suyufi,28 the chief architect of the court, or the raʾis al-muhandisīn.29

In light of the dearth of definitive parallels, more evidence is needed to prove any hypothesis about the possible origin of these panels and the craftsmen who produced them. The fact that most other tilework in Cairo was executed in tile mosaic makes these panels rare and highly significant for the architectural history of tile decoration in Cairo. The choice of four different designs with different sizes, shapes, and proportions could suggest an experimental approach rather than the adoption of a well-established tradition.

One major observation should be made at this stage. There is a clear discrepancy in complexity and quality of execution between the rectangular panels and the tile roundel facing the interior of the mosque, as opposed to the tile roundel facing the street, which displays a much higher level of sophistication, both technically and stylistically (fig. 12). The design of this roundel is the most complex of the four, and the connections of the different pieces are very intricate and finely executed. It could therefore be suggested that the tile roundel facing the street may have been produced by the Tabrizi master himself, and acted as a prototype to be copied by those training under his supervision. No concrete evidence, however, can prove this hypothesis. In the future, restoration and cleaning may help reveal new evidence that can guide us in determining the craftsman who produced these panels.
Fig. 15. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), detail of tile roundel facing the courtyard over north-western entryway. (Photo: © Diana Bakhous)

Fig. 16. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), detail of tile roundel facing the street over north-western entryway. (Photo: © Diana Bakhous)
The team of artists, or workshop, that was responsible for the tile decoration on Cairene monuments has also been credited with the execution of stucco decoration.

By the first quarter of the fourteenth century, the tradition of Mamluk stucco decoration had become well established, and in Iran, stucco decoration reached its apogee under the Ilkhanids. Several buildings in Cairo feature stucco decoration that was alien to the tradition of the Mamluk period, some of which can still be observed today, though others are no longer extant.

One of the earliest examples is in the complex sponsored by Al-Nasir Muhammad for himself. The mihrab of the Madrasa of Al-Nasir Muhammad (1296–1304) at Bayn al-Qasrayn (fig. 18) is quite exceptional in Mamluk architectural decoration and clearly derives from Persian prototypes. With its pierced bosses, the high-relief carving on the conch of the mihrab closely resembles Ilkhanid stucco as well as repoussé metalwork. Laila Ibrahim has suggested that the closest parallel is to be found in the mihrab of the Great Mosque (1277) at Urumiyya. Upon closer examination, however, one sees that the two mihrabs share the same bulbous qualities but not the same designs. The stucco mihrab found at the Pir-i Bakran Mausoleum (1299–1312) (fig. 19), and particularly the spandrel design of the mihrab added by Uljaitu to the Great Mosque of Isfahan in 1310 (fig. 20), provide much closer parallels because they share similar arabesque designs. One should note, though, that Mamluk-Mongol relations had not been well established by the time the Madrasa of Al-Nasir was completed in 1303. This suggests that unless the conch was decorated at least a decade later, the craftsmen who worked on it were likely to have been refugees rather than craftsmen brought as a result of diplomatic relations.

The now-ruined Qasr al-Ablaq (1313–14) of Al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel, known to us through the Description de l’Égypte, was also decorated with a medal-
lion, probably in stucco, which is stylistically very close to the Ilkhanid tradition. The medallion is distinguished by the use of hollow appliqué bosses35 similar to those discussed earlier in connection with the Madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad. Such bosses were very rare in Cairo and their use is restricted to only a few but significant buildings. These bosses also occur in the spandrels of the mihrab of the Khanqah of Princess Tughay, also known as Khawand Umm Anuk (pre-1349), who was al-Nasir’s favorite wife.36

A stucco roundel at the Khanqah of Emir Qawsun (1335) in Cairo features an inscription surround that is now in a ruined state (fig. 21). The major peculiarity of the surround is the use of the initial formula mimma

Fig. 19. Linjan, Pir-i Bakran Mausoleum (1299–1312), conch of mihrab. (Photo: © Bernard O’Kane)
and tree patterns (fig. 23), grace the upper portion of the walls of the prayer hall. There are, however, very few intact stucco roundels on the qibla wall. The density and quality of the decoration, as well as the size of the roundels, are not comparable to the examples at the Khanqah of Emir Qawsun. The bukhariyyas are finely executed but their decoration does not compare to those seen at the khanqah.43 It is therefore very unlikely that the Tabrizi workshop exerted any influence on the stuccowork of the Mosque of al-Maridani.

Given the evidence available today, one could assume that the influence of the Tabrizi workshop on the Mosque of al-Maridani was relatively restricted in scale. The decoration of the tile panels as well as the decorations in stucco give the impression of being experimental and are not found later in any other monuments. Additionally, they have been used sparingly on the structure, mainly on the interior and not on the façade or minaret, for instance, where they would have made a clear statement regarding the involvement of a foreign workshop. On the other hand, parts of the decoration that had been a Cairene specialty and in which the craftsmen were already talented were executed according to very high standards of perfection. Nevertheless, one should always consider the extensive restorations carried out at the mosque; original parts of the decoration may have been lost, making it more difficult to be certain of the sources of inspiration. Restoration and cleaning may help reveal new evidence, but until these are carried out, no final conclusions can be reached.
Fig. 21. Cairo, Khanqah of Emir Qawsun (1335), stucco roundel. (Photo: © Matjaž Kačičnik)

Fig. 22. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), stucco bukhariyya. (Photo: © Diana Bakhoum)

Fig. 23. Cairo, Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (1334–39/40), tree representations in stucco. (Photo: © Matjaž Kačičnik)
THE DECLINE OF THE TABRIZI WORKSHOP

The scarcity of available material could be misleading in the examination of the extent of the influence exerted by the Tabrizi workshop in Cairo. Based on the current evidence, one might assume that following the death of al-Nasir Muhammad, the influence of the Tabrizi workshop declined and that the tile decoration adorning the windows of the mausoleum of the Sultan Hasan complex (1356–63), for example, may have been one of the last undertakings of the workshop in Cairo. In terms of stucco decoration, the richly ornamented stucco roundels at the Mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar (1344–45) and the nearly contemporary Khanqah of Princess Tatar al-Hijaziya (1348) were the last products of stucco ornamentation for at least a decade.44

Following the death of Abu Saʿid in 1335, the Ilkhanid empire disintegrated rapidly, accompanied by a demise in the imperial building tradition. With the ensuing turmoil and with the Black Death of 1348, many artists fled to Cairo and brought with them new building techniques and motifs, which included complex muqarnas vaults and chinoiserie patterns. The stone architecture of Anatolia seems to have had lasting effects on Mamluk façade decoration. The disappearance of Persian styles of tilework in Cairo may have been the result of these circumstances.

Timurid architectural decoration and tilework were to exert more influence on the architecture of Mughal India than on the Western Islamic lands. Furthermore, there was an increasing interest in the use of stone as a building and decorative material in Cairo, which seems to have affected the use of tile mosaic for decoration. The architecture of the later Bahri Mamluk period, as well as that of the Burji Mamluks (1382–1517), thus relied heavily on stone decoration, and great advances were achieved in the decoration of dome structures, minarets, and portals, a factor that gave Cairo its unique architectural style.

This examination of the Mosque of al-Maridani in light of the historical events of the time has resulted in a better understanding of how foreign relations influenced the building of this period. The appropriation of foreign techniques, probably undertaken by local craftsmen who were influenced by local motifs, was possibly intended as an exercise in experimentation, first to be tried in buildings sponsored by emirs, and then to be perfected in later architectural projects carried out by the sultan. Such efforts, however, were instrumental in imparting a unique sensibility to their monuments.

Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations, The American University in Cairo

NOTES

7. At the Khanqah of Baktimur was a Koran commissioned by Uljaitu (r. 1304–16) as a gift for al-Nasir Muhammad, which the sultan gave to his emir and son-in-law Baktimur as a sign of royal favor. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks: A History of the Architecture and Its Culture* (Cairo, 2007), 35.


16. Today, the panel above the southwestern entryway is in a fragmentary condition.


18. Meinecke has suggested that the use in this panel of two different shades of green, a bright turquoise and muted “bottle green,” was a major technical breakthrough. This is a rarity, which was introduced in Iran after the mid-fourteenth century. However, upon examining the panels, I have not been able to identify the different shades Meinecke mentions. A slightly different shade of green is found on the outer roundel of the northwestern entryway, in the border, which supposedly framed the word Allāḥ (fig. 16). Ibid., 112.

19. Ibid., 110.


22. One of the different techniques used for tile decoration involves incised compartments: oxides are separated by cutting deep lines in the raw paste and the motifs are outlined with light incisions revealing the color of the body. Other techniques include tile mosaic, in which monochrome panels are fired, cut, and assembled afterward; cuenca y arista (cavities and ribs), which involves molding compartments or forming small lines in relief to contain the enamels; and cuerda seca (dry cord), a more complex and advanced technique, in which a different substance with a different composition was used between the glazes to separate them, and then disappeared almost entirely after firing. Cuerda seca was especially popular in Spanish ceramics; it is generally inaccurate, however, to refer to it in the ceramics of the East, where the substance used to prevent the colors from running over was distinct, with a more matte, vitrified, and black appearance. The tile panels in the Mosque of al-Maridani are unique, and cannot be classified according to an existing tilework technique. See Jean Soustiel and Yves Porter, Tombs of Paradise: The Shah-e Zende in Samarkand and Architectural Ceramics of Central Asia, trans. Damien Janos (Saint-Rémy-en-l’Eau, 2003), 213–17.

23. This is a technique used in tilework in which patterns are incised onto a tile that was first covered with a slip and coated with a lead glaze.


27. Similar carved surfaces were in fact much more common in stucco; this type of overall decoration may be regarded as a possible precedent to the carved masonry domes of the later Mamluk period.


30. A technique used in metalwork in which the metal is hammered into relief from the reverse side.


32. Stucco mihrrabs with bulbous elements were common in Iran as early as the tenth century. A good example is the mihrrab at the Na‘īn Friday Mosque (ca. 960), as well as the much later mihrrab at the Seljuq mausoleum of Gunbad-i Alaviyyan in Hamadan (datable to the mid-twelfth century).


34. The full title of the work is Description de l’Égypte, ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l’expédition de l’armée française. This is a multi-volume work, compiled by scholars and scientists of the Scientific and Artistic Commission, who accompanied Napoleon Bonaparte on his expedition to Egypt in 1789. It included plates, maps, and essays, which offered a comprehensive description of Egypt’s archeology, topography and natural history.

35. These are bosses applied to the surface of the medallion.

36. According to Ibrahim, the examples proposed here cannot be attributed to the same craftsman, but it is very likely that all of these could have been made under his supervision in the newly founded court workshop. Ibrahim, “Great Ḫānqāḥ of the Emir Qawṣūn,” 57.

37. Ibrahim records three examples of the use of this formula in an architectural context, namely, a stone slab at the mausoleum of Tastimur in the Eastern Cemetery (1334), a wooden panel from the ceiling of the western iwan at the palace of Bashtak (1334–39), and two marble panels from the madrasa of Sarghītīmīsh (1356). Ibid., 50.

38. Ibid., 50–57.

39. Very little is known about the organization of the craft in Mamluk Cairo and Ilkhanid Iran, and signatures of stucco workers are very rare. One recorded inscription (at the mosque of Bayazid at Bistam) characterized the stucco worker as the jassas; a second inscription at the same sanctuary characterizes him as the bannā (commonly used to refer to a master mason). There are other cases where the term bannā is used to refer to a ceramics craftsman: (a) a faience mihrrab from Iran now in the Metropolitan Museum
of Art in New York, dated to the first half of the fourteenth century and believed to have once adorned the mausoleum of ʿAbd al-Samad in Natanz, signed “Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. ʿAḥmad b. Babuy al-bannā,” who was a known fourteenth-century tileworker from Kashan; (b) a star tile allegedly commemorating the construction of the mausoleum of ʿAbd al-Samad in Natanz, signed “Ībrāhīm b. Ismāʿīl al-bannā al-Iṣfahānī”; (c) a faience medallion in the iwan of the Sirçali Madrasa in Konya (1242–43), signed “Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān al-bannā al-Tūsī.” Laila Ibrahim thus concluded that several crafts may have been practiced by the same master mason. Ibid., 56–57.


41. Douglas Pickett, Early Persian Tilework: The Medieval Flowering of Kāshī (London, 1997), 143. This dating is also confirmed by an inscription.


43. The first recorded appearance of bukharīyyas in Cairo is in the domes of the Mausoleum of Salar and Sangar al-Jawli (1303). Ibrahim, “Great Ḫānqāh of the Emir Qawsun,” 51.

Tabriz, the former capital city of the Ilkhanid and Jalayirid rulers (r. 1256–1335 and 1335–1432, respectively), located at a commercial crossroad, was a significant intellectual and artistic center during the Turkmen Qara Qoyunlu (r. 1380–1468) and Aq Qoyunlu (r. 1378–1508) dynasties (fig. 1). The city remained a state capital until 1555, during the reign of the Safavid Shah Tahmasp I (r. 1524–76).\(^1\)

During the fifteenth century Tabriz was famous for its workshops (sing. *kitābkhana*). Its manuscript production was renowned, as were its ceramics. By the end of the century, a Tabrizi craftsman was even said to have attempted an imitation of porcelain,\(^2\) an episode that illustrates the dynamism of the city’s workshops. As far as Cairo, Damascus, Bursa, and Shahr-i Sabz, potters bearing a *nisba* (element of a name indicating relation or origin) from Tabriz perpetuated the fame of its prestigious workshops.\(^3\) Turkmen rulers also built great architectural complexes in Tabriz.\(^4\) But between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, a number of earthquakes severely damaged this flourishing city, devastating its historical monuments.\(^5\) In addition to these natural disasters, in 1514 Tabriz was attacked and its treasuries plundered by the Ottoman army.\(^6\)

Consequently, very little is known about Tabriz’s legacy. The remains of the Mosque of ʿAli Shah, the Rabʿ-ı Rashidi complex of pious and charitable institutions (named after its founder, whose mausoleum was part of the complex), and the former Masjid-i Jamʿ appear to be a very faint echo of what may have been great architectural complexes erected by the Mongol rulers Ghazan Khan (d. 1304) and Rashid al-Din (d. 1318).\(^7\) In his famous depiction of the city, Matrakçı Nasuh (d. 1564), a painter who followed the Ottoman sultan Süleyman during his military campaign in Iran and Iraq between 1533 and 1536, offered a glimpse of the magnificent heritage of Tabriz.\(^8\) As for the fifteenth century, the famous Blue Mosque built in 1465 by the Qara Qoyunlu has long appeared to be the last remnant of Turkmen architecture and decoration in the city. It was while studying this monument that scholarly attention first focused on the innovative distinctiveness of ceramic tile production in Tabriz—in the originality of its range of “blue-and-white” ornaments, its lusterware, and even its gilded cobalt tiles, some of which long constituted the only known examples of their type.\(^9\) The recovery of the Mosque of Uzun Hasan, however, has brought to light new evidence of similar examples. Restored by the Sazman-i Miras-i Farhangi (Organization for National Cultural Heritage) in 2006–7, this structure has been identified as the mosque built by the Aq Qoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan (r. 1457–78).\(^10\) Its ceramic decoration, which will be presented below, leaves no doubt regarding this attribution while also confirming previous assessments as to the outstanding and original quality of Tabrizi tile production during the Turkmen dynasties.

THE FOUNDING OF THE UZUN HASAN MOSQUE
AND THE NASRIYYA COMPLEX

The Mosque of Uzun Hasan (known locally as Masjid-i Hasan Padishah) formed part of the Nasriyya Complex, located on a former plaza called the Maydan-i Sahib-abad, on the north side of the river crossing Tabriz.\(^11\) This
plaza has now vanished and, apart from the newly recovered Mosque of Uzun Hasan, only the Sahib al-'Amr Mosque (founded during the time of the Safavid ruler Shah Tahmasp I) remains in the vicinity, on the north side of the former complex.12

We know from historical sources that the Maydan-i Sahibabad was founded during the time of the Qara Qoyunlu sultan Jahanshah (r. 1438–67), who built his own palace there in 1466.13 When the Aq Qoyunlu rulers seized the city in 1467, they added their own buildings and decorations to the palace.14 In 1472, the Venetian ambassador Josafa Barbaro described the mosaic panel decorations of the audience hall during the reign of Uzun Hasan.15 Some years later, Khunji Isfahani (d. 1519) mentioned the construction of a mazār (tomb) during Khalil’s reign (r. 1478) and further restorations (or perhaps a complete reconstruction?) undertaken by Uzun Hasan’s son and successor, Sultan Yaʿqub (r. 1478–90), between 1483 and 1486.16 Khunji Isfahani reports that there was an elevated octagonal palace, described as a “turquoise throne.” After Yaʿqub’s renovations were completed, the palace was apparently renamed the “Hasht Bihisht” (Eight Paradises);17 it has been proposed that the Hasht Bihisht may be the first known example of this plan type.18 At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Francesco Romano, a Venetian merchant, thoroughly described the amazing paintings decorating the palace.19 The Hasht Bihisht was the main palace connected with the Nasriyya Complex, where the Uzun Hasan Mosque was erected.

Construction began on the architectural complex of Nasriyya in 1477–78, under the patronage of Uzun Hasan, and seems to have been completed seven years later, during the reign of Sultan Yaʿqub—that is to say, around 1484.20 The complex comprised a mausoleum, a mosque, a madrasa, and a hospital. Karbala’i Tabrizi (fl. sixteenth century) describes the complex as a mosque (jāmiʿ-yi Naṣriyya), but his contemporary Qazvini also writes about a garden (bāghcha-i Naṣriyya). The Nasriyya seems to have had a funereal purpose as well, since its patrons—Uzun Hasan and Yaʿqub—were said to be buried there.21 The best architects and craftsmen would have worked on the construction of the nasriyya complex, and a certain darvish qasim was apparently in charge of building the mausoleum erected in the middle of a garden.22 Khunji Isfahani refers to this structure as a red and blue monument (surkh va kabūd); this probably indicates a brick construction with brick or terra cotta ornamental patterns arranged with tiles in dominant blue tones.23 On the north side of this mausoleum was an older shrine, the Pir-i Rumi, dated Rabiʿ I 874 or 884 (September–October 1469 or May–June 1479) by one stone inscription, and 768 (1366–67) by another.24

The mosque attached to this complex replaced a Qara Qoyunlu mosque located in the same place. The new building was founded by Uzun Hasan. Yet Khunji
Isfahani describes the mosque’s state of disrepair during the reign of Ya’qub, when the queen mother, Malika Saljuqshah Begum, funded its restoration: a new portico was built, decorated with tiles (kāshī) and surmounted by a cupola covered with blue tile revetments. Surprisingly, the mosque is said to have been a stone construction, which, if true, would make it a rare example of such a structure in Aq Qoyunlu architecture of the region. It seems more likely, however, that the reference to stone concerns the many marble panels decorating the walls (on which, see below).

During the Safavid era, the Uzun Hasan Mosque was damaged when the Ottomans besieged the castle in 1585: Tabrizi forces apparently used the Aq Qoyunlu mosque as one of their points of departure against the assailants. In 1635, when the Ottomans again pillaged the city, the Uzun Hasan Mosque seems to have mostly been spared, but the adjoining Safavid mosque that had previously been built on its east side was ruined. This latter mosque was restored in 1679. The earthquake of 1780, however, severely damaged the entire Nasriyya Complex. The adjoining Safavid mosque was restored once again in 1794, and the Uzun Hasan Madrasa was rebuilt in 1826, by Mirza Mahdi Qadi, a remote descendant of Uzun Hasan. But from this time forward there is no longer any mention to be found of the original Uzun Hasan Mosque.

Today, only a part of the great domed chamber of the mosque is still standing. Its east side is obviously missing, having been replaced by a Safavid and then a Qajar building. The west side of the room seems to have retained its three original alcoves, formed by two plain pillars and two massive corner pillars, whereas remnants of only two alcoves survive on the north and south sides (fig. 2). Together the four sides once constituted a square domed chamber (around 20 m wide) surrounded on each side by four pillars (two plain and two corner). But the cupola collapsed and today the height of the domed chamber reaches only three meters. This chamber used to be a prayer room and the mihrab niche has been preserved. Its spatial organization brings to mind the architecture of the Qara Qoyunlu Blue Mosque, as well as the Safavid Sahib al-ʿAmr Mosque in Tabriz, both of which are completely covered with cupolas, an archi-
tectural feature that is closer to Ottoman models than to Iranian architectural traditions. Alongside this mosque one finds the ruins of the former madrasa that was rebuilt in the nineteenth century.

A great number of ceramic revetments have been discovered in the rubble of the mosque. Some of them have been restored and replaced on the pillars (fig. 6), but most of the tiles are in storage. Their technical and stylistic features, presented below, clearly belong to the Aq Qoyunlu period.

CERAMIC TILES FROM THE UZUN HASAN MOSQUE

The exterior of the north wall of the mosque is ornamented with cobalt and turquoise bannāʾī bricks that probably framed the openings. The border is composed of a series of cobalt dots on a turquoise ground, framed by cobalt lines (fig. 3). The bannāʾī (lit. “builder’s” decorative brickwork) technique, which was widespread in the Iranian zone, was primarily used for external decorations. In the rubble of the mosque, some small square underglazed tiles have also been discovered painted with a white quatrefoil motif outlined in black, on a cobalt background (fig. 4). Such “blue-and-white” tiles were perhaps arranged along with bannāʾī decorations on the outer walls, since the same kinds of tiles and composition are still to be found at the back of the Qara Qoyunlu Blue Mosque (fig. 5). The two Turkmen monuments contain exactly the same tiles and both were clearly made by the same team.

The strong links between both of these Turkmen monuments in Tabriz are also demonstrated by the internal decoration of the Mosque of Uzun Hasan. Ceramic tiles remain along the pillars and alcoves. The architectural decoration is composed of dadoes sectionally ornamented with underglazed painted tiles combined with stone polygons (figs. 6 and 16). Each projecting angle is highlighted with a stone column topped with a muqarnas. A calligraphic stone band is spread over the dadoes. The upper part of the pillars was mostly covered with mosaic tile panels. The mihrab itself is not tiled but is instead composed of a rectangular alabaster slab, ornamented with a simple sculpted arch (fig. 6). The panel above the mihrab is covered with square cobalt and gilded tiles; this technique was not
common at that time, and its use on a wall instead of on dados is quite surprising (fig. 7).

Many mosaic tile panels have been found in the rubble of the Uzun Hasan Mosque (fig. 8). The palette employed floral and vegetal patterns characteristic of the Turkmen repertoire that developed during the second half of the fifteenth century. Only some mosaic tile panels are still visible on the largely restored pillars. The top panels on the pillars display geometrical compositions fitted with fine vegetal designs that were typical of the fifteenth-century Iranian repertoire (fig. 9). Mixed with these compositions are small, lozenge-shaped blue-and-white tiles depicting vegetal patterns on a white background (figs. 9 and 10).

Examples of fifteenth-century blue-and-white tiles are very limited in Iran and Central Asia. Yet many blue-and-whites were found in the Uzun Hasan Mosque. For example, the lozenge-shaped blue-and-whites (fig. 11) illustrate the wide range of "blue-and-white" tiles produced in Tabriz. In the ruins of the mosque a small section of a blue-and-white inscription was also discovered (fig. 12). The fragment shows a part of two white

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Fig. 4. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, blue-and-white square tiles, restored into a brick panel (kept in the storeroom). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 5. Tabriz, Blue Mosque, blue-and-white square tiles mounted into a bannāʾī panel, (exterior walls of the mausoleum). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2004)
cursive letters delineated by a black line on a cobalt background. Although this fragment is too small to read, it should probably be compared to a square blue-and-white tile kept in the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha (fig. 13). Although these kinds of blue-and-white tiles have often been dated to the fourteenth century, the discovery of such evidence in Tabriz must call this dating into question, leading us to propose a new late-fifteenth century attribution. Also found in the rubble of the Uzun Hasan Mosque was one of the most unusual examples created in Tabriz: fragments of vegetal-shaped blue-and-white decoration in relief. Examples of such decorations were also found on the minarets of the Blue Mosque of Tabriz (fig. 14). For a long time, these few pieces were the only known evidence of this original type of decoration. However, more than two bags full of...
Fig. 8. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, fragment of a calligraphic mosaic tile panel (found in the ruins of the mosque). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 9. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, mosaic tile and blue-and-white decoration on the upper part of a pillar. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
Figs. 10 and 11. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, two blue-and-white tiles (kept in the mosque’s storeroom). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 12. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, fragment of a blue-and-white inscription (kept in the mosque’s storeroom). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 13. Square calligraphic underglazed tile painted with cobalt and black on a white background. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque (?), ca. 1480. Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, inv. no. P.0354.2004. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2011, with the kind authorization of the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha)

Fig. 14. Tabriz, Blue Mosque, blue-and-white decoration (now kept inside the mosque) from the minarets. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2004)
similar pieces have now been collected inside the Uzun Hasan Mosque (figs. 15 and 26). This remarkable discovery may constitute the most important extant grouping of this unusual architectural decoration.

The range of blue-and-white tiles is even larger. The remaining dadoes are composed of geometrical networks combining ceramic tiles and stone polygons. The composition is based on stars surrounded by lozenge shapes, pentagons, and double pentagons. On the qibla side, these compositions are filled with various other types of similar tiles (fig. 16); hence, the Uzun Hasan Mosque definitely displays an unexpected range of blue-and-white tiles.

A closer analysis of these blue-and-white dado tiles reveals that two different techniques of production were employed here. Most of these tiles have an underglazed decoration painted with white, cobalt, and black:

Fig. 16. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, blue-and-white tiles in a geometrical network on the dadoes from the qibla side of the mosque. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
these are clearly the so-called blue-and-white tiles. But a very small number of tiles—although presenting the same shapes—have an overglazed decoration: they are painted in cobalt on a white glazed background and delineated by a black line (fig. 17). This corresponds to the “black line” (or cuerda seca) technique. Evidence of “black line” tiles is, however, extremely rare in Turkmen lands, and one question still remains: Why did tile-makers employ two different techniques to decorate the same kind of tile with the same pattern? Although we do not have any clues at this point, these examples may at least reveal that “black line” decoration was not as sparsely employed as the lack of evidence to date had seemed to suggest.\(^{37}\)

One last feature is worth mentioning. All the borders framing the dadoes, as well as the polygons from secondary spaces surrounding the courtyard, are ornamented with a still more surprising kind of tile. These tiles feature vegetal designs with a very fine relief. The lower parts are painted with a black slip under a transparent colored glaze. The range of colors is remarkable: in addition to a cobalt glaze (fig. 16: see tiles on the frame) and a turquoise one (fig. 18), some other panels employ a green glaze, as well as an exceptional yellowish brown one (fig. 19).

A few examples of black-and-green or black-and-turquoise ceramics are known from the late fifteenth century and are generally associated with the “Kubachi” label (a label encompassing different kind of ceramics that were primarily associated with the village of Kubachi in the Caucasus).\(^{38}\) But this technique was rarely employed for ceramic tiles from the Aq Qoyunlu period.

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Fig. 17. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, detail of two tiles from the dadoes of the qibla: on the right is an underglazed tile painted with cobalt and black on a white background (“blue-and-white” type); on the left is an overglazed tile painted with cobalt surrounded by a black line on a white glazed background (“black line” type). (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
Fig. 18. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, detail of a dado decoration displaying low-relief painted tiles with a black slip under a light blue transparent glaze. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 19. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, detail of a dado decoration featuring low-relief painted tiles with a black slip under a green or a yellow transparent glaze. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
Besides a series of rectangular tiles painted in black under a turquoise glaze framing the dadoes of the Safa Camii in Diyarbakır (ca. 1450; fig. 20), the only other known examples are some tiles with inscriptions from the region of Yazd. Yet all these tiles present a black motif instead of a colored design on a black background. Thus, the aesthetic of the Tabriz tiles evokes the contemporaneous group of “Cizhou” wares associated with Nishapur, the origins of which go back to the “silhouette” wares of the Saljuq period. Yet no ceramic tiles seem to have been previously associated with this group. Moreover there is no other known evidence, during this period, of tiles with a green or yellow transparent glaze such as the Tabriz ones.

Finally, it is worth mentioning one last tile fragment found in the rubble of the Uzun Hasan Mosque. This item displays a calligraphic design with a light relief effect and polychrome underglazed paintings (fig. 21). This unusual feature highlights even further the originality of the tile production of Tabriz. The evidence found in the Uzun Hasan Mosque is most certainly noteworthy.

Fig. 20. Diyarbakır, interior of Safa Camii, detail of underglazed tiles painted in black under a turquoise glaze. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2006)

Fig. 21. Tabriz, Uzun Hasan Mosque, epigraphic tile fragment with underglazed black, cobalt, and turquoise painting on a white slip with a slight relief effect. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
The case of the Uzun Hasan Mosque highlights the continuity between the Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu workshops in Tabriz. Many original decorative features were brought to light through the example of the famous Blue Mosque of Tabriz, which was endowed in 1465 by Khatun Jan Begum, the wife of the Qara Qoyunlu ruler Jahanshah (r. 1438–67). Several of its ceramic tiles were believed to be unique. It is now known, however, that the Blue Mosque and the Uzun Hasan Mosque share several traits; this observation is significant because it highlights the distinctiveness of Tabriz’s ceramic tile workshops.

The alabaster slabs illustrate this parallel. The Uzun Hasan Mosque has the same elegant mihrabs as the Blue Mosque of Tabriz: two of them are conserved in the ambulatory of the oratory and another fragment is located in the mausoleum (fig. 22). Moreover, in the Blue Mosque, the alabaster dadoes are surmounted by a long stone inscription; this feature is repeated in the Mosque of Uzun Hasan, where similar sculpted stone inscriptions are found above the dadoes, although these are less detailed than in the Blue Mosque (see the fragment at the bottom of fig. 9).

In the mausoleum of the Blue Mosque, the walls and inner cupola were completely covered with hexagonal cobalt and gilded tiles (fig. 23). This technique, which is similar to the one used in the Uzun Hasan Mosque, deserves special attention given their unusual placement. Although examples of such tiles are most often found on dadoes (see, for example, the Darb-i Imam in Isfahan, 1453 [fig. 24], and the Safavid shrine of Shaykh Safi al-Din in Ardabil, sixteenth century [fig. 25]), they were placed directly on the upper walls in both of the Turkmen mosques of Tabriz. The only known example of such a placement outside of Tabriz was in the domed chamber of the Masjid-i Shah (or Masjid-i Haftad va Du Tan Shahid [Mosque of the Seventy-Two Martyrs (of Karbala)]) in Mashhad. Interestingly, the portal of this Timurid mosque, built in 1451 by the amir Nizam al-Din Malikshah Yahya, is signed by an architect-mason (bannā’) from Tabriz: Ahmad Shams al-Din Muhammad Banna’ al-Tabrizi. What decisions did he personally make regarding the decorative architectural elements? To what extent was he influenced by Tabrizi architecture? It is probably impossible to answer these questions. Nevertheless, the link with the Tabrizi style is certain.

The most significant parallel between the two Turkmen mosques of Tabriz is seen in the presence of blue-and-white tiles in each. As stated above, this large group contains some unique examples. The aforementioned small, square blue-and-white tiles (about 5 cm wide) arranged with bannā’i decorations are seen in both monuments (fig. 14). And the high-relief vegetal-shaped “blue-and-white” tiles found on the minarets of the Blue Mosque were believed to have been exceptional—until the recent discovery of numerous such items in the rubble of the Mosque of Uzun Hasan (figs. 15 and 26). This feature demonstrates the originality of Turkmen ceramic tile production in Tabriz. Many other blue-and-white tiles have been attributed to the Blue Mosque of Tabriz in the archives of the late Professor Turabi Tabataba’i: lozenge-shaped and square tiles, as well as seventy triangular underglazed tiles painted with floral motifs in white and cobalt and outlined with black (fig. 27). These numerous identifications, combined with the broad range of blue-and-whites newly discovered at the Uzun Hasan Mosque, confirm both the diversity and importance of blue-and-white production in Tabriz.

The parallels seen between these two mosques illustrate the continuities in the techniques handed down from master to disciple in Tabrizi ceramic workshops, whether their patronage was Qara Qoyunlu or Aq Qoyunlu. This artistic transmission is also apparent in the geometrical patterns used in Tabriz: both the Blue Mosque and the Mosque of Uzun Hasan employed decorative models found in the so-called Topkapi Scroll, which Gülru Necipoğlu examined in her seminal 1995 work on this document. Comprising 114 drawings intended as models for architectural decoration, the scroll might have been compiled in the kitābkhāna of the Topkapi Palace from different designs brought from Iran to Istanbul by Ottoman armies. Rediscovered inside the Topkapi Palace Inner Treasury in the 1980s, the drawings of this scroll (Ms. H.1956) have been attributed...
Fig. 22. Tabriz, Blue Mosque, fragment of the mihrab located in the western ambulatory of the oratory. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
The Uzun Hasan Mosque in Tabriz

by Necipoğlu to northwest Iran, probably Tabriz, as it was the most outstanding artistic center in the region. Necipoğlu proposes dating the scroll to the second half of the fifteenth century.52 This attribution is strongly convincing since many of these models can be identified in Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu monuments in Tabriz, as well as in other Turkmen decorations in Iran. For instance, drawing no. 28 from the Topkapı Scroll is used as a model for the geometrical composition covering the upper parts of the pillars of the Uzun Hasan Mosque in Tabriz (figs. 9 and 28); drawing nos. 1, 69b, and 42 are used to decorate both the Blue Mosque of Tabriz and the Masjid-i Jami’ of Yazd (restorations from...
Fig. 25. Ardabil, Shrine of Shaykh Safi al-Din, detail of gilded tiles on the dadoes surrounding the tomb. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2015)

1457); and calligraphic compositions seen in the Blue Mosque of Tabriz echo drawings nos. 51, 65, 68, and 69, as well as 71, 74, 75, and 91. We can also mention drawing no. 8, repeated on the Turkmen-period minbar of the Taqi al-Din Dada Mosque in Bundarabad (ca. 1473–74) and on the dadoes of the *pishtaq* (monumental portal) of the Masjid-i Jami’ of Yazd; drawing no. 41, employed on the Qara Qoyunlu minbar of the Masjid-i Maydan-i Sang in Kashan (ca. 1463–64); drawing no. 43, which is used for the Qara Qoyunlu-period dadoes of the Masjid-i Jami’ in Bafruye (about 60 km North from Yazd, 1461–62); and drawing no. 47, used on the Darb-i Kushk in Isfahan (1496–97). Likewise, the relief effects proposed, for example, by drawing no. 49 are developed at the Blue Mosque of Tabriz, and the Darb-i Imam and Darb-i Kushk

Fig. 26. Molded underglazed revetment painted in cobalt and black on a white slip, Tabriz, ca. 1465–84. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Madina Collection of Islamic Art, gift of Camilla Chandler Frost, inv. no. M.2002.1.305. (Photo: © LACMA/Public Domain High Resolution Images)
Fig. 27. Tabriz, Blue Mosque, some triangular blue-and-whites. Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, MNC 18958. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2009, with the kind permission of the Cité de la Céramique, Sèvres)
in Isfahan, as well as in the Aq Qoyunlu mausoleum built for Zaynal Beg at Hasankayf (ca. 1473–74), and in some Timurid monuments as well. Thus, there are plenty of examples that illustrate the use of the Topkapi Scroll models on Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu architectural ornament. This illustrates artistic transfers from Tabriz to western Iranian Turkmen territories. Most of these works are located in Tabriz, giving further credence to Necipoğlu’s hypothesis that they originated there. Based on all these examples, it seems more accurate to date the Topkapi Scroll drawings to the third quarter of the fifteenth century, that is to say, to the transitional period from the Qara Qoyunlu dynasty to the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty in Tabriz.

The group of ceramic tiles associated with Tabriz provides further evidence for the innovative and characteristic features of Tabrizi workshops. Several of them are still unparalleled, while others provide new insights into the transmission of techniques in the region, such as the “black line” tiles, which establish for the first time that this kind of decoration was used in the Turkmen capital. Examples of “black line” tiles are found in eastern Iran, in Timurid Herat, Mashhad, and Khargird (at the Ghiyasiiya Madrasa, ca. 1436–43 [fig. 29]), but none of these have the same technical properties as the items from Tabriz. In western Iran, specimens of fifteenth-century “black line” tiles are extremely rare. The main evidence in Turkmen territories is located in the aforementioned Safa Camii in Diyarbakır (ca. 1450, fig. 30). Some others are found in Timurid Iran: in the Masjid-i Jami’ of Simnan, in the Khanqah of Shahrukh located in the Shrine...

Fig. 28. Model no. 28 from the “Topkapı Scroll.” (Drawing: Sandra Aube, based on Gülru Necipoğlu, The Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture; Topkapı Palace Library MS H. 1956 [Santa Monica, Calif., 1995], p. 300)

Fig. 29. Khargird, Ghiyasiyya Madrasa, “black line” and blue-and-white tiles from the southwestern iwan. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2015)
of Imamzada Ja’far at Damghan (all dated ca. 1405–47, fig. 31), and in the Imamzada Zayn al-ʿAbidin in Sari (Mar’ashi dynasty, late fifteenth – early sixteenth century).\textsuperscript{56} The range of colors and technical features differs from the few exemplars recovered in Tabriz. It is clear, however, that a great amount of “black line” evidence is still missing, since the technique could not have simply disappeared from western Iran in the fifteenth century. The few examples found in Tabriz prove that the “black line” technique continued to be used in Aq Qoyunlu lands.

Moreover, it is worth recalling how little is known about blue-and-whites in Iran during the fifteenth century. Aside from the case of Tabriz, there are a limited number of Aq Qoyunlu examples. We can mention the inscription on the Mosque of Panja-yi ‘Ali in Qum (dated 1481–82, fig. 32),\textsuperscript{57} but its style and quality are nonetheless different. In fact, the few examples comparable to Tabrizi blue-and-whites are from Timurid Khurasan. Several blue-and-white tiles of various shapes, along with mosaic tile panels and the already mentioned “black line” tiles, are found in the Ghiyasiyya Madrasa at Khargird, commissioned by the Timurid vizir Pir Ahmad Khvafi and signed by the famous Qavam al-Din b. Zayn al-Shirazi (figs. 29 and 33).\textsuperscript{58} The quality of these blue-and-whites seems to be superior to the Tabrizi specimens. Yet the shape and decoration of some of these specimens bring to mind examples from Tabriz: for instance, the lozenge-shaped tiles, or the square ones ornamented with a quatrefoil motif. In 1444–45, Pir Ahmad Khvafi also patronized the building of the Zayn al-Din Mausoleum in Taybad.\textsuperscript{59} The largely restored spandrels of the entrance’s iwan feature lozenge-shaped blue-and-whites arranged with mosaic tiles that once again recall some of the Tabrizi items (fig. 34). Moreover, in the Zayn al-Din Mausoleum in Taybad we find another interesting analogy with the architectural decoration of Tabriz: its dadoes (on the entrance façade as well as in the domed shrine chamber) form a geometrical network centered on star motifs, combining ceramic panels with stone designs (fig. 35). This feature has close parallels with the decoration of the dadoes in the Uzun Hasan Mosque—although the techniques employed are different. Furthermore, in both monuments the projecting
Fig. 31. Damghan, Imamzada, detail of a "black line" tile from the Khanqah of Shahrulkh. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)

Fig. 32. Qum, Panja-i 'Ali Mosque, blue-and-white inscription. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2014)
angles are ornamented with a marble column topped by a sculpted muqarnas. The same disposition is already employed in Timurid monuments from Transoxiana: these marble decorations are found on the dadoes in the so-called Bibi Khanum Mosque (1398–1406, fig. 36), as well as in the Ulugh Beg Madrasa in Samarkand (1417–21, fig. 37).

Parallels between Tabrizi and Timurid workshops are unsurprising. Both areas share a common cultural legacy. Moreover, during his military campaign in 1386, Tamerlane brought Tabrizi craftsmen back to his court at Samarkand. It is also worth recalling the numerous exchanges between the courts of Tabriz and Herat—in
Fig. 35. Taybad, Zayn al-Din Mausoleum, dados in the main domed chamber. (Photo: Sandra Aube, 2015)
1420, for example, the Timurid Baysunghur subdued a rebellion in Tabriz and then deported craftsmen and intellectuals, and in 1458 the Qara Qoyunlu Jahanshah took Herat and returned to Tabriz accompanied by craftsmen. Indeed, as discussed above, the closest comparisons to the technical repertoire developed in Tabriz are found in Khusarani monuments. The case of the gilded tiles well illustrates this point. Although monochrome tiles with gilded decorations are not widespread during the fifteenth century, some examples are found on dadoes: we find them inside the Darb-i Imam built in Isfahan during the time of the Qara Qoyunlu Jahanshah (1453, fig. 24), and on the dadoes of the Shirin Bika Aqa Mausoleum in Samarkand (1385–86). But there is only one known example of the unusual placement of gilded tiles on the upper walls, as seen in Tabriz, instead of the dadoes, namely, the Masjid-i Shah in Mashhad (1451), whose builder bore a Tabrizi nisba. The analogy
between the Tabrizi and Khurasani styles is also well illustrated in the architectural decoration of the Çinili Köşk, built within the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul. Erected between ca. 1465–66 and 1472–73 for the Ottoman sultan Mehmet II (r. 1444–46 and 1451–81), this "Porcelain Pavilion" is covered with ceramic tile decorations. The style of the mosaic tile panels that decorate the main façade of the pavilion is quite recognizable from Iranian traditions. On each side and above the entrance door, the façade is framed by bannāʾī bricks arranged with square blue-and-white tiles (fig. 38). Inside, the dadoes are covered with cobalt or turquoise gilded tiles; on some panels, hexagonal gilded tiles are framed by rectangular-shaped gilded tiles (fig. 39), while on other panels we find triangular gilded tiles. Several Turkmen manuscript paintings contain this kind of ceramic decoration, but this feature was still uncommon in fifteenth-century Ottoman architecture in Turkey. Necipoğlu has hypothesized that craftsmen from Khurasan introduced these decorations in Istanbul. Her hypothesis was supported by an undated petition from Khurasani tile cutters (kāshi tarāshān-i Khurāsān) asking Sultan Mehmet II to provide further work. Is it possible that this petition could be linked instead to
The group of craftsmen working for Mehmet II on his mosque complex in Istanbul and at the Üç Şerefeli Mosque of his father, Murat II (r. 1421–44 and 1446–51), in Edirne? In light of the examples of ceramic tiles known from Tabriz, we may wonder how the styles and techniques employed at the Çinili Köşk might have been influenced by Tabrizi traditions instead of Khurasani ones (see, among others, the blue-and-white and gilded tiles).65 In any event, by merely raising the question of their origin, we may highlight once more the close artistic correlations between Turkmen Tabriz and the Timurid Khurasani style, probably developed in Herat.

**CONCLUSION**

The characteristics seen in the two Turkmen mosques of Tabriz reflect the creativity of the ceramic tile workshop in Tabriz, which shares a common legacy with the Timurid style from Khurasan. On a broader scale, western Iranian art in the second part of the fifteenth century combines a regional tradition with some Timurid influences from eastern Iran—this holds true for both architectural decorations and the arts of the book.66 In a certain way, it is these associations that create an original Turkmen style. These new tendencies were clearly introduced in Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu lands. Let us remember, for example, the specific nature of Aq Qoyunlu metalwork productions,67 and the development of original calligraphies, such as the “western nasta’līq,” a writing style that emerged in western Iranian manuscripts between the 1430s and the end of the fifteenth century and highlighted once again the distinctive traits and originality of Turkmen productions.68 Nevertheless, this type of calligraphy does not seem to have been widespread outside the region. The same appears to be true for some of the ceramic techniques developed in the Tabrizi workshop. Although this center developed some extremely original techniques of ceramic tile production, they nonetheless had a limited distribution. The very large range of blue-and-white tiles seen in both the Uzun Hasan Mosque and the Blue Mosque in Tabriz illustrates this point, as do the astonishing small luster tiles located on the bases of the
pishtaq at the Blue Mosque.69 These unusual features might have been technical experiments that ultimately had only limited influence. This is also true for the rare examples of experimentation with the “black line” technique, although it is clear that a great amount of “black line” evidence is missing in Iran.

This point opens up new perspectives on the history of ceramic tiles. For example, how might this finding lead us to reconsider past conclusions about the famed Masters of Tabriz working in Ottoman Bursa and Edirne? Or about productions introduced by Tabrizi craftsmen in Damascus?70 More than ever, Tabriz appears as a preeminent artistic center—a laboratory for conducting experiments that was especially creative during the peak of the Turkmen dynasties. The discovery of a new range of Aq Qoyunlu ceramic tiles from Tabriz is obviously an important advancement in our knowledge of artistic transmission in the fifteenth century.

Researcher on Islamic Art,
Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS),
UMR 7528 “Mondes iranien et indien,”
Paris / ANR-DFG “DYNTTRAN”

NOTES

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3. See the workshop of Ghaybi al-Tawrizi in Cairo and the tile panels in the Tawrizi Complex in Damascus (ca. 1423), the “Masters of Tabriz” working in the Yeşil Camii Complex in Bursa and then in the Muradiye Camii at Edirne (ca. 1420–30), and the work of Tabrizi craftsmen in Timurid centers such as Mashhad or Shahriyār-Sabz: Sheila Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepôt under the Mongols,” in Pfeiffer, Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge, 321–56; Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes”; see also Khalida Mahi, “La céramique architecturale des ‘Maitres de Tabriz’ dans les édifices ottomans des 15ème et 16ème siècles” (PhD diss., Aix-Marseille Université [Aix-en-Provence], December 2015).


6. It is worthwhile to remember the booty that was brought from Tabriz to the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul in 1514: mentioned in Ludvik Kalus, “Les armures des Timourides, des Aqquyunlus et des Shirvanshahs,” in Timurid Art and...


The painting is from the manuscript Bahrāʾī Tārīkh-i Rawżāt al-jinān, fol. 27b–28a; reproduced in Nurhan Atasoy, Istanbul University Library, Ms. T.5964, fol. 105. See also k hunjī iṣfahānī, Rawżāt al-jinān, 94 and 442, about the death of Sultan Yaʿqub. The information below concerning the blue Mosque of Tabriz is from Aube, La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes, 1:46–51; Aube, "le céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes," 1:46–51; Ökten, "Imperial Aqquyunlu Construction"; 'Umrānī and Aminiyān, "Gumāni zanī.

12. Karbalāʾī Tabrīzī, Rawżāt al-jinān, 600. Built by Shah Tahmasp I before the Ottoman invasion of 1535, the Sahib al-'Amr Mosque was restored in 1679 and then rebuilt by Jaʿfar Quli Khan in 1749, following the earthquake of 1780. See Melville, "Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz," 171; and Brignoli, "Les palais royaux safavides," 137.

13. Other buildings surrounded the Qara Qoyunlu palace, but it is not known how they were situated. On Jahanshah’s palace, see Tihrānī, Kitāb-d-I Dīyār-bākriyya, 437 and 523.


17. Deduced by Sandra Aube, "La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes," from Kuala Isfahānī, Tārīkh-i Ālam-ārā-yi Aminī, 46.

18. About the "Hashībihsī" type of palace and its development after the reign of Yaʿqub in Tabriz, see Brignoli, "Les palais royaux safavides," 140–41.

19. This substantial report is found in: Anonymous [Francesco Romano], The Travels of a Merchant in Persia, in Grey, Narrative of Italian Travels, 139–208, at 167–75.


21. Kuala Tabrīzī, Rawżāt al-jinān, 600; Qazvīnī, Javāhir al-akhbār, 80. It should be noted that Sultan Yaʿqub was first buried at Qara Aghach before being transferred to the Nasiriya Mausoleum in Tabriz: Kuala Isfahānī, Tārīkh-i Ālam-ārā-yi Aminī, 94.

22. Qazvīnī, Javāhir al-akhbār, 80n4; Darvish Qāsim is mentioned in Kuala Tabrīzī, Rawżāt al-jinān, 89–90.

23. See a bayt (couplet) in Kuala Isfahānī, Tārīkh-i Ālam-ārā-yi Aminī, 94 and 442, about the death of Sultan Yaʿqub. The term surkh seems to indicate a brick construction rather than tile decoration, since red was not used in ceramics at
that time (unless it describes the interior wall decorations, which could have been red-colored paint instead of tiles?).

Karbalāʾī Tabrizi, Rawżat al-jinān, 527.

Khuṇjī ʿIṣfahānī, Tārīkh-i Aḥām-ārī-yi ʿAminī, 92 and 428. Karang reports that Nadir Mirza described an architectural decoration made with mosaic tiles (kāshīhā-yi muʿārraq), but I was not able to identify this source: see Kārang, Āṣār va abniyya, 7–8.

In the seventeenth century, the mosque is also described as being made of marble (reported by Melville, “Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz,” 171, from Kātib Ṣelēbī’s Cīhānnūma). Stone construction was widespread in Aq Qoyunlu architecture in southeastern Anatolia. There is almost no Aq Qoyunlu architecture left in northwestern Iran; brick masonry was nonetheless preferred in Iran. On this Masjid-i Jamiʾ, see Karbalāʾī Tabrizi, Rawżat al-jinān, 600; Hinz, “Beiträge,” 60; and Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J., 1988), 1:409–10.

All these events are reported in Melville, “Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz,” 171.

Mirza Mahdi qadi was one of the sons of Mirza Muhammad Taqi, qadi of Tabriz, and a descendant of the Aq Qoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan, who had made a generous endowment to his descendants through his daughter. Mirza Muhammad Taqi’s ancestors are identified as having been in charge of this endowment since at least the reign of Shah Tahmasp II (1722–32), but during the reign of Nader Shah (r. 1736–47), these endowments were removed. See Werner, Iranian Town in Transition, 193–21.

The Iranian team of the Mīras-i Farhangī in Tabriz has finally restored this monument: see ‘Umranī and Aminiyān, “Gumāni zanī.”


Aubè, “La Mosquée bleue,” 259, and fig. 5; Aubè, “Tabriz X. Monuments.”

See, for example, a topped, ribbed half-vault found in the ruins of the Mosque of Uzun Hasan, which displays the same kind of composition and motifs as the entrance door arch in the vestibule of the Blue Mosque: Aubè, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 3:43B-C. For a typology of the Turkmen repertoire of designs seen on ceramic tile panels, see ibid., vol. 1, chap. 2, pp. 39–58, and vol. 3, pp. 121–63 (illustrations).

For examples of blue-and-white tiles from the fifteenth century in Iran and Central Asia, see Jean Soustiel and Yves Porter, Tombeaux de Paradis (Saint-Rémy-en-l’Eau, 2003), especially 210–12.

I am very grateful to Dr. Leslee Michelsen, former head of the Curatorial and Research Section at the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, for kindly granting me permission to publish this ceramic tile.

Yves Porter has proposed the term “black line” in order to distinguish this technique from items made using the cuerda seca (Span., dry cord) technique: see Yves Porter and Gérard Degeorge, L’art de la céramique dans l’architecture musulmane (Paris, 2001), 279.


See the tile from the Masjid-i Chaduk in Haftadur (1487), or the hexagonal tile kept at the Musée du Louvre in Paris (Département des arts de l’Islam, MAO 2071). Aubè, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 1:89, 2:59–60, 3:20; and Aubè, La céramique dans l’architecture en Iran, chap. 6 (forthcoming).

See Golombek, Mason, and Bailey, Tamerlane’s Tableware, 133–35. I am indebted to my anonymous reader for having drawing my attention to this group.

No ware or tile painted in black under a yellow glaze is known, though we do have some examples of wares painted in black under a green glaze. See, for example, an inkwell made in Mashhad in 1444–45 now in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, inv. 1988.570, published in Golombek, Mason, and Bailey, Tamerlane’s Tableware, pl. 55, and Porter, Le prince, l’artiste et l’alchimiste, cat. no. 262, p. 284. As far as I know, however, there is no known tile made with this green glaze.


For an illustration of these mihrabs, see also Aubè, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 3:46B and 171–72 (pl. 171B is also published in Aubè, “Tabriz X. Monuments,” fig. 4).
For an illustration, see Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 377-37.

See Aube, “La Mosquée bleue,” fig. 10; and Aube, “Tabriz X. Monuments,” fig. 10.


For an illustration of this decoration in the Blue Mosque of Tabriz, see Aube, “La Mosquée bleue,” fig. 5a-b; and Aube, “Tabriz X. Monuments,” fig. 11.

One fragment of such a tile piece is kept in a storeroom of the Cité de la Céramique in Sèvres (France), inv. no. MNC 9597/1; another is held by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.2002.1.305, mentioned in Aube, “La Mosquée bleue,” 617n78.

Illustrations of all these tiles are available in Aube, “La Mosquée bleue,” fig. 6; Aube, “Tabriz X. Monuments,” figs. 13–15; and Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 385–94. I am once again greatly indebted to the late Professor Turabi Tabataba’i for giving me access to his personal archives.

See the noteworthy publication of Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapi Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture; Topkapi Palace Library MS H. 1356* (Santa Monica, Calif., 1995), as well as Necipoğlu “Geometric Design in Timurid/Turkmen Architectural Practice.”


For further details and examples regarding the influence of the Topkapi Scroll drawings on Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu tiles, see Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes.”


With Tamerlane bringing back craftsmen from all regions during his military conquests, Samarkand soon became an outstanding artistic center. After Tamerlane’s death in 1405, his successor, Ulugh Beg, freed these craftsmen (1411), which led to a significant circulation of artisans, skills, techniques, and fashions throughout the Middle East: see Jean Aubin, “Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes,” *Studia Islamica* 19 (1963): 83–124, at 104–5; and Lisa Golombek, “Timurid Potters Abroad,” *Oriente Moderno*, n.s., 15 (1966), no. 2 (1966): 580.

See Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 38, for the architectural decoration of the Darb-i Imam. The gold has now vanished from the hexagonal green tiles of the Shirin Bika Aqa Mausoleum (Shah-i Zindeh, Samarkand). The original gilded tiles are mentioned in Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 1243.


The petition is kept in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı arşivi, E.3152; see Necipoğlu, “From International Timurid to Ottoman,” 137.

Bernard O’Kane has already remarked that the Çini Kık seems closer to Tabriz than Herati traditions: “Its foreignness to the traditions of Ottoman architecture is not in dispute, but although tileworkers from Khurasan are known to have completed a pavilion in the Topkapi Palace, the decoration of the Tiled Kiosk is closer to Tabriz than to Herat, indicating Aqqoyunlu as much as Timurid links”: see Bernard O’Kane, “From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design,” in “Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces,” ed. Gülru Necipoğlu, special issue, *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 249–68, at 252. Moreover, we know from the historian Mu’ali that designers from Khurasan worked on the Mehmet Fatih Camii in Istanbul (ca. 1463–1470) regarding this architectural decoration; see Necipoğlu, “From International Timurid to Ottoman,” 137; Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby,
Iznik: La poterie en Turquie ottomane (Paris, 1994), 88; and Carswell, Iznik Pottery, 27. This decoration is stylistically close to ceramic tiles displayed at the Üç Şerefeli Camii in Edirne (rebuilt or completed in 1437–48). Perhaps, then, these two ceramic tile decorations on structures built for Sultan Mehmet II might be connected to the Khurasani petitioners.

66. About Turkmen architectural decorations, see Aube, “La céramique architecturale en Iran sous les Turkmènes,” 1:272–308. About the arts of the book, see, among others, Brend, Perspectives on Persian Painting, 105–6 (on exchanges between Herat and Turkmen courts); David J. Roxburgh, ed., Turks: A Journey of Thousand Years, 600–1600 (London, 2005), 200; and Rettig, “La production manuscrite à Chiraz.”


69. Aube, “La Mosquée bleue,” 266–69, and fig. 9.

Leafing through an auction catalogue or visiting an exhibition, one occasionally comes across a specimen of an Indian Koran copied in the Bihari script, usually grouped with other “curiosities” of the same sort, such as Chinese, Indonesian, or African manuscripts. \(^1\) Many of these Indian Korans were dismembered, their pages scattered among various public and private collections. Although the manuscripts that make up this group are remarkably homogenous, and strongly resemble one another in many respects, there is little information available on them, and only recently have studies on the subject begun to be published. \(^2\)

This corpus was incorrectly considered of secondary significance, probably due to the limited number of manuscripts known and published, and also to the period that it represents, Sultanate India (thirteenth to sixteenth centuries). The scarcity of information regarding book production during this time is probably one of the reasons behind these lacunae. \(^3\) But it is important to note that the dating of the Bihari Korans extends far beyond this period, into the nineteenth century. The uniformity of the corpus, at least at first glance—the highly repetitive character of the script and decorations, for example—also constitutes one of the difficulties in analyzing it. It is not easy to detect the specific features that could help to establish a chronology in this category of manuscripts, the vast majority of which lack colophons or precise information that might serve to determine at least relative dates. Furthermore, identifying where they were produced has proved to be an even more arduous task because the manuscripts themselves offer no clues on this matter, either textually or materially, and historical sources reveal nothing about precisely where on the Indian subcontinent this type of manuscript could have been made.

This article presents research that is still in progress. I will attempt to define the main issues raised by the Korans in Bihari script, which, as we will see, constitute a corpus in themselves, with exceptional textual and formal characteristics. The systematic inventory of these manuscripts was still incomplete at the time of writing, in particular the inventories of the rarely published Indian collections and of the Central Asian collections, which contain several specimens. \(^4\) The information provided in this article is based on a corpus of one hundred and thirty-seven manuscripts in Bihari script, all of which, with only two exceptions, are Korans. Almost half of the corpus is made up of codices containing the complete text of the Koran or a set of \(ajzāʾ\) (sing. \(juz′\), a thirtieth of the entire text, referring to the division of the Koran into thirty parts, to be recited over the course of one month), \(^5\) and the other half is made up of isolated folios.

**BIHARI SCRIPT**

The study of the main corpus, which I delimited based on the formal criterion of the Bihari script, obviously leads to questions regarding this distinctive writing form, which was specific to the Indian subcontinent. No in-depth analysis of Bihari script has yet been published, and the bibliography on this subject consists of only a few pages. \(^6\) While the scope of this article necessarily excludes a paleographical analysis of the Bihari script, which will be the subject of a more specialized study in...
the near future, the main characteristics of this style will be enumerated below.

The origin of the term "Bihari" has been the subject of various hypotheses.7 The word does not appear in the textual sources, but this is not necessarily because it is a late creation: from the Sultanate period onwards, written information is scant regarding the book arts and various calligraphies in India.8 What sources there are do not mention Korans copied in Bihari, but we do possess their material reality, which is to say, the numerous manuscripts that have survived up to the present and that in themselves constitute proof of the importance of this calligraphy among Arabic writing styles in India.

According to Abdullah Chaghatai, this calligraphic form was named after a finish applied to paper, but the references that he provides do not suffice to confirm his assertion,9 which is likely based on the phonetic proximity between the words "bihār" and "āhar," the latter designating a paper stiffener (a starch-based preparation) in Persian. Among all the hypotheses on the topic, the one that connects the term to the Bihar region of northwest India seems the most plausible. However, Jeremiah Losty, who also favors this explanation, thinks that this region would not have been very conducive to such calligraphic developments, since it was not among the great intellectual centers of Islamic culture.10 In a book published in 1992, David James also supported this point of view.11 These claims nonetheless deserve to be reconsidered: according to Siraj-al-Juzjani's Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī (Nasirian Tables), which dates from the second half of the thirteenth century, there were many books in the fortified city of Bihar (present-day Biharsaharif), which contained a number of madrasas at that time.12 The use of the script is attested in the second half of the fourteenth century by the Gwalior Koran (Aga Khan Museum [AKM], Ms. AKM00281), as dated by its colophon.13 Since this period, Bihari seems to have been reserved for copies of the Koran.14

The script reveals distant links with the script of Ghurid Korans (eleventh and twelfth centuries),15 but this connection remains to be studied with greater precision and using a larger corpus of Ghurid Korans than is currently available. We also find several interesting extensions of the Bihari script in monumental epigraphy, but none of these seems to date back to a period earlier than the fourteenth century.16 The majority of architectural remnants showing this type of writing originate from the northeast region of the Indian subcontinent and from regions that were under the domination of the Jaunpur and Bengal sultanates.17 In 1990, in an article devoted to Indian epigraphy, Mohammad Yusuf Siddiq remarked:

“...[T]he twelfth and thirteenth centuries were the traditional period for Arabic writing; in that period a gradual transition took place from the use of extremely angular styles to more adaptable cursive ones. It was, however, not an abrupt change. During the transitional period we find semi-angular, semi-Kufic styles where elements of both Kufic and Naskh can be seen, and these peculiar kinds of writing often resemble the so-called Bihari style of the Subcontinent."18

The very peculiar physiognomy of Bihari calligraphy places it in between angular and cursive scripts, especially in its earliest forms. Old manuscript catalogues refer to it, though they do not use the term "Bihari," and even today we are unsure of the exact origin of this style, which has been described as “transitional,” on the cusp between angular and cursive scripts.19 A revealing example is found in an Indian album copied in 1278 (1862), in which fourteen different calligraphic styles are presented separately, and Bihari and Kufic are placed on a single page, folio 35a.20

In Bihari calligraphy, the script spreads forward in a thick horizontal line along the line of writing, while the lower strokes remain short. Most striking is the contrast between the fine vertical strokes of the letters and their horizontal bases, which are always broad. The loops of some letters, such as the emphatics ẓāʾ, ẓāʾ, and mīm, are amplified. The letter nūn stretches below the line into a wide but shallow loop. The final mīm has a tail at an oblique angle in relation to the line of writing, whereas the rāʾ at the end of words has a small tail that curls back under the letter. The ḍāl and its dotted equivalent, ḍhāl, are especially broad and open. Some letters, such as fāʾ, qaʾ, wāʾ, and mīm at the start of a word, have a head that ends in a point, which gives this part of the letter an almost triangular form. Vowels are placed horizontally over letters, the fatha is a long, fine line, and the tail of the damma follows the same model. Letter and word spacing is variable: large intervals between words or between letters within a word alternate with
groups that appear crowded, almost crushed together. Letters are often written above or inside other letters. This peculiar visual rhythm, which appears deceptively irregular, together with the alternation between letters with sharp angles and exaggerated loops, produces the overall effect of untidiness, at least at first glance. However, a careful examination of the calligraphic line enables us to realize that there is a meticulous system at work, one that reflects a binary dynamic: angular and curved shapes, empty and full spaces, bold and fine lines.

Bihari should be compared to two scripts whose use was developed in India during the Sultanate period. First, there is a naskhi script reserved for the hermeneutical system in the manuscripts of this corpus, the naskhi-divani, a calligraphy that seems to be derived from administrative scripts and shows obvious similarities with the script used on the scroll of Muhammad b. Tughluq’s decree, made in Delhi in 725 (1325) (Keir Collection, Ms. VI.39). Bihari also resembles another script that was administrative in origin, the tughrā style, which underwent some original developments in Indo-Islamic epigraphy during the Sultanate period, especially in the Bengal region. A stone engraving kept at the Varendra Research Museum (Rajshahi, Bangladesh) illustrates the relationship between these two scripts; the part of the writing that occupies the horizontal support line shows very clear similarities with Bihari (in particular, the drawing of the sād), whereas the upper strokes are excessively elongated and other letters occasionally cross through them, as is usual in the tughrā style.

It thus seems conceivable that the sources of Bihari script are to be found in chancery scripts, or that it was first developed, at least as early as the fourteenth century, by copyists who were working for the administration of the sultans.

PRESENTATION OF THE CORPUS AND TYPOLOGY

As mentioned above, one hundred and thirty-seven manuscripts in Bihari script were examined in this study. With two exceptions, a fiqh (Islamic law) text and a poetic compilation, they are all Korans, nearly three-quarters of which can be dated between the last quarter of the fourteenth century and the end of the sixteenth century. The latest manuscripts were copied in the nineteenth century, but these represent a very small part of the corpus (two works in all). Twenty-one manuscripts are dated by colophons and in only three is the place of production mentioned. Based on stylistic and palaeographical clues that will be discussed in greater detail below, most of these manuscripts can be dated to the fifteenth century, most likely the first half.

The corpus can be divided into three distinct groups of a very unequal number of manuscripts.

1. The Pioneer Group

Five manuscripts can be attributed to the last quarter of the fourteenth century: three Korans and two non-Koranic texts, the Kulliyāt (Complete Works) of the poet Sa’di (d. 1292) and one copy of the Al-Ḥāwī al-Ṣaghīr (The Small Collection) by Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ghaffār b. ‘Abd al-Karim al-Qazwīnī al-Shafī‘ī (d. 1266 or 1267), a work on Shafī‘i jurisprudence. Two of these manuscripts are dated by their colophons, and the other three can be ascribed to the fourteenth century, thanks to an examination of the palaeography and a study of their illuminations.

Al-Ḥawī al-Ṣaghīr, probably the oldest, is dated 781 (1379) (fig. 1). In this manuscript, the large central script is characterized by a particularly broad and uniform stroke: the letters are distinctly drawn, and the lines do not spread out horizontally, as in the later versions. There are broad spaces between words, making the text appear light and uncluttered. This script does not share all the characteristics of Bihari as it appears in most manuscripts from the fifteenth century onwards. The letters are more simply drawn, there is no excessive variation in their size, and none are written inside other letters. This form of Bihari is similar to some examples of monumental engraving from India datable to the late thirteenth century that employ particularly thick lines. The heavy, massive appearance of the writing and its horizontality (the ascending and descending shafts of the letters are not very developed) suggest a link between these older writing forms and the Bihari script. Two folios from a Koran formerly in the Chester Beatty Library are copied in a similar form of Bihari that
appears nowhere else in the corpus. It seems reasonable to suggest a dating that is close to that of *Al-Ḥāwī al-Ṣaghīr*, or the last quarter of the fourteenth century.

The other manuscripts in this pioneer group include two Korans, belonging, respectively, to the Aga Khan Museum (the aforementioned Ms. AKM00281; figs. 2 and 3) and to the Keir Collection (Ms. PI.1; fig. 4), as well as the copy of the works of Saʿdi dated 791 (1388), the present location of which is unknown.

The Koran in the Aga Khan Museum, which was copied and illuminated in Gwalior Fort on 7 Dhu ‘l-Qa‘da 801 (July 11, 1399), is the earliest illuminated Indo-Islamic manuscript to be dated by a colophon. Several of its defining characteristics foreshadow the style that would define fifteenth-century Bihari manuscripts, both in their calligraphy and their page designs and illuminations. The lines of the text alternate between different colors, namely, blue, red, and gold, and pages are arranged as one frame set within another frame, the first containing the text of the Koran and the second a few glosses or decorations. In addition, we find in the Gwalior Koran a number of illumination motifs also present in Bihari Korans that may be dated to the fifteenth century. The writing in the Gwalior Koran is very regular and exaggeratedly horizontal. The letters are thick, and some are drawn in distinctive ways, such as the final *nūn*, with a loop that spreads out to become quite broad, once again in a horizontal movement that closely follows the line of writing, or the *mīm*, with a relatively short tail drawn diagonally. All these characteristics to-
gether suggest that this may be an archaic form of Bihari. This writing does not contain imbricated letters or very broad ones, such as šād, dād, zā‘, tā‘, and ḏāl, and the rhythm of the calligraphic sentence is monotonous. This form of Bihari does not show the dexterity and skill of the Bihari Korans of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Furthermore, its decorations remain deeply rooted in earlier traditions, which can be dated to the first half of the fourteenth century. The Gwalior Koran is a fundamental reference point for understanding the illuminated manuscripts of pre-Mughal India and their mutations and transformations up to the mid-sixteenth century, but it is a complex work that raises more questions than any other regarding the conditions under which prestigious manuscripts like it were produced, the artisans who made it, their sources of inspiration and, of course, its commissioners and, more generally, its intended recipients. This manuscript will only be examined here in terms of its links with the rest of the production of manuscripts copied in Bihari.

The Koran from the Keir Collection is copied in a Bihari script close to that used for the Gwalior Koran, although it is drawn more delicately, prefiguring the developments that this writing form would undergo in the fifteenth century. Composed of 440 folios measuring 31.5 × 24 centimeters, its format is close to that of the Gwalior Koran, whose folios measure 29 × 22 centimeters. In both of these manuscripts, the text is copied on either thirteen lines per page, or on nine lines for pages divided into thirty parts open onto richly ornamented double-frontispieces. These formal simi-
larities are reinforced by textual parallels that will be discussed further below.

2. Classical Bihari Korans

The second group of manuscripts consists of Korans in the Bihari script that I will describe as “classical,” i.e., those whose page layout, calligraphy, and ornamentation follow a set of rules that were already well established at the time of their production. The copies belonging to this second group of manuscripts form a particularly homogenous family: they are finely worked, feature elegant and confident calligraphy, and are made of high-quality materials. The paper, pigments, ink, and gold are still in very good condition. It seems that this production diminished in quality over time: the least polished manuscripts of the group were produced in the late fifteenth century, and this downward trend only continued in the following century.

The page layout (fig. 5) is composed of a double or triple outline, made up of frames set within each other, creating three defined spaces. The central rectangle contains the text of the Koran itself. The first frame contains words taken from the central Koranic text but they are vocalized differently: these are Koranic variants, called canonical “readings” (qirāʾāt), which were accompanied in these manuscripts by a system of abbreviations indicating the names of the readers or reciters. The variant readings were transcribed in the codex starting at an early date, but bibliographical references about these
Fig. 5. Koran copied in a Bihari script, north India, first half of fifteenth century. Paris, Institut du Monde Arabe, Al 84-19. (Photo: © Institut du Monde Arabe)
variants in the context of their material manifestations—the manuscripts—are scant. From the available examples, we know that these variants, which always appear in the margins or in the interlinear spaces, were either fully written out or else abbreviated using a system that referred to each of the possible readings for a given term.

Finally, in the outer frame, we find a gloss comparing different levels of the text: words attributed to the Prophet (ḥadīths), texts related to the recitation or the choice of suras (fuṣūl), and other guidelines that are highlighted by the ornamentation of the page, such as Koranic divisions used as aides for recitation or signals for prostration (ṣajda), inscribed inside medallions and illuminated mandorlas. In this group of manuscripts, the marginal gloss found in the outer frame is systematically written in a complicated manner, most often in zigzagging lines (fig. 6), and, in the later manuscripts, in crisscrossing lines. It is always copied in the same script, the naskhī-divānī, which originated in the chanceries, as discussed at the beginning of this paper. With some rare exceptions, this gloss is contemporaneous with the copying of the main text. All these glosses are of utmost importance because their existence shows that the manuscript was planned as a global work that would indivisibly join the Koranic text to its hermeneutical system.

A number of the decorative elements found in classical Bihari Korans suggest that they were produced in the fifteenth century even though none is dated by a colophon. Seven other manuscripts in the corpus (on which see no. 3 below) are dated to the fifteenth century by a colophon, but none of these contains exactly the same type of decoration as the manuscripts in the classical group, and none was produced with as much care or with materials of such fine quality. The fact that the classical group is at once stylistically homogenous and of excellent quality tends to prove that these works were all produced in the same area, perhaps even in a single workshop, for wealthy patrons.

3. Common Bihari Korans

The calligraphy, ornamental style, and iconographical lexicon of this third group are unmistakably affiliated with classical Bihari Korans, but the quality of the execution is inferior, though it varies considerably within the group. Compared to the classical Bihari Korans, the script in these works is less elegant and less inventive, and the materials are of lower quality. Gold is applied in a very diluted solution, and the colors are duller—the reds especially are less orange and less luminous. The brushstrokes are less exact, and the illumination is overall less skillful. The page layout no longer relies on a complex system of imbricated frames, which was one of the distinctive characteristics of the preceding group.
The first frame, which contained variant readings of the Koranic text, has here generally disappeared, and the qirāʾāt are rarely included. The earliest examples of these manuscripts are datable to the fifteenth century, while the last specimens are from the nineteenth century.43

RECURRING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CORPUS AND ITERATIVE PROCESSES

The Korans grouped together in this corpus have distinctive features that make it possible to propose certain hypotheses regarding the context of their production. I will now enumerate their formal and functional characteristics.

Formal Attributes

It is difficult to draw a general conclusion about the dimensions of these manuscripts, which have been damaged over time, and, in any case, there is a great deal of variety among their formats. If, however, we calculate the proportions between the two or three frames drawn on a page (the frame surrounding the central Koranic text, the one that surrounds variants, and the frame around the glosses), this ratio suggests the existence of a common norm, which varied slightly depending on the historical period and the care taken in producing a given manuscript.44 This initial observation was based on a limited sample of approximately thirty per cent of the corpus. In order to confirm that these recurring ratios were indeed based on a set of shared guidelines, the

Fig. 7. Koran copied in a Bihari script, frontispiece, north India, fifteenth century. London, Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, Ms. QUR237, fols. 613b–614a. (Photo: Nour Foundation, courtesy of the Family Trust)
same calculations will be applied to all the manuscripts in the corpus once the necessary information regarding their measurements has been gathered.

**Line rulings**

The pages of Koranic manuscripts in Bihari script are constructed with an uneven number of written lines: almost 40 percent of them have thirteen lines per page while most of the other works have either eleven or fifteen lines per page (approximately 25 percent for both of these cases). The remaining line rulings are variable, and manuscripts with an even number of lines are exceptional (only two in a corpus of one hundred and thirty-seven manuscripts). We can also note that most of the manuscripts datable to the late fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth century have thirteen lines per page. This observation confirms that the manuscripts are strongly normative, and were produced according to rules issuing from a single canon. This ruling pattern remains the most common throughout the fifteenth century, but in the later manuscripts from the second group, and in those of the third group, the rulings are more variable, with eleven or fifteen lines per page in most cases.
Ornamentation

The ornamentation of these manuscripts has no exact equivalent elsewhere in the Islamic world. The extremely repetitive character of the decoration in the corpus is striking. The general composition is almost always the same, a frontispiece or double-frontispiece framing an initial text (fig. 7). Mandorlas and other initial circular figures, such as the *shamsa*, are rare (fig. 8), as are all other forms of initial decorations such as the *sarlakh*, which heads the opening text, or the illuminations that cover the entire part of the page contained within the frame. The most common layout for frontispieces, recurring in the overwhelming majority of cases, is a composition in imbricated rectangles, sometimes bordered with a frieze of blue fleurons pointing inwards (fig. 9). The same established iconographical lexicon is used over and over to fill in frames and marginal medallions. This includes certain motifs that are not found in the Islamic repertory outside of India. In particular, there are delicate long-petaled flowers (fig. 10), several types of which may be seen in other Indian manuscripts from the same period, such as an anthology in the British Library, Ms. Or.4110, datable to the early fifteenth century and probably produced in Jaunpur (fig. 11). Other elements seem to be exclusively reserved to these Indian manuscripts.

Fig. 9. Double-page frontispiece of a Koran copied in a Bihari script, north India, fifteenth century. Montreal, McGill University, Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Ms. A29, fols. 2b–3a. (Photo: courtesy of McGill University)
Korans. These may have been transferred from older iconographies, derived from Islamic figurative manuscript painting, which took on an entirely new value, devoid of their initial and purely ornamental usage. The grassy pyramid motif that is scattered over the backgrounds of many Bihari Korans is a good example of this. A renewed version of the tufts of grass dotting the ground in outdoor scenes in fourteenth-century Persian painting is here used to fill in space between lines and letters (fig. 12). Finally, the chromatic scale of the ornaments, while quite vivid, remains limited. It varies very little, if at all, from one manuscript to the next. Most of the colored space is occupied by a very orange shade of vermilion and a very peculiar indigo. Another feature of Bihari manuscripts should be noted here, namely, alternating lines of different colors. The distribution of colors is apparently random, with no particular meaning: it does not seem to be governed by any rules, other than being limited to a range of black, gold, red, and blue.

The older Korans, such as the Aga Khan manuscript copied in Gwalior, the Koran from the Keir Collection, or that of the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) in Doha (figs. 13 and 14), contain the richest and most original decorations, quite distinct from the rest of the corpus. The ornamentation is different in each of these three manuscripts and has no equivalent in the Islamic world. The elements that make up the ornamentation in each, although separately recognizable, together form very unusual compositions.
Three observations relating to the entire corpus will help us understand how these codices were used. First, nearly a quarter of all the manuscripts contain an interlinear Persian translation. Second, three of the complete manuscripts in the corpus, and probably others as well, are divided into four parts by double-frontispieces that mark the following suras: Sura 1, *al-Fātiḥa*; Sura 7, *al-Aʿrāf*; Sura 19, *Maryam*; and, finally, Sura 38, *Ṣād*. This subdivision is infrequent outside the pre-Mughal Indian sphere in contemporaneous or earlier periods, with the notable exception of a Ghurid Koran kept in Tehran (Museum of Ancient Iran [Muze-yi Irān-i Bāstān, part of the National Museum of Iran], Ms. 3500). The parallel is an interesting one because this Ghurid Koran shares other similarities with the Bihari corpus. It, too, contains a Persian version copied between the lines of the text of the Koran. Although they are filled in with decorations, the wide frames on the pages of the Ghurid Koran recall the illuminated frames in certain Bihari Korans, and the ornamentation shares some features with that of the Bihari manuscripts. While it is tempting to deduce a relationship of filiation between Ghurid and Sultanate Korans, these similarities are not precise enough and the examples at
Fig. 13. Full-page decoration in a Bihari Koran, end of fourteenth century or beginning of fifteenth century. Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS.259.2003. (Photo: © Museum of Islamic Art)
Fig. 14. Full-page decoration in a Bihari Koran, end of fourteenth century or beginning of fifteenth century. Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS.259.2003. (Photo: © Museum of Islamic Art)
our disposal are not sufficiently numerous to warrant any more definite conclusions at this stage. There are more obvious similarities with other manuscripts dating from the second half of the thirteenth century, which is to say, after the Ghurid period. This is particularly true of the Koran in Doha (MIA 259.2003) (figs. 13 and 14) and of a monumental Koran kept in Dushanbe, both in Bihari script, with decorations that closely resemble those of the Koran (QUR573) from the Khalili Collection dated 667 (1269).

Returning to the functional attributes of the manuscripts in the corpus, we should note that close to a tenth of the Bihari Korans contain a book of divination, a fālnāma, usually found at the end of the manuscript. This is likely an underestimation because almost half of the manuscripts are fragmentary or missing their last leaves, and publications rarely mention the existence of the fālnāma. The example of the Gwalior Koran is revealing: although the manuscript was published and exhibited on a number of occasions over the last four decades, until recently it had never been mentioned that a book of divination was appended to the text. This is all the more surprising because it is extremely rare to find a fālnāma annexed to a Koran before the fifteenth century. The Gwalior Koran and the Keir Koran are probably the oldest known works with this type of appendix. The latter probably precedes the Gwalior work by a few years, as indicated by the script and the illumination style, and may thus contain the earliest fālnāma appended to a Koran that we know of at present. The other Bihari manuscripts with this feature are later; many of them were probably made in the sixteenth century and the latest are from the nineteenth century. The practice of appending a Koranic fāl had already become more common in the Islamic world; in this respect, there is nothing exceptional about its presence in the later manuscripts, unlike the first two examples. The uniform character of the production of the Bihari Korans and the fragmentary nature of the classical Korans of the fifteenth century suggest that the production of Korans with a fāl was probably uninterrupted between the first two examples mentioned, i.e., the Gwalior and Keir Korans, and those from the sixteenth century. The use of the Koranic fālnāma in the Indian context is thus an old practice and one that is linked to a corpus for which the page layout rules seem to have been rigorously established at least as early as the late fourteenth century.

Koranic manuscripts in Bihari writing took on some very particular characteristics at this point: the fāl, reading markers (qirāʾāt), broadly developed glosses, and a Persian translation may all appear together in a manuscript, giving the object a practical dimension and transforming it into a type of manual on how to use a Koran. The normalization of this complex hermeneutical system leads us, of course, to wonder who—whether persons or institutions—the intended recipients of these manuscripts were, and under what conditions they were produced. It is quite possible that these Korans, or at least some of them, were copied and perhaps also decorated in places of religion and transmission such as madrasas or shrines (sing. dargāh), for an educated public. Unfortunately, no source evokes this type of production, and the colophons and secondhand notes in the manuscripts give no indications that might support such a hypothesis. The texts, however, frequently mention the type of intellectual environment in which these kinds of works may have been created, and these were often Sufi centers.

Questions arise when we consider the close affinities between these works and other objects possessing apotropaic virtues, such as talismanic tunics, which may feature not only a type of Bihari script but also the same ornamental repertory and palette. These tunics also form a very homogenous group, though far more limited in number, the earliest examples of which probably date from the sixteenth century. None of these tunics has been dated, nor are any likely to be dated easily. The dates suggested by publications on the subject are always later than the fifteenth century, although there is no solid proof for such a hypothesis. It is not impossible that some of these tunics might date from the fifteenth century: their decoration has similarities to that of classical Bihari Korans, as well as to the secular arts of the book. A talismanic roll containing exactly the same type of decoration as the talismanic tunics further suggests a date earlier than the sixteenth century: according to the auction catalogue in which it was published, this roll, now kept in an unknown collection, contains a
chronogram with the year 798 (1395), though this date still needs to be verified. There are only a few formal similarities between classical Bihari Korans and the group of tunics, but they are striking, the two most important being the calligraphy used on the borders of the tunics for the ninety-nine names of God (asmāʾ al-ḥusna), which is close to Bihari, and the chromatic scale, dominated by red and blue, which recalls the colors seen in classical Bihari Korans. Both the tunics and the pages of the Korans contain concentric circular motifs that may simultaneously denote an aesthetic taste that was popular at a given time, a decorative technique shared by a group of artists, and/or a particular symbolism whose meaning we cannot yet precisely define. Circular motifs appear frequently in India (e.g., the Buddhist mandala, or Jain cosmology in the Adhāî-dvīpa [Two and Half Continents]), and it is interesting to compare the compositions on these tunics with yantra, or diagrams with apotropaic virtues. The Victoria and Albert Museum has in its collections a cloth battle flag showing a Jain yantra that should be mentioned here. Dated 1447, it comes from the Gujarat region and measures 86 cm × 59.4 cm. Nearly its entire surface is covered with a grid pattern filled with numeric formulae and sacred mantras; this use of space recalls that seen on Islamic talismanic tunics. The relative proportion of Bihari Korans containing fālnāma remains to be determined, but did the production of Bihari Korans more generally involve an esoteric use of the codices? In other words, did copying a Koran in the Bihari script imply that it would be used for magic or divinatory purposes, at least during the period when such works were produced in great number and following highly codified criteria?

The page layout for these words is constructed in such a way as to emphasize a complex hermeneutical system. Given the scholarly character of these Korans, the different levels of reading that they require, and the varied uses, both exoteric and esoteric, to which they may have been put, I am inclined to think that these works were very likely produced in centers of religion and of transmission of knowledge linked to Sufi orders, and that they were intended for erudite readers who would have been sufficiently wealthy to acquire illuminated—sometimes sumptuously illuminated—codices such as these.

A ROUGH CHRONOLOGY

Analyzing the available corpus makes it possible to establish a relative chronology for Korans in Bihari script and, more broadly, for Korans produced in India during the pre-Mughal period. With no colophons in the majority of these manuscripts and without any other form of information regarding the commissioners, those who carried out the work, and the place of production, this task is especially difficult. The following hypotheses have been formulated through a meticulous diachronic study of the decorations, as well as through the establishment of stylistic parallels with the secular arts of the book.

The Gwalior Koran is what we may call a “pivotal” work, a manuscript that connects the main groups of Koranic manuscripts from the Sultanate period. As mentioned above, very few manuscripts from earlier periods are known to us today, and among these only three are incontestably dated by colophons. The first is apparently the work of a certain Abu Bakr Yaʿqub b. Nasir al-Din, copied in Lohri (Sind) on 17 Rabiʿ I 776 (August 26, 1374). This Koran, mentioned by A. Chagatai more than thirty years ago, was at that time kept in the National Museum in Kabul. I recently managed to track down this manuscript, which is still in the museum in Kabul (inv. no. 86-17). Unfortunately, given the newness of this discovery, I was not able to use it for this article. The other two manuscripts are the work of Shafiʿi jurisprudence dated 781 (1379) (fig. 1), and the copy of Saʿdi’s Kulliyāt made by Nur al-Din b. Mahmud and dated 791 (1388).

In the other two manuscripts that fit into this group there is no mention of a date or a place: one of them has been published by David James, the other is kept in the Keir Collection. Only the first two folios of the manuscript published by David James in 1980 are known. The text on these folios shows a similar layout and script to those found in the Al-Hāwī al-Saghīr in Hyderabad; a date circa 1380 is thus conceivable. The last manuscript, the Koran from the Keir Collection (fig. 4), is at least contemporaneous with the Gwalior manuscript (figs. 2 and 3), and perhaps even precedes it by a few years. The archaic Bihari style of writing, and the style of
the decorations, close to Muzaffarid illumination, suggest a date circa 1370–80.64

The Gwalior Koran, the last representative of this pioneering group of manuscripts, may at the same time be seen as an ancestor in a family tree that would unfurl its branches over the following two centuries. It already shows several of the fundamental characteristics of the later Bihari Korans—the writing, of course, which takes on a fully mature form here, but also the polychromy of the lines of text, which would be seen in several later Korans (and already existed, in a simpler form, as red and black lines, in the Keir Koran), as well as the page layout made up of embedded frames described earlier in this article. Its decorative program is, nonetheless, very original, and only some of its frontispieces contain iconographical elements that would later be seen in the illumination of other Bihari Korans, with a more standardized ornamentation: backgrounds finely checkered in red and studded with stylized tufts of grass, blue lanceolate borders, and edgings made up of peacock-feather motifs side by side. The spectrometric analyses carried out on the manuscript have not determined whether these are the result of contemporaneous re-paintings or later additions to the original illuminations, but it is entirely possible, even probable, that from the start the Gwalior Koran borrowed from a varied repertory of distinct styles, some of which lasted into the following century or beyond in India.

In the group of fifteenth-century manuscripts (fig. 5)—direct descendants of the Gwalior Koran—we find the greatest number dated by colophons, seven in all, which remains rare nonetheless. This branch is divided into two further groups. The first contains seven Korans in various styles and with illuminations of varying quality. Some of these manuscripts, such as the one from the Archaeological Museum of Bijapur (Ms. 912, dated 888 [1483]), are skillfully illuminated, while others, like the Ahmadabad manuscript (Hazrat Pir Muhammad Shah Dargah Sharif Library, dated 894 [1488]), are cruder. The dating of these fifteenth-century Korans encompasses a long period. Most of them are thought to have been produced in the second half of the century, but the earliest manuscript, now found in Leiden (University Library, Ms. Or. 18.320), is dated 811 (1408). The second subgroup is that of the classical Bihari Korans, which are remarkable for their homogeneity and for the quality of their production. Except for Ms. A29, from McGill University, they are all fragmentary. None is dated with certainty, but based on their decorations we may attribute them to the fifteenth century. The developments seen in these manuscripts are for the most part meticulous and inventive, even if they are governed by norms that give them a rather rigid character. In this group, alongside the Bihari script, we encounter new calligraphies artfully used. These refined writing styles, the work of confirmed artists, can be studied in parallel with the evolution of the contemporaneous monumental epigraphy of pre-Mughal India, which shows especially skillful and imaginative discoveries. These two types of Bihari Korans thus apparently coexisted in the fifteenth century. It is likely that the major differences between them are related to the nature of their patronage.

The remaining manuscripts can be dated between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. None of these shares the high quality of the fourteenth-century production and the finest specimens dated to the fifteenth century, nor are they as exquisite as the group of classical Bihari Korans. As mentioned previously, this group seems to decrease in quality over the decades, starting in the sixteenth century. Most examples can be attributed to the sixteenth century, with five manuscripts that are dated. The principal characteristics of the classical Bihari Korans are maintained, but the materials used are of poorer quality: the layouts are simplified, the illuminations less delicate, and the script more awkward. These manuscripts appear to have been mass-produced. The only Bihari Koran conserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) (Ms. Arabe 7260) is a good example of this group.66 Though there is no colophon, a note on folio 636a written in a second hand indicates the date 2 Muharram 1012 (June 12, 1603), its terminus ante quem, while a commentary in the margins, identified as the Mawāhib ‘alayhi by Kamal al-Din Husayn Kashafi (d. 1504), composed in Herat in the late fifteenth century, gives its terminus post quem.67 The manuscript, which contains 639 folios with a ruling of eleven lines per page, measures 45 cm × 35 cm; it is thus a rather imposing codex. The main text is at the center of the pages and embellished with an interlinear Persian version. The glosses, in naskhi-divani script, are arranged in the form of crosses in a marginal frame, which is where the reading signals—here absent—would have been
copied in earlier Bihari Korans. The BnF manuscript also has a falnāma included at the end. It is decorated with a rich decorative program that includes frontispieces, a finispiece, and illuminated double-pages marking juz’, as well as cartouches and marginal medallions. The gold, however, is quite diluted and often clumsily applied and, more broadly speaking, the drawing strokes seem stiff. The Bihari script is used but it is inelegant and sometimes faltering. Despite having been produced with a great deal of care, this work nevertheless has some awkward features.

DETERMINING WHERE THE CORPUS WAS PRODUCED

In the absence of elements of comparison that could help ascertain the origin of the manuscripts, it is nearly impossible to determine where they were produced. This is true for nearly the entire corpus, with a few rare exceptions.

Other than the Gwalior Koran and the older manuscript discussed by Chagatai, which apparently contains a mention of the Sind city of Lohri, only a later Koran dated 1003 (1594–95) has a colophon indicating where it was made: it is specified that the work was copied by a certain Shaykh ʿabdallah al-Sa⁠ʾif in balād Bihār (country/province of Bihar). A note in this Koran mentions the existence of an earlier codex, completed in 897 (1491). We may then surmise that the manuscript from the year 1003 (1594–95) was based on a model from approximately one century earlier. It contains a falnāma, which occurs a number of times in this third group of the corpus, and it has all the other characteristics of the Bihari corpus. Its origin, i.e., “balād Bihār,” cannot but remind us of the term Bihari in reference to the script of this name. The Bihar region, which was incorporated into the Jaunpur Sultanate between 1394 and 1479, could arguably be the birthplace of Bihari calligraphy and, perhaps, of the first examples of Koranic manuscripts copied in this writing style. Jaunpur, which was at the height of its power in the mid-fourteenth century, was an eminently intellectual city described in the sources as “the Shiraz of India.” Furthermore, the Jaunpur Sultanate abutted the Bengal territories, where the earliest specimens of Bihari script used in monumental epigraphy are to be found. While this hypothesis remains plausible, it is nevertheless necessary to keep in mind the overall dearth of manuscripts whose places of production are known; moreover, the three Korans whose places of production we know come from three distant cities. Thus, we are not able to support this notion more than any other.

INDIAN KORANS IN MUḤAQQAQ SCRIPT

The initial research that was carried out in order to assemble this first corpus of Bihari manuscripts also brought to light another set of works that might belong to a more distant branch on the family tree of Bihari Korans, rather like cousins to the other groups. These are Korans copied in a script that we find indiscriminately defined as muḥaqqaq, thuluth, or rayhānī. This script is nonetheless distinct from the latter two calligraphic styles, especially thuluth, the main characteristics of which it does not share. Although the existing vocabulary of calligraphic styles is too limited to express with accuracy the variety of developments in different scripts, the script in question here seems closer to the muḥaqqaq style. From a formal point of view, Bihari and muḥaqqaq share some features and, in the same way, there is a subtle but incontestable relationship between Koranic manuscripts copied in Bihari and those copied in muḥaqqaq in India during the fifteenth century.

There are far fewer Korans in muḥaqqaq script than in Bihari: so far I have been able to gather nine muḥaqqaq manuscripts, but there is still further research to be done. We can make out two broad trends among those Korans in muḥaqqaq. On the one hand, there are muḥaqqaq manuscripts with decorations in the same style as the classically made Bihari manuscripts (with the same ornamental repertory and chromatic palette). On the other hand, muḥaqqaq manuscripts were produced with a great deal of care—and, in some cases, are of exceptional quality. Some of these are “plurifunctional,” like the Bihari Korans, and also share some elements of their ornamental lexicon. The best example of this type is a superb Koran now in the Walters Art Museum (WAM) in Baltimore: Ms. W563 (figs. 15 and 16). Although it is painted in a style using later iconographic
Fig. 15. Koran (Bihari calligraphy in the margins), India, second half of fifteenth century. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, Ms. W563, fol. 3b. (Photo: courtesy of the Walters Art Museum)
Fig. 16. Koran, India, second half of fifteenth century. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, Ms. W563, fol. 4b. (Photo: courtesy of the Walters Art Museum)
elements that may be dated circa 1430–1450, it also shares a number of similarities with the Gwalior Koran (figs. 2 and 3). This manuscript should be considered alongside the group of classical Bihari Korans. To begin with, as with several Korans from this group and the Gwalior Koran, the WAM Koran shows a four-part division marked by double frontispieces on folios 8b–9a (Sura 1, al-Fāṭīha), 137b–138a (Sura 7, al-A’rāf), 274b–275a (Sura 19, Maryam), 408b–409a (Sura 38, Śād), 549b–550a (Sura 113, al-Falaq, and Sura 114, al-Nūs). This division is all the more remarkable given how infrequent it was in the Islamic world. The Bihari script is used in the WAM manuscript, making it the only muḥaqqaq Indian Koran with this particular feature: Bihari was chosen for the repetition of verse 6 of Sura 2 (al-Baqara) in the margins of one of the first frontispieces (folios 7b–8a)—but the script entirely disappears from the manuscript after this occurrence. In addition, the first folios of the work (folios 3a–b, 4a–b, 5a–b, 6a–b, and 7a) contain a gloss on Koranic readings copied in a naskhi-dīvānī script that is very close to that found in manuscripts from the first half of the fifteenth century, both secular and religious. This script is not used after folio 8b, when it is replaced instead by a small, elegant, and more common naskh script. We may, of course, wonder why the scripts were abandoned. Were these deliberate choices? A belated decision on the part of the master of the project? A rectification following the orders of the commissioner of the work? A change in the initial composition plan? Or are they simply the marks of different copyists who followed their own various practices—which may imply that the copying took place in a workshop? Whatever the case may be, these transformations, which are silent and discreet, occur subtly, over the course of the first folios, without any obvious point of rupture. The overall page construction still follows the same principles and the chromatic scale remains identical. The inks show no notable change, and the pictorial program is perfectly coherent.

The WAM Koran also contains a fālnāma. Unlike in the Bihari manuscripts, this fālnāma, copied in rather sloppy calligraphy, is placed near the beginning of the work (folio 2a), and has no form of decoration. It was apparently added later, during restorations to the work at an early period, and it probably reproduces a text that existed in the initial version of the manuscript. It is thus interesting to observe that, as with the Gwalior Koran and the classically made Bihari manuscripts, this copy in muḥaqqaq contains, in addition to a fālnāma, a Persian interlinear translation, marginal reading variants, and glosses related to recitations as well as to readers and reciters of the Koran.

There are some iconographical motifs in this work that can be found elsewhere only in Koranic manuscripts in Bihari writing prior to the sixteenth century. The decorations of the WAM Koran are, however, far more homogenous than those of the Gwalior Koran. The WAM Koran establishes a link between the Gwalior Koran, an earlier work, partially anchored in the fourteenth century, and some other Indian Korans in muḥaqqaq that have not been dated with certainty but whose ornamentation is similar to fifteenth-century Persian illumination—more sober but still highly skillful and made with high-quality materials. With one exception, a Koran belonging to a private collection that shows great decorative similarities with the WAM manuscript, the muḥaqqaq Indian Korans do not feature the combination of functional characteristics that is specific to Bihari Korans.

One last manuscript in muḥaqqaq needs to be mentioned in this study, even though it differs on a number of points from the preceding works. This Koran, from the British Library, (Ms. Add.18163), is a large codex of 752 folios whose original decorative program was never completed. This manuscript is marked by different phases of intervention and shows the traces of multiple hands, both in copying and illumination. The chronicle of its creation, which extends into the nineteenth century, is far from transparent. Three things, however, lead me to mention this manuscript as part of the present study. First, muḥaqqaq script was used for copying the text, even if it has a number of peculiarities that deserve more thorough examination. Second, we must note the physiognomy of the illuminations found in the first section of the manuscript, the only part containing decorations that are contemporaneous with the text, covering forty-eight folios. These illuminations, in the form of marginal mandorlas, are very similar to Iranian manuscripts from the second half of the fourteenth century, particularly the decorations of Inju and Muzaffarid
Another avenue to consider is the neighboring Malwa sultanate: the production of painted manuscripts and the existence of a royal workshop in the capital, Mandu, have been confirmed for the late fifteenth century. Manuscripts from Mandu show a very broad stylistic variety, probably due to the presence of painters of diverse origins within the sultan’s kitābhāna (workshop). Later works from the sixteenth century attributed to this sultanate show obvious stylistic links with Deccani painting, in particular a shared palette, the same one mentioned above. If Mandu could offer the services of trained painters from different regions of the Islamic world, or at least a varied sampling of manuscripts of high quality, it is quite possible that the sultans of neighboring territories may have employed its artists. Finally, the more or less obvious resemblances between the muḥaqqaq and Bihari korans might be explained by the fact that the latter were certainly the most frequently used model on the Indian subcontinent during part of the medieval period. These korans in Bihari script were destined for a specific readership that sought a book as an object with specific textual and formal characteristics, to which they probably attributed apotropaic virtues, as suggested by the links between this group of manuscripts and talismanic tunics in the same style. Was this also true of the korans in muḥaqqaq script from the same period? Based on the quality of the manuscripts, which must have made them very expensive, we may wonder if they might have been commissioned by those at the highest levels of state. It is plausible that such patrons wished to own luxurious works with decorations that were inspired by the most beautiful Persian specimens, which were fashionable in Sultanate India, but simultaneously maintained the virtues attributed to the more common works, Bihari korans, which were doubtlessly publicly displayed and used during ceremonies in holy places such as Sufi sanctuaries.

CONCLUSION

This preliminary study of Korans in Bihari script has generated more questions than it has answered. Nonetheless, it reveals the existence of a large group of manuscripts that were produced following immutable rules.
These rules were perpetuated over time because they gave tangible form to the usages of mystical circles and were thus disseminated to large audiences. The highly conservative character of these works is not unusual in the Indian context, where the arts of the book, in both the Islamic and non-Islamic traditions, demonstrate certain conformism in the early centuries of their development that is manifested in the use of an iconographical repertory tending towards archaism. Here, however, there are distinct signs of not only older inspirations in the iconography but also the implementation of a system of page layout certainly destined for a specific recitation practice.

A large number of manuscripts belonging to the corpus of my study have lost their margins, and thus probably the variants and accompanying glosses that they contained. This process of deterioration over time may not always have been as accidental as it at first seems. From the frequency with which missing margins are encountered, the care apparently taken in cutting them off, and the way in which the text of the Koran was reinserted into blank margins, we may infer that excising these texts from the margins of the manuscripts was a way of materially eradicating certain practices, such as the use of qirāʾāt or the consultation of the fāl. This may perhaps have occurred because these practices had been discredited or because they no longer had any meaning for those who were currently in possession of the manuscripts. In other words, this excision reintroduced the works into a more orthodox and more ordinary corpus. Likewise, the variant readings offered in the manuscripts correspond to the evolution of certain rituals within the institutions where these Korans may have been used, though we should not exclude the possibility of their use in a private context. These more anthropological perspectives should not be ignored in future research seeking to better comprehend the history of this corpus of manuscripts.

UFR d’art et d’archéologie, Université Paris-Sorbonne

NOTES

Author’s note: Some of the questions addressed within this article were discussed in my presentation at the Third Biennial Symposium of the HIAA, held in New York in October 2012.

1. Concerning Indonesian Korans, I must mention Annabel Gallop’s fundamental work on this corpus. While more articles have been devoted to the African Korans (for a synthesis of which, see Constant Hamès, “Les manuscrits arabo-africains: Des particularités?,” in “La tradition manuscrite en écriture arabe,” ed. Geneviève Humbert, special issue, Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée 99–100 [November 2002]: 169–82), these works have generally been marginalized in exhibitions and publications about the production of Koranic manuscripts.


4. I wish to thank Maria Szuppe (CNRS, UMR 7528—Mondes iraniens et indiens) for this information.

5. This division is very frequently marked in Indian Koranic manuscripts.


7. Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 386.


9. Chaghatai, EI2, s.v. “Khaṭṭ—IV. India.”

10. “Why it would be named after this region of India, however, is unclear, for no great Islamic centre flourished there, unless Jaunpur could also be included in Bihar in Persian terminology.”—Jeremiah P. Losty, The Art of the Book in India (exh. cat.) (London, 1982), no. 21, illus. p. 38. In Islamic Calligraphy, Blair employs arguments that are quite close to those of Losty, Art of the Book in India: see Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 386.
11. David James, *After Timur: Qur‘ans of the 15th and 16th Centuries* (London, 1992), 102: “It is usually assumed that the name of the script was derived from that of the province of Bihar in eastern India, but Bihar was not particularly important as a centre of Islam.”
12. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Indo-Persian Historiography up to the Thirteenth Century* (Delhi, 2010), 134.
14. The British Library possesses a codex that is evocative from this point of view: a *Ma‘ālim al-tanzīl* (Signposts of the Revelation) commentary on the Koran by al-Baghawi (d. 1222), dated 10 Muharram 815 (April 22, 1412), in which the quoted Koranic passages are formally distinct from the rest of the text because they are copied in Bihari: British Library, inv. no. IOL 4154; C. A. Storey, “*i.* Qur’anic Literature,” in vol. 2 of *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts* (London, 1930), no. 1083.
15. Francis Richard brought this to my attention several years ago. This opinion is shared by Sheila Blair, who studied the writing in a Ghurid Koran dating from n88–89 (publication forthcoming). According to Blair, “the script had several features in common with Bihari, notably its thick round bowl for endings and tapering *alif* that ends with a little foot to the left.” Personal communication, December 2012. I wish to thank Sheila Blair for bringing this information to my attention.
17. See Siddiq, “Calligraphy and Islamic Culture.”
19. See, for example, Khan Sahib Maulvi Zafar Hasan, *Specimens of Calligraphy* in the *Dell Museum of Archaeology, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* 29 (Calcutta, 1926), no. 3, p. 5: “A Qur‘an written in characters of a transitional style between Kufic and Naskh and said to have belonged to the 8th century H. (14th C. AD).” This style (commonly known as *Khatt-i-Bihār*) is believed to have evolved at a very early period in India, and the fact that not a single specimen of it has been illustrated in Moritz’s *Arabic Palaeography* confirms the belief that it was not known in Arabia, Persia or Egypt.” See also Maulavi Mianuddin Nadwi, *Arabic Miss: Qur’anic Science*, pt. 1–11, vol. 18 of the *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore*, 25 vols. (Calcutta, 1908–42): note on Koran no. 3 in Bihari script: “written in characters of a transitional style between Kufic and Naskh and said to have belonged to the 8th century H. (14th C. AD).”
20. Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, no. 48 (not reproduced).
25. Siddiq, “Epigraphical Journey,” fig. 17. This is an early and still clumsy manifestation of what would become the very elegant “bow and arrow” Bengali style.
26. Toronto, Aga Khan Museum, Ms. AKM00281; Dallas, Keir Collection, VII.42; and David James, *Qur‘ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library: A Facsimile Exhibition* (London, 1980), no. 82 (formerly Chester Beatty Library; the inventory number given by James does not correspond to any of the library shelf numbers).
27. Sotheby’s, April 18, 1983; no. 72. The only available photograph of it is not clear enough to form the basis for a more precise description.
30. See the engraving on a polylobed arch found in Sultanganj, near Godagari (Bengal), now kept at the Varendra Research Museum: Siddiq, “Calligraphy and Islamic Culture,” pl. X, p. 30.
31. James, *Qur‘ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library*, no. 82.
32. Toronto, Aga Khan Museum, Ms. AKM00281.
33. Black ink is not used for the main text. This characteristic is shared by only one other codex in the corpus, a manuscript sold at Christie’s on October 9, 2009, no. 396.


44. This exercise was applied to a sampling of each of the three groups I have listed: Brac de la Perrière, *L’art du livre*, 120–21.

45. These “tufts of grass” are also found in secular manuscripts attributed to India, such as a copy of Ṣa ‘dī’s Diwān (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Supplément persan 1711), dating to the sixteenth century, or the Intikhāb-i Shāhnāma of the New York Public Library, bearing the date 906 (1501) and a mention of Jaunpur (New York Public Library, Spencer coll., Indo-Pers. Ms.1): http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-7605-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99. On this manuscript, see Barbara Schmitz, *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library* (New York, 1992), 219–21, figs. 225–26, and Brac de la Perrière, *L’art du livre*, 279, no. 15. These motifs are characteristic of Indian production, but they also recall the tufts of grass seen in Aqqoyunlu painting (second half of the fifteenth century). Another rather similar specimen may be found in the Kashf al-Asrār from Istanbul, Egypt, or Syria, ca. 1400 (Istanbul, Sleymanıye Library, Lala İsmail 565); see Duncan Haldane, *Mamluk Painting* (Warminster, 1978), pl. 10 (fol. 22v), pl. 12 (fol. 35v); and Richard Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (New York, 1977), 150–60.

46. The Doha manuscript is especially interesting because it was the oldest, in addition to being one of the only pre-Mughal manuscripts to have been preserved with its original binding, though it is only partially intact. A document related to Samarkand ca. 838 (1434) was discovered inside the binding, making it possible to date the Koran to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century: Crofton Black and Nabil Saidi, *Islamic Manuscripts* (London, 2003?), cat. 22, 2000, no. 14. When I last consulted the manuscript in February 2013, these documents had, unfortunately, disappeared.

47. These three are the Gwalior Koran, the Keir Koran VII.62, and the British Library Delhi Arabic IB Koran (formerly IO Islamic 4142). I was not able to examine all the complete manuscripts in the corpus (sixty-seven Korans), and catalogues descriptions often neglect to mention this division into four parts.


50. One of the most interesting examples of this type is the Koran in Doha (MIA 259.2003), in which the large gilded frames of the frontispieces recall those of the Ghaznavid Korans. Brac de la Perrière, *L’art du livre*, 279, no. 15, pls. 40 and 41; and Reading Qur’anic Manuscripts: *In the Museum of Islamic Art* (Doha, 2011), 16.


52. The Dushanbe manuscript is unpublished. I am grateful to Christiane Gruber for letting me know of its existence.


54. This is the case for the following manuscripts: Toronto, Aga Khan Museum, 00288; Montreal, McGill University, A29; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 7260; London, British Library, Delhi Arabic IB; Dallas, Keir Collection, P.1; Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, no. 92; Sotheby’s, October 18, 2001, no. 25; Christie’s, October 11, 2005, no. 9.

309n9. The identification of the manuscript’s place of production as Shiraz is erroneous.

56. On Indian talismanic tunics, however, the Bihari script is used only to emphasize a few words, the term Allāh, and the ninety-nine names of God, asma‘ Allāh al-husnā. The rest of the text is copied in lowercse Ghubari script. Regarding these tunics, see Eloïse Brac de la Perrière, “Les tuniques talismaniques indiennes d’époque pré-mohgole et moghale à la lumière d’un groupe de corans en écriture bihāri,” Journal Asiatique 297, no. 1 (2009): 57–81. Only around fifteen tunics of this type have been catalogued. See my inventory in Brac de la Perrière, “Les tuniques talismaniques indiennes,” 62–63, to which may be added one tunic from the Archeological Museum of Delhi (Red Fort).

58. The general parallel between this and the arts of the book is still significant. See ibid., 71–72.

59. Bonhams, October 15, 1998, no. 15. It is not possible to verify the chronogram from the photograph.


61. Chaghahtai, ELZ, s.v. “Khatt—IV. India.”

62. Sotheby’s, April 18, 1983, no. 72. In this case, the resemblance between this script and Bihari is still too slight for us to be sure that it is indeed the same form of calligraphy.

63. James, Qur’ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library, no. 83.

64. On the links between Sultanate and Muzaffarid painting, see Brac de la Perrière, L’art du livre, 219–20.

65. Although the manuscript was analyzed in a laboratory, the extent of the re-paintings and restorations does not allow me to be more precise. On the analyses that have been completed on the Gwalior Koran, see Nourane Ben Azzouna and Patricia Roger-Puyo, “The Gwalior Qur’an: Archaeology of the Manuscript and of Its Decoration, a Preliminary Study,” in Brac de la Perrière and Burési, L’art du Coran de Gwalior, 57–84.


68. Christie’s, October 11, 2005.

69. Jaunpur was founded in 1359 by Firuz Shah Tughluq, sultan of Delhi, during the conquest of Bengal. In 1394, Malik Sarwar, one of the favorites of the sultan of Delhi, became governor of Jaunpur. He oversaw a large territory stretching from Kol (Aligarh) in the west to Bihar and Tirhut in the east. Between 1401 and 1440, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi ruled the Jaunpur sultanate; his patronage was fruitful, as evidenced by the archaeological remains of monuments built during his reign. This dynasty was finally overwhelmed by Bahlul Lodi, sultan of Delhi, in 1484.


71. The nisbas connected to the names of the two copyists do not provide any additional information: we owe the copying of the Delhi Arabic Koran 13, b at the British Library (ex-India Office Library Islamic 4143), datable to the fifteenth century, to a certain Muhammad Dihláwī, and the copying of another manuscript at the British Library, Mā‘ālim al-Tanzil (ex India Office Library 4154), dated 10 Muharram 815 (April 22, 1412), to Mubarak b. Mahmūd b. Nizām al-Shirāzī.

72. Due to a number of peculiarities, the muḥaqqaq script found in this group of Indian Korans has posed some identification difficulties in the past. For a more precise description of its characteristics, see Simon Brettig’s palaeographical analysis of the Koran from the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (W.563), “A ‘Timurid-like Response’ to the Qur’an of Gwalior? The Manuscript W563 at the Walters Art Museum,” in Brac de la Perrière and Burési, Le Coran de Gwalior, 194–96.

73. For example, the Koran from the Khalili Collection, QUR413, in James, After Timur: Qur’ans of the 15th and 16th Centuries, 108, no. 29, fol. 628, and 110–11, fols. 508–51a.

74. In some classical Bihari Korans, the lines copied in muḥaqqaq are inserted into the Bihari text, either to mark a subdivision within the Koranic text, like a jūz’, or simply for aesthetic reasons. See, for example, the Schøyen Collection, Ms. 4595, downloaded from http://www.schoyencollection.com/palaeography-collection-introduction/arabic-script/bihari-script/ms-4595.

75. See the muḥaqqaq Koran, whose decoration follows the model of the classical Bihari Korans: Christie’s October 15, 1996, no. 53.


77. It is also interesting to note that on fol. 16b of the Gwalior Koran, restored at an early date, the Bihari text was replaced by a text in muḥaqqaq.

78. The writing seems to fit in between what can be seen in the British Library Anthology Or.410 (Brac de la Perrière, L’art du livre, pl. 47) and that used for the glosses of classical Bihari Korans. Among the most obvious characteristics, the dāl is very open and especially large, the bar stroke of the kāf stands out clearly from the base with a small indention at its extremity, and the dāl’ has a minuscule tail on its lower part that points in the direction of the writing. These characteristics are described in Brac de la Perrière, “Bihāri et naskhī-dīwānī,” 89.
79. The manuscript has the marks of significant deterioration on its first folios.
81. That is, the WAM Koran, W563.
82. On this Koran, today in a private collection, see Christie’s, April 8, 2008, no. 274 and Sotheby’s April 6, 2011, no. 190.
83. This Koran is reproduced in Martin Lings and Yasin Hamid Safadi, The Qur’an: Catalogue of an Exhibition of Qur’an Manuscripts at the British Library, 3 April–15 August 1976 (London, 1976), no. 144, illus. p. 83. The most important information can be found in Losty, Art of the Book in India, 38.
84. See the marginal mandorla on folio 26a. Elaine Wright has already eloquently highlighted the parallels between these Indian decorations and those of a manuscript produced in Shiraz in the fourteenth century, which itself presents a succession of Inju and Muzaffarid decorations: Elaine Wright, “An Indian Qur’an and Its 14th-Century Shiraz Model,” Oriental Art Magazine 42, no. 4 (1996–97): 8–12.
85. The original way in which the muḥaqqaq script is executed and the peculiar rendering of the illuminations on the first folios suggest, however, that this is indeed a work produced in Sultanate India.
86. Rettig, “A ‘Timurid-like Response’ to the Qur’an of Gwalior?,” 201–3. On the links between India and the Ottoman Empire, see Giancarlo Casale, The Ottoman Age of Exploration (New York, 2010). In the entire bibliography on the subject, information on the fifteenth century remains scarce. Rettig’s hypothesis is thus all the more interesting.
87. Mark Zebrowski, Deccani Painting (Berkeley, 1983), and, more recently, Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan Courts, 1523–1687, ed. Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (New York, 2011), 12–64. This chromatic scale contains a range of pinks and mauves.
88. Regarding the manuscripts attributed to the royal workshop of Mandu, see Losty, Art of the Book in India, no. 10, no. 40, no. 42.
In the nascent yet burgeoning field of Deccani art history, Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627), the sixth ruler of the ‘Adil Shahi dynasty (1490–1686), has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Ibrahim ruled for nearly fifty years, and many of the masterpieces of Deccani architecture date to his reign, including the Ibrahim Rauza (ca. 1627–35), popularly dubbed “The Taj of the South.” In Mark Zebrowski’s pioneering *Deccani Painting* (1983), Ibrahim was heralded as “the greatest patron of the arts the Deccan produced,” a sentiment repeated a decade later in the second installment (1994) of Yale’s Islamic Art Survey and several subsequent publications. In addition to panegyric praising Ibrahim’s proficiency in music, calligraphy, and poetry, the presumption of his prolific patronage has stemmed from his sixteen contemporary portraits; in other words, the ruler’s place as subject has secured his stature as patron. An exquisite portrait of “Ibrahim hawking,” now preserved in St. Petersburg, graced the cover of Zebrowski’s book and was later described as “one of the greatest images in Indian or Islamic art.”

Ibrahim’s elevation as a “genius” patron has been fueled equally by his religious tolerance and eclecticism, which have inspired comparison to the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605). Nominally a Sunni, Ibrahim adopted Hindi titulature (*Jagat Gurū*, World Teacher) and founded a composite religious system devoted to the Prophet Muhammad, the Hindu goddess Saraswati, and the Deccan’s most famous Sufi saint, Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz (d. 1422). It is an oft-repeated staple of scholarship that the ruler’s *Kitāb-i Nawras* (Book of Nawras), an innovative collection of fifty-nine songs in Dakhni, opens with invocations to the Prophet, goddess, and saint. Such syncretic proclivities have led scholars to conclude that “Ibrahim was the product of a hybrid civilization. It is hard to label him either a Muslim or a Hindu.”

Notwithstanding the noted risks of scholarly veneration—culminating in Richard Eaton and Phillip Wagner’s insistence “to qualify the conventional image of Ibrahim II as something of a beads-and-flowers hippie avant le temps”—the ruler remains the axis mundi of Bijapuri art. In the catalogue accompanying the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s recent exhibition on the Deccan (2015), it is argued, “Ibrahim’s court attracted some of the most talented artists of the age, who gave expression to the sultan’s inner vision and whose works offer a glimpse into an opulent and sensuous world.” Building on (and dramatizing) such sentiment, a reviewer for the New York Times offered a conclusion replete with “neo-Orientalist undertones”: “One source of the Deccan’s instability may have been, as the show’s subtitle of ‘opulence and fantasy’ suggests, that the sultans had a greater interest in culture and leisure than governing.” While acknowledging the deserved iconic status of Ibrahim’s *Kitāb-i Nawras* and the contemporary description of Bijapur as an “elixir of mirth and pleasure,” this article attempts to investigate the ruler as but one link in a long chain of intercultural production, rather than the singular source of inspiration, and the Deccan itself beyond the tropes of “otherworldliness,” “leisure,” and “mystery.”

Much of the recent emphasis on Ibrahim’s syncretism and patronage can be traced to a portrait of the goddess Saraswati, the focus of his spiritual devotion, seated on a gold throne (fig. 1). Although the major iconographical elements of “Saraswati enthroned” rely heavily on the ruler’s *Kitāb-i Nawras*, the composition is fundamen-
Fig. 1. “Saraswati enthroned,” signed by Farrukh Husayn, Bijapur, ca. 1595–1609. Jaipur, Brigadier Sawai Bhawani Singh of Jaipur, City Palace, JC-1/RJS.1326-RM 177. (From Chandramani Singh and Madhvendra Narayan, From the Collection of Maharaja of Jaipur: Six Multicoloured Prints, Surat Khana, Jaipur, 16th–17th Century, Mughal and Deccani [Jaipur: Jaigarh Public Charitable Trust, 2003], pl. C)
Book Culture, Royal Libraries, and Persianate Painting in Bijapur

and ʿAdil Shahi Bijapur as a courtly culture enmeshed in wider Perso-Islamic systems (as attested by the material record in its broadest sense, including seals, coins, titulature, library collections, metalwork, bookbinding, and wall painting). In many ways, Farrukh and his portraits bridge the divide between Ibrahim and his court while stimulating larger questions about agency, reception, and translation across the Indo-Persian world. In turn, the art historical conversation shifts away from the often impenetrable question of original hand, at least partially. For the general field of Deccani studies, artist and oeuvre also challenge the deep-rooted Deccani-Westerner binary, which is applicable in certain contexts but tends to be unilaterally emphasized.

Connected Systems of Iranian Peregrination and Patronage

Unlike their consistently Shiʿi contemporaries in Qutb Shahi Golconda, the rulers of ʿAdil Shahi Bijapur vacillated between Sunnism and Shiʿism, and routinely shifted their allegiances between local and foreign factions. Since the mid-twentieth century, some scholars have argued that Ibrahim's reign witnessed the tipping of the scales in favor of the former. Evidence in support of this theory has included the ruler's restoration of Hanafi Sunnism in 1583, as well as his broken (shikasta) Persian, use of Hindi titulature (Jagat Gurū), devotion to Saraswati, and the collection of songs (Kitāb-i Nawras) he wrote in the Deccani vernacular (Dakhni). As recently as 2006, it was argued that “the height of Persian and Shiʿi influence was during the reign of ʿAli ʿAdil Shah (r. 1558–80), who had the Shiʿi khutba read in mosques. A brief Sunni restoration, coupled with a move away from Persian influence, took place under his grandson [actually his nephew] Ibrahim ʿAdil Shah II (d. 1618) [actually d. 1627].”

The above conclusions are problematic on several levels. First, they presume a linear relationship between religious sectarianism and culture, that is, Shiʿism = Persian and Sunnism = non-Persian. Second, although the first decade of Ibrahim’s rule was indeed marked by a series of Dakkanī regencies led by former African slaves (ḥabashi, deriving from al-Habash, Abyssinia or Ethio-
Khalilullah’s counterpart in the field of painting was Farrukh Husayn, who painted at least five portraits of Ibrahim during his tenure in Bijapur between circa 1595 and 1609. Farrukh’s “Ibrahim hawking” (St. Petersburg) and “Ibrahim playing the tambur” (fig. 2) are celebrated icons of Deccani painting. Closely related to the former is a lesser-known portrait of the ruler holding a ṣafīna (small oblong album) while seated on a throne in a landscape (fig. 3). Farrukh’s final two portraits of Ibrahim depict him riding Atish Khan, his favorite elephant, praised throughout the Kitāb-i Nawras. A variant of one of the elephant compositions appears as a wall painting in the artist’s “Saraswati enthroned” (fig. 1), which has been heralded as a “masterful representation of the idealized vision of self, state, and culture that Ibrahim espoused,” despite its inaccessibility.

The final three courtiers described in the Khān-i Khalīl—Haidar Zehni, Malik Qummi, and Zuhuri—were the leading Iranian literati of Ibrahim’s court. Zuhuri served as Ibrahim’s poet laureate from circa 1601 until his death in 1616, and he often collaborated with his father-in-law, Malik Qummi (d. 1616). Probable partnerships between the two include the Khān-i Khalīl itself and Nawras, both part of the trilogy known as Sih Naṣr (Three Essays), as well as an imitation (nādira) of Nizami’s Makhzan al-Asrār (treasury of secrets) entitled Manbaʿ al-Anhār (Source of the Rivers). Although not mentioned in the Khān-i Khalīl, two additional Iranian intellectuals in Ibrahim’s Bijapur deserve mention yet require little introduction: Muhammad Qasim Hindushah Astarabadi (known as Firishta, d. 1611) and Rafi’ al-Din Shirazi (d. 1620). Firishta composed his well-known history Gulshān-i Ibrāhīmi (Rose Garden of Ibrahim) upon the ruler’s request (the two recensions are dated 1015 [1606–7] and 1018 [1609–10]). Shirazi’s major work was his Tadhkirat al-Mulūk (History of Kings, completed between 1608 and 1611), a history of the ‘Adil Shahi dynasty and contemporary Indian and Iranian courts that has been largely neglected in favor of Firishta.

The careers of the Iranian migrants discussed above were all characterized by continual peregrination in
Fig. 2. “Ibrahim playing the tambur,” ascribed to Farrukh Beg (Farrukh Husayn) at the Mughal court by Muhammad Husayn Zar'in Qalam, Bijapur, ca. 1595–1609. Folio from the Salim/Jahangir Album, north India, ca. late 1590s–1620s. Prague, Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, A. 12182. (Photo: courtesy of the Náprstek Museum)

search of patronage, both within Iran and across the subcontinent. Malik Qummi, Firishta, and Zuhuri, for example, spent their initial years in the Deccan at the Nizam Shahi court of Ahmadnagar and only later migrated to Ibrahim’s Bijapur. The poet Kalim perhaps best exemplifies the interconnectedness of knowledge systems and peripatetic networks. His courts of tenure and associates included ‘Adil Shahi Bijapur (with Shah Navaz Khan), Safavid Isfahan (ca. 1618–20), Qutb Shahi Golconda (possibly with Mir Muhammad Amin Shahrastani/Ruh al-Amin) and Mughal India, until his death in 1651 in Lahore.

The widespread celebrity of Iranian intellectuals in the early modern Deccan and the relative ease with which they circulated were conditioned by heightened proximity and diplomacy associated with military conflict. In his account of his mission to the Deccan in 1591–93, the Mughal poet Fayzi (Abu’l-Fayz b. Mubarak, d. 1595) praised both Malik Qummi and Zuhuri and singled them out for recruitment, and Malik Qummi appears to have briefly entered the service of ‘Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan (d. 1627) after the Mughal general’s siege of Ahmadnagar in 1595. Once Malik Qummi had settled in Bijapur, his works continued to circulate via the hands of fellow peripatetic Iranians. The Shirazi savant Mir Jamal al-Din Husayn Inju (d. 1625–26), whom Akbar had dispatched as ambassador to Ibrahim in 1600, reportedly transported Malik Qummi’s work back to Agra and presented it to the still smitten Khan-i Khanan.

For his part, Ibrahim had to contend with steady Mughal incursions into the Deccan, initiated by Akbar in the 1590s, and the northern empire’s dismissal of him as a mere khān rather than shāh. Concurrently, the Bijapur ruler exchanged embassies with Shah ʿAbbās, who faced his own military engagement with the Mughals in Qandahar. In one letter transported by Khalilullah in 1612–13, Ibrahim described Bijapur and the Deccan as part of the Safavid Empire, declared that the names of the Safavid monarchs were recited in the Friday sermon, and titled himself a mansūbdar (subordinate, lit. “holder of rank”) ruling on “His Majesty’s behalf.” Such letters underscore the fluidity and practicality of sectarianism during Ibrahim’s reign. Although Hanafi Sunnism was restored in Bijapur in 1583, it was in Ibrahim’s best interest to join his Shi’i Deccani neighbors—especially Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (r. 1580–1612) and Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–26) of Golconda—in the cultivation of brotherhood with Safavid Iran. As aptly summarized by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, this Deccani-Safavid alliance was more symbolic than practical: “It was clear of course that no military alliance was really possible that might straddle the distance between Chaul and Dabhol, and the ports of Fars, but other forms of
Fig. 3. "Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir," attributed to Farrukh Husayn, Bijapur, ca. 1595–1609. Folio from the Salim/Jahangir Album, north India, ca. late 1590s–1620s. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 87. (Photo: Keelan Overton)
real and symbolic affinity tied the predominantly Shiʿi sultans of the Deccan to Iran rather than to the Sunni Mughals who were gradually encroaching upon them from the north." It is to these “other forms of real and symbolic affinity” that we now turn.

BOOK CULTURE IN IBRAHIM’S BIAJPUR

A perusal of Ibrahim-era portraiture underscores the privileged status of books, and, by extension, erudition, in Bijapuri iconography. A number of single-page paintings conform to the Indo-Persian trope of a noble youth holding a book symbolic of his intellect, and many are remarkable for the detail afforded to the depiction of the codices. In “A youth with swans and rabbits,” a courtier holds a book whose Persian-style binding is embel-lished with red stones, and in “Mullah,” a sensitive portrait of one of Bijapur’s religious dignitaries, the book’s endband (stitching reinforcement at the head and tail of the text block, often in a chevron pattern) is subtly indicated by a red line. In “Ibrahim feeding a hawk,” a luxurious red velvet case protecting an es-teemed volume is held by an attendant behind the ruler, and in “Ibrahim visiting a Sufi saint,” the pages of the book next to the saint are bookmarked for future reading by the binding’s envelope flap.

Despite the prominence of bound codices in Ibrahim-era portraiture, only a handful of manuscripts dating to the ruler’s reign are extant. The text surviving in the highest number is the \textit{Kitāb-i Nawras}, and the most well-known manuscripts include a copy by ‘Abd al-Rashid dated 990 (1582–83) (appendix, no. 15) (fig. 4), one by ‘Abd al-Latif Mustafa with a terminus ante quem of 5 Muharram 1022 (February 24, 1613) (appendix, no. 16), and the aforementioned luxury example by Khalilullah, transcribed after 1617 (appendix, no. 17). Other surviving Ibrahim-era manuscripts include an unillustrated \textit{Ikhtiyārat-i Bādī’ī} (Selections of Badi’i) dated 990 (1582–83) (appendix, no. 10); an illustrated \textit{Pem Nem} (Toils of Love) datable to circa 1591–1604 (thirty-four miniatures); an illustrated \textit{Ni’matnāma} (Book of Delights) (two miniatures, one of which is a portrait of Ibrahim); the above-mentioned unillustrated \textit{Khamsa} of Nizami copied by Khalilullah after 1617, and an illustrated \textit{Shāhnāma} (Book of Kings) datable to circa 1600–10 (approximately two dozen paintings are known). The \textit{Ni’matnāma} portrait of Ibrahim confirms the importance of text-image relationships in Bijapuri painting while demonstrating that the city’s \textit{nawras}—"nine
moods,” based on the rasas of Indian aesthetic theory, or “new arrival,” from the Persian naw and rasidan—and Persianate cultures were anything but exclusive. The Persian couplet above the ruler reads, “The master/lord of all existing things, who made this workshop / Had as his intention love, [but] he made nawras a pretext.” As elsewhere, the precise meaning of nawras remains elusive. If a Persian interpretation is favored, the “pretext” in question could be defined as aesthetic freshness and innovation, qualities that indeed exemplify Ibrahim-era art.

Although a few of the manuscripts listed above have been the focus of individual studies, the current understanding of Ibrahim-era painting is framed by single-page album portraits, especially of the ruler himself, of the type described at the beginning of this article. The majority of these paintings have been ruptured from their original parent albums, and the result is that it can be difficult to move beyond formal analysis and connoisseurship toward an emic understanding of function and reception. To date, the Kitāb-i Nawras has provided the most useful launching point for deeper understanding. In “Ibrahim playing the tambur” (fig. 2), the ruler’s iconography—red nails, necklace of rudraksha (dried berries) beads, tanbūr (long-necked lute), and elephant Atish Khan—parallels his verbal self-portrait in songs 15 and 56, and in “Saraswati enthroned” (fig. 1), verses from song 56 appear in the composition. While acknowledging that the Kitāb-i Nawras was synonymous with Ibrahim both at home and abroad, the present goal is to explore additional knowledge systems that permeated Bijapuri culture and in turn impacted sovereignty and artistic production. Toward this end, the books collected into Ibrahim’s and the city’s libraries present a valuable resource, because many bear precisely what the detached album portraits do not: concrete data concerning provenance and traceable connections to the ruler himself. It is through an examination of book culture that we can begin to map patterns of intellectual taste and circulation in Bijapur, trace the literary fluency of the court, and further consider Ibrahim’s multivalent identities.

As was the case at virtually all early modern Islamic courts, the formation of a comprehensive library of Arabic and Persian classics was a prerogative of ‘Adil Shahi kingship. The seals of Ibrahim’s bibliophile predecessors—Isma’īl (r. 1510–35) and ‘Ali I (r. 1558–80)—are known, and Shirazi observed both the latter’s fondness for books and the size of his collection and kitābkhāna (comprising “sixty men, calligraphists, gilders of books, book-binders and illuminators”). The likelihood that Ibrahim inherited a well-oiled library bureaucracy is attested by acquisitions and protocols dating to the regency period (1580–90). As early as 1586, when the ruler was just fifteen, his books were being marked with a distinct ex libris (fig. 5) and a small, oval seal inscribed Ibrāhīm nawras (fig. 6). Given Ibrahim’s youth and recent accession, the word nawras might again warrant a Persian interpretation, hence translating the legend as “Ibrahim freshly sprouted” (into youth, nawjavān) or “Ibrahim newly arrived” (as Bijapur’s king). Regardless of precise meaning, the use of nawras during the volatile regency period raises questions of agency. Who was responsible for developing it as a word and concept at this early stage?

At present, it is possible to track approximately seventy books associated with Ibrahim specifically and/or Bijapur’s royal library (kitābkhāna-i ʿāmira or kitābkhāna-i ma‘mūra) during his reign. Approximately 50 were among the 430 books discovered in Bijapur’s Asar Mahal (completed 1647) in 1853 and subsequently transferred to the India Office Library (now British Library). Although the Asar Mahal collection was once part of Bijapur’s royal library, it cannot be considered representative of the institution’s original quality, size, or scope (in 1604, upon the marriage of his daughter to Akbar’s son, Ibrahim gave 2,000 books alone to the Mughal ruler). The majority of the books are fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Arabic texts on Sufism, ethics, logic, and law (noticeably absent are Korans and historical texts), and the collection includes just seventeen Persian volumes and only a single literary classic (Nizami’s Makhzan al-Asrār). Although some of the Asar Mahal volumes were rated first class (avval) by Bijapur’s librarians, few, if any, can be classified as “luxury” codices in holistic art-historical terms, that is, utilizing the finest materials (paper, pigments, gold, leather) and including exceptional calligraphy, illumination, painting, and/or binding. We can presume that these manuscripts remained in the Asar Mahal until the British discovery
Fig. 5. Illuminated ex libris of Ibrahim II dated 21 Dhu‘l-Hijja 994 (December 2, 1586). Partially visible to the left is the word *avval* and a type B Bijapuri notation dated 8 Rabi‘ I 1003 (November 21, 1594). Folio from a Gloss by Jurjani on the Commentary by Qutb al-Din al-Razi on the *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār* of Urmawi, apparently copied by Taqi al-Din al-Husayni (d. 1476–77). London, British Library, Loth 525/B 181 (former B 181a), fol. 3r. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 6. Impression of the oval seal of Ibrahim II (inscribed: *Ibrāhīm nawras*; dimensions: 13 x 20 mm). Folio from a Koran, Shiraz, ca. 1570 (see appendix, no. 11). Hyderabad, Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 76.851, Ms. 1. (Photo: courtesy of the Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art)

As a whole, these books are of a far higher aesthetic quality than those in the Asar Mahal collection. A few deserve an art-historical, first-class valuation (*avval*) and include the work of famous calligraphers and illuminators (Yaqt al-Musta‘simi, d. 1298; Shah Mahmud Nishapuri, d. 1564–65; Jalal al-Din Baghnavi, fl. in late sixteenth-century Shiraz). Others have illustrious provenances in Greater Iran (Abu Sa‘id, r. 1458–69; Rustam b. Maqsud, r. 1493–97; Shah Isma‘il, r. 1576–78) and/or subsequently entered royal collections in India (‘Alamgir, r. 1658–1707; Tipu Sultan, r. 1782–99). In addition to these seventeen bound manuscripts, two album folios with calligraphy framed by marbled borders (appendix, nos. 18–19) bear evidence of Ibrahim’s ownership.

Notwithstanding its severe limitation in number, this dispersed corpus rounds out the better known Asar Mahal collection and in turn underscores the dual function of books in Bijapur’s courtly culture: as prerequisites in established intellectual curricula (primarily Asar Mahal texts) and as luxury enterprises in the visual arts (mainly dispersed examples). Moreover, Ibrahim’s nine imported Persian classics (from Shiraz, Herat, and Isfahan) — in tandem with the Khalilullah Khamsa and illustrated Shāhnāma produced in Bijapur—suggest that Persian

precisely because they were not lavish enough to incite removal.79

To locate the finest books in Ibrahim’s possession, we must look outside of the British Library’s Asar Mahal collection. Based on textual evidence summarized below (see “Ibrahim’s marks of ownership”), I have to date identified seventeen manuscripts once owned by the ruler and now in collections across the globe: nine Persian literary classics, one Persian medical treatise, three Arabic volumes (two Korans, one dīwān), and four Bijapuri texts (Persian or Dakhni) (appendix, nos. 1–17).80
literature occupied a privileged place at the ‘Adil Shahi court, as it did at all Persianate courts of the day.

The latter assertion is borne out by related visual evidence suggesting the widespread popularity of Persian classics in Bijapur. At Kumatgi, a pleasure palace located approximately ten miles east of the capital, two wall paintings in the central bath hall, which is datable to Ibrahim’s reign, illustrate iconic episodes from the *Shāhnāma* and *Khamsa*.82 The *Shāhnāma* scene is located directly across from the entrance and depicts Rustam’s agony—his tearing open of his shirt—upon realizing that he has stabbed his son, Sohrab, who identifies himself by pointing to the armband given to him by his mother, Rustam’s wife (figs. 7 and 8).83 This same scene was chosen for illustration in the Bijapuri *Shāhnāma*,84 and its privileged location in the bath hall stimulates questions about meaning and relevance.85 The second wall painting shows an emaciated Majnun in the wilderness being visited by his mother and his uncle Salim ‘Amiri (fig. 9).86 While the Rustam-Sohrab tragedy appears to have been a rather exceptional selection for a palatial wall painting, the Majnun example conformed to architectural trends throughout contemporary India.87

*Ibrahim’s marks of ownership*

In addition to illuminating patterns of Persianate literary taste in Bijapur, Ibrahim’s books include marks of ownership that shed light on the ruler’s self-representation outside of the *Kitāb-i Nawras* framework. This evi-
ence can be divided into three categories: seal impressions (versus the actual matrices, none of which have been identified), ex libris, and scribal notations by librarians. Like many rulers of the day, Ibrahim (or at least his librarians) employed several seals. One of the most common—appearing in both Asar Mahal (British Library) volumes and dispersed ones—was the aforementioned oval example inscribed Ibrāhīm nawras (fig. 6). A second far larger, circular seal (fig. 10) has been erroneously associated with Ibrahim Mirza of Mashhad (d. 1577), and its known impressions are currently limited to the dispersed corpus. Its long inscription is a Koranic verse concerning the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham):

And who turns away
From the religion of Abraham
But such as debase their souls

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Fig. 8. Line drawing of “Rustam recognizing the dying Sohrab” (see fig. 7). (From Henry Cousens, Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains, With an Historical Outline of the ʿĀdil Shāhi Dynasty [repr., Delhi: Bharatiya Publication House, 1976], pl. cxiii)

Fig. 9. “Majnun in the wilderness visited by his uncle and mother.” Vault B1, South Arch, Kumatgi, Bijapur, early seventeenth century. As with fig. 7, this wall painting is badly damaged. (Photo: Keelan Overton)
Fig. 10. Impression of the circular seal of Ibrahim II (inscribed with Koran 2:130; diameter: 41 mm). Folio from a Divān of Jami, copied by Shah Muhammad al-Katib al-Shirazi, probably Shiraz, dated 971 and 972 (1563–65) (see fig. 19 and appendix, no. 1). Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, Ms. 260. (Photo: Keelan Overton)

Fig. 11. Dish, Bijapur, ca. 1600. Copenhagen, The David Collection, 11/1992. (Photo: Pernille Klemp)

Fig. 12. Tympanum with Koran 2:130, Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur, ca. 1627. (Photo: Ameen Hullur)
With folly? Him We chose
And rendered pure in this world:
And he will be in the Hereafter
In the ranks of the Righteous (2:130).

The inscription reads from top to bottom in bold *thuluth*, and elongated letters (*kashida*) in the words *millat*, *fī*, and *istafaynahu* create a series of four horizontal registers (see how the *yaʾ* of *fī* extends backwards across the middle of the seal). Like the *nawras* example, the Koranic seal is double-rulled, and its background features an even spiral accented with small leaves and floral blossoms. Stylistically, the seal closely resembles a number of Bijapuri bronze dishes with stacked *thuluth* inscriptions, often including exaggerated horizontal extensions, on delicately spiraling grounds (fig. 11).90

The codification of Bijapuri epigraphic arts acknowledged, Ibrahim’s Koranic seal is unique in several respects. Unlike the seals of his contemporaries, it features neither a date nor the monarch’s full name or titulature. The seal’s allusion to Ibrahim is just that: the chosen Koranic verse honors his namesake, the prophet Ibrahim, by way of his pure path (*millat-i Ibrāhīm*). In doing so, it alludes to the Bijapuri Ibrahim’s repentance (*tawba*), which was spearheaded by the city’s “landed” and “reformist” Qadiri and Shatarri Sufis in reaction to his syncretic Hindu-Muslim spirituality.91 This assertion is supported by the same verse’s prominent position in the tympanum over the east door of the Ibrahim Rauza, the ruler’s tomb (fig. 12).92 Recent analysis of the tomb’s epigraphic program reveals the widespread and deliberate selection of verses honoring the prophet Ibrahim Khalilullah (Friend of God) and encouraging the life of a *hanīf* (a pure believer who submits to God and true monotheism).93 The exclusive selection of 2:130 for Ibrahim’s large seal must therefore be contextualized in light of the ruler’s reorientation toward orthodox Islam, a process desirable for public broadcasting in propagandist visual terms.94

The two ex libris and four types of scribal notations (types A–D) present in Ibrahim’s books constitute further raw data through which to explore the ruler’s identity/identities. Each ex libriss can be associated with one of the royal seals (*nawras* or Koranic). The first is in the form of an illuminated rectangle, cartouche, or *shamsa* (sunburst) framing a stacked inscription written directly on the plain paper (fig. 13; see also fig. 5).95 The primary color scheme is red and blue—alternating between the inscription and illumination—and the latter includes simple floral designs and minimal gold. Although the illumination is unremarkable in comparison to Timurid and Mughal ex libris, the inscription is notable for its length and detail pertaining to the codex in ques-
perpetuate his kingdom,” a variant of which can alone comprise many ex libris (fig. 13).

Alternatively, it can record the volume’s provenance (as a gift, *pishkash*, from a specific individual) and the presence of the *nawras* seal (*muhashshā bā sikka [?] nawras*) (fig. 5).

In sum, this ex libris blends conventions of such owner-

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Fig. 14. Flyleaf with the Koranic seal ex libris of Ibrahim II, type B Bijapuri notation dated 22 Ramazan 1014 (January 31, 1606), and type C Bijapuri notation in *raqam* equivalent to 1,555 rupees. Folio from a *Majāls al-ʿUshshāq* of Kamal al-Din Husayn Gazurgahi, copied by Ahmad al-Hafiz, Shiraz, ca. 1580s (see appendix, no. 3). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, SP 1559, fol. 3r. (Photo: courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Fig. 15. Flyleaf with the Koranic seal ex libris of Ibrahim II, type A Bijapuri notation (largely effaced), and type B Bijapuri notation dated 20 R[...] 1014 (1605–6). Folio from a *Kulliyāt* of Saʿdi, Iran, late sixteenth century (see appendix, no. 6). London, British Library, Add. 17961, fol. 2r. (Photo: © The British Library Board)
ship marks (illumination, the name of the ruler) with codex-specific detail usually reserved for notations. All currently known examples are dated and reveal its consistent use for the duration of Ibrahim’s reign.99

The inscriptional content of the second ex libris (figs. 14–16) is abbreviated and formulaic, but its design is exceptional for its inclusion of Ibrahim’s Koranic seal as the central unit of a tripartite composition lacking illumination.100 Above the seal is an inscription in two lines separated by a lengthy extension (kashida) of the letter bi in the opening word kitāb (book). It typically reads, “Book of the . . . from the library of,” followed by a series of honorifics (ashraf, most noble; aqdas, most holy; a’lā, most sublime; arfa’, most high; humāyūn, blessed) culminating in Ibrahim’s name (Ibrāhīm ʿĀdilshāh) in the top line (where it is sometimes effaced, as in fig. 14). The
Fig. 17. Flyleaf with the Koranic seal of Ibrahim II and a type A Bijapuri notation in the inverted triangle format. Folio from a *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā* of Jami, copied by Shah Mahmud Nishapuri, Tabriz, dated 950 (1543–44) (see appendix, no. 5). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, SP 1919, fol. 2r. (Photo: courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)
Fig. 18. Flyleaf with a type A Bijapuri notation dated 11 Rajab 1029 (June 12, 1620) and the word nawras. Folio from a Laylā va Majnūn of Hatifi, copied by Shah Mahmud Nishapuri, Herat, dated 969 (1561–62) (see appendix, no. 9). St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, vр-995, fol. 1r. (Photo: © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Vladimir Terebenin)
final component of the ex libris is the phrase *kitābkhāna-i hudūr*, which is inverted on a diagonal to the upper left of the seal (sometimes overlapping the impression, as in fig. 16). Read in conjunction with the seal, it can be preliminarily interpreted as “library in the presence of [Ibrahim].” in other words, a privy library.

The titulature outlined above presents an important Persian counterpart to the locally inspired Hindi title, *Jagat Gurū*, by which Ibrahim is most commonly known. The term *a’lampanāh* was a popular *laqāb* (epithet, title) also employed at the contemporary Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman courts. Similarly, the honorifics *ashraf*, *a’tā, arfa’,* and *humāyūn* reflect global trends in Persian titulature from the Timurid to Ottoman courts and beyond, and, in the case of Shah ‘Abbas, were often combined with *a’lampanāh.*

Used at the onset of Ibrahim’s reign, this titulature placed him on equal footing with contemporary Islamic sovereigns while perhaps serving as yet another level of symbolic affinity with Iran specifically.

The first scribal notation (type A) is associated with the royal library (*kitābkhāna-i ‘āmira*), ranges from two to nine lines (often in the shape of an inverted triangle, as in fig. 17), and may have been written by a variety of hands (compare the precision of fig. 17 to the sloppiness of fig. 18). In addition to describing the book’s physical appearance (script, binding, rulings, paper), it can record its provenance (*bābat* [estate] and/or *pīshkash* [gift]), the date it entered the royal library, the presence of a particular seal (Ibrahim’s *nawras* or Koranic examples, or that of a different owner), and, less frequently, its ranking (*avval, duvvum, sivum*) and/or presence in a subcollection. The second notation (type B) is an *arzdida* (inspection notice) typically dated 1003 (1594–95) or 1014 (1605–6) (figs. 13 and 14). The third (type C) is a monetary valuation sometimes rendered in *raqam*, an accountant’s system of numerical symbols, which is rare in the known corpus (fig. 14). The fourth and final notation (type D) comprises two to five lines of fine *nasta’liq* written by a single librarian who appears to have subsequently worked for Ibrahim’s successor, Muhammad (r. 1627–56) (see the date of 1037 [1628] in fig. 4). Its simplest form records Ibrahim’s titulature and possession of a “special” book (fig. 21), while its longer iteration repeats information in the type A and offers critical updates. The type D in Ibrahim’s *Yūsuf va Zulaykḥā* (appendix, no. 5), for example, reiterates portions of the now-cropped type A on the subsequent folio (see fig. 17) while adding two lines about a refurbishment: “Newly bound with yellow lining and red binding."

**Bijapur’s libraries**

The marks of ownership summarized above reveal that Ibrahim’s books were preserved in at least two, and probably three, repositories. The main distinction appears to have been between Bijapur’s royal library (*kitābkhāna-i ‘āmira*) and Ibrahim’s wardrobe (*jāmadārkhana*). The precise location of the royal library is unknown, but we can assume that it was the source of the 2,000 volumes, some with paintings “entirely the work of masters,” that Ibrahim presented to Akbar in 1604. As for the *jāmadārkhana*, we can presume a smaller collection and a greater degree of physical proximity to the ruler (within his palace?). Upon entry into the *jāmadārkhana*, many books were decorated with the illuminated ex libris and impressed with the *nawras* seal. Some were subsequently transferred to the *kitābkhāna-i ‘āmira*, as documented in type A and/or type D notations. A large-scale relocation of books seems to have occurred in 1615, on the eve of Ibrahim’s final decade of rule. Other transfers took place after his death in 1627 (see fig. 4, where the type D notation is dated 1037 [1628]).

One particular first-class fifteenth-century manuscript—Glosses by the Timurid scholar Sayyid Sharif Jurjani (d. 1413) on the commentary by Qutb al-Din al-Tahtani al-Razi (d. 1364) on the *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār* (Rising of Lights) of Siraj al-Din Mahmud Urmawi (d. 1283)—bears three dated ownership marks spanning three decades that support the hypotheses above. The earliest is Ibrahim’s illuminated ex libris with the following stacked inscription in blue (fig. 5):

Glosses (ḥāshiya) of Mir Sayyid Sharif on the commentary (sharḥ) of Qutbi on the *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār* of Urmawi, completed in logic. In *shikasta* script. Annotated (mukashshā) with the [*?] *nawras* seal (*sikka* [indeed visible on fol. 3v]) of the Refuge of the World (*A’lampanāh*), may God perpetuate his kingdom. Gift (*pīshkash*) of Mir Zahid, on the twenty-first of Dhu’l Hijja, year 994 [December 2, 1586].
The second is a type B notation (‘arżdida) written next to the ex libris and dated 8 Rabī‘ I 1003 (November 21, 1594). The third and final mark is a nine-line type A notation in the inverted triangle format on the previous folio (fol. 2r). It confirms the book’s earlier presence in the jāmadārkhāna, where it presumably received the illuminated ex libris and nawras seal, and its accession into the kitābhāna-i ʿāmira on 5 Rajab 1024 (July 31, 1615).112 This transfer took place with the permission of the keeper of the wardrobe (biparvānīgī-jāmadārkhān) and was carried out by one Farrukh Aqa, presumably a young page (khursāla) in Ibrahim’s entourage.

Since most of the jāmadārkhāna books are of average quality in aesthetic terms, this repository may have been a mundane functional collection, a source of canonical books of the “textbook” sort that Ibrahim would have consulted regularly as part of his intellectual syllabus. The inclusion of the phrase kitābhāna-i huḍūr in the ruler’s Koranic seal ex libris suggests that an additional, more luxurious collection was also kept in his immediate presence. The value of the kitābhāna-i huḍūr volumes likely explains their physical separation from the more routine jāmadārkhāna ones.

The Paris Majālis al-ʿUshshaq (Assemblies of Lovers) (appendix, no. 3)—including a double-page illumination signed by Jalal al-Din Baghnavi (fols. 3v–4r) and seventy-five paintings attributable to Shiraz circa 1580—supports these preliminary conclusions.113 In addition to the Koranic seal ex libris (with the standard phrase kitābhāna-i huḍūr), it includes a type C notation recording its value as 1,555 rupees (fig. 14).114 This high valuation suggests that the Paris Majālis was especially esteemed and therefore suitable for the kitābhāna-i huḍūr.115 The volume traveled fairly quickly from its place of production (Shiraz) to Bijapur, as attested by its type B notation (‘arżdida) dated 22 Ramadan 1014 (January 31, 1606) (fig. 14). It may have been a treasured gift to Ibrahim from one of Bijapur’s leading Shirazi émigrés (Shah Navaz Khan?). Alternatively, it could have come directly from a Shirazi atelier of the type known to have supplied the Ottoman court.116

The recently identified Laylā va Majnūn (appendix, no. 9) copied by the famed Shah Mahmud Nishapuri in Herat further complicates our understanding of Bijapur’s library collections.117 According to its type A notation (see fig. 18), it entered the royal library (kitābhāna-i maʿmūra) on 11 Rajab 1029 (June 12, 1620) from the huḍūr nawras (bābat-i huḍūr nawras). The notation further records that it was impressed with the nawras seal, and the word nawras is written prominently on the upper edge of the same folio (fig. 18).118 This volume therefore reveals that both the nawras and Koranic seals were used to impress luxury manuscripts kept in Ibrahim’s presence (huḍūr). Was the huḍūr nawras a subcollection within the kitābhāna-i huḍūr? Why were some luxury manuscripts associated with nawras (vis-à-vis the seal and word itself), while others were marked with the Koranic seal or Koranic seal ex libris?119 Finally, why were no volumes impressed with the latter seal present in the Asar Mahal at the time of the British discovery in 1853? At present, we can only speculate while acknowledging the existence of a sophisticated library administration and a collection of books divided among several repositories depending on rank, value, and probable use.

**Value, reception, and refurbishment**

The application of Ibrahim’s Koranic seal presents an opportunity to explore further the reception and valuation of certain books in his collection. Two of the ruler’s finest manuscripts were marked with multiple impressions of this seal. His Dīvān of Jami copied by Shah Muhammad al-Katib al-Shirazi and dated 971 and 972 (1563–65) features nineteen such impressions (appendix, no. 1).120 The first appears on the opening flyleaf (fol. 1r) above a largely effaced type A notation in the inverted triangle format.121 The remaining eighteen are located in the borders of all but one of the book’s nineteen illustrated folios (fig. 19). In a few instances, they slightly overlap the rulings and picture plane.

The second example of multiple seal impressions occurs in Ibrahim’s Dīvān of al-Ḥadīra (Qutba b. Aws) dated 629 (1231–32) (appendix, no. 13).122 Here the number of impressions is far less (just two), but their placement speaks volumes. The first appears in the border of the incipit page (opening page of text) next to the bismillah (fig. 20), and the second in the border adjacent to the colophon reading “end of the poetry of al-Ḥadīra ... written by Yaqt al-Mustaʿsimī” (fol. 36v). The great
'Abbasid calligrapher Yaqut (d. 1298) was widely eulogized in Persian poetry at Ibrahim’s court, and the presumption of his hand likely explains the two seal impressions bookmarking the text. The manuscript’s high value is further confirmed by the two-line type D notation appearing at the top of the title page: “Special book of the blessed, most noble, most holy, most high, Ibrahim ‘Adilshah” (fig. 21). In possessing a volume thought to be the work of Yaqut, Ibrahim found himself on equal footing with its previous bibliophile owners, who also left their marks on the title page (fig. 21). A signed reader’s note written diagonally across the lower edge suggests that the manuscript circulated at the early Timurid court. Two royal seals in the middle of the folio—the circular one belonging to Rustam b. Maqsud (r. 1493–97) and the niche-shaped one to a descendant of Ya’qub (r. 1478–90)—confirm its subsequent presence in Aqqoyunlu Tabriz. Thereafter, the book migrated southeast to Safavid Qazvin, as documented by the seal of Isma’il II (r. 1576–78) on the previous folio. The latter court of tenure reveals that the volume likely entered Bijapur (and India in general) for the first time during Ibrahim’s reign (beginning 1580), presumably via the hands of an
Iranian immigrant previously engaged at the Safavid court.

Like the adoption of titulature echoing that of Shah 'Abbas, the use of multiple seal impressions may have been part of a larger cultural effort to align Bijapur symbolically with Iran. The excessive impressions of Shah 'Abbas’s 1017 (1608–9) Ardabil waqf seal are well known. Well over half of the twenty-nine illustrated folios in Ibrahim Mirza’s _Haft Awrang_ (Seven Thrones) of Jami dated 963–72 (1556–65) were stamped with this seal,\(^{129}\) and the same can be said for five of the eight illustrated folios in the _Mantiq al-Tayr_ (Language of the Birds) dated 892 (1487).\(^ {130}\) In the Deccan, redundant seal impressions also appear in the Qutb Shahi context, as attested by the seal of Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–26) on each of the five illuminated title pages in the renowned Timurid _Khamsa_ of Nizami dated 835 (1431–32).\(^ {131}\) Considered together, these Safavid, 'Adil Shahi, and Qutb...
Shahi practices sharply contrast with contemporary Mughal ones. Although the seals of Jahangir's librarians and disciples appear frequently in his manuscripts, the emperor's seal was used rather sparingly, and he preferred to compose his own lengthy inscriptions on flyleaves, illuminated frontispieces, and/or colophons. Given that Ibrahim spent the majority of his reign thwarting threats from the Mughals and the Abyssinian military leader Malik 'Ambar (d. 1626), it can be tempting to suggest that his incessant seal impressions were symptomatic of both value and fear, the latter paralleling Safavid anxieties. Although the Doha Dīwān and Rampur Dīwān seem to have evaded confiscation, some (many?) of Ibrahim's books were accessioned into the Mughal library upon, or shortly after, the conquest of Bijapur in 1686 (appendix, nos. 5, 8–10).

A final mark of ownership closely related to Ibrahim's Koranic seal is found not on the pages of his books but rather on their bindings, many of which were likely practical refurbishments in the Bijapuri workshop (the binding taking the brunt of a codex's damage and often requiring replacement). The mark in question is a large (height: 95 mm), diamond-shaped medallion (likely turanj in contemporary usage) with scalloped edges that frames an inner circle with stacked thuluth inscriptions in four registers on a spiral ground (fig. 22). This central epigraphic portion is immediately recognizable as a replica of Ibrahim's Koranic seal (see fig. 10), albeit slightly larger (diameter: 47 mm versus 41 mm). We can presume that the original seal and stamp matrices—the first for impression on paper, the second for pressing into leather, and not to be confused as a single object—were produced by the same designer/engraver/workshop, whose style can in turn be associated with contemporary examples of Bijapuri metalwork (see fig. 11). To date, a comparable phenomenon of a royal seal refashioned as a binding stamp, with minimal alteration to the seal's epigraphic design, has not been identified.

Ibrahim's "scalloped seal stamp," as I prefer to call it, has hitherto been identified on only one binding: the example sheathing the Koran transcribed by Muhammad Mu’min b. ‘Abdullah Murvarid (appendix, no. 12). This important manuscript is well recognized by both Islamicists and South Asianists as the only known Koran ostensibly copied for Abu Sa’id (r. 1458–69) and later owned by Tipu Sultan of Mysore (r. 1782–99). The stamp is not visible on the binding's covers (fig. 23), whose eclectic central panel combines the favored geometry of Timurid Herati illumination with Safavid-style floral embellishment, the latter carrying over into the twelve stamps of the outer border (four cornerpieces [kunjī] and eight cartouches [katība]). Instead, it is found in the center of each doublure (fig. 24), where it is framed by two small pendants (turanj va sar turanj or turanj va barg, as in appendix, no. 16) and four corner pieces, a typical arrangement. Thanks to their protected internal placement, the two stamp impressions are in excellent condition. Every detail remains in sharp relief, including the fine spiral ground familiar from the original seal and the bold floral scroll of the "new" scalloped frame, replete with cleverly placed curves. In addition to implying the sophistication of Bijapuri metallurgy and bookbinding, the stamps break a 350-year silence (ca. 1440–1790) in the Koran's biography, illuminate an earlier sojourn on the subcontinent (its first?), and confirm that volumes of the highest pedigree made their way to Ibrahim's Bijapur. The latter underscores the city's cultural and commercial centrality despite its physical location in a region deemed peripheral (at least in contrast to the Mughal, Ottoman, and Safavid "centers").

The decision to commemorate Ibrahim's possession of this esteemed Koran on the inside of its new Bijapuri binding was anything but standard. When ownership is recorded on a binding, it generally takes the form of an elongated horizontal stamp on the exterior of the foreedge flap or spine. Moreover, such inscriptions name the owner in explicit terms, rather than Koranic allusion, and begin with the common ex libris phrase bi-rasm-i kitābkhāna-i (or a variant thereof). At present, the closest parallel to the St Andrews binding (more specifically, its doublures) can be found in a Koran made for the Mamluk sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri (r. 1501–16) while he was still amir. The composition of the Mamluk doublures is familiar—a large medallion framed by axial pendants—and the epigraphic commemoration again appears in the central element. In this instance, however, the owner/amir is named in the conventional terms described above (bi-rasm-i khizāna-i), the inscrip-
tion is continuous between the front and back dou-
blures (instead of being repeated), and the technique in
question is gilded filigree (rather than a gold-blocked
stamp).

Although Ibrahim’s scalloped seal stamp remains
a confounding unicum—What explains the cross-
fertilization with the royal seal? Who developed this
“dual-purposing”? Were there any precedents?—it
nonetheless magnifies the incessant seriality, and hence
significance, of the Koranic verse in question (2:130).
This verse was not only selected for a prominent tympa-
num of Ibrahim’s tomb (fig. 12), but was also cast as his
royal seal (fig. 10), and that circular form was in turn
elevated to an ex libris (figs. 14–16) and replicated as the
central portion of a laborious binding stamp (fig. 22).
These visual variations of a single verse—in stone, met-
al, paper, and leather—leave open the question of ad-
tional iterations, perhaps including a metal dish of the
standard type (fig. 11). For the moment, we are left with
a poignant and pervasive verbal portrait of Ibrahim as a
hanif on the pure path, one that stands in sharp contrast
to his figural image as a syncretic seeker (as perpetuated
in “masterpiece” paintings such as figs. 1 and 2).

There can be little doubt that the metal binding
stamp—an outstanding work of art in its own right—
was used to mark and beautify other books in Ibrahim’s
possession, and the future discovery of additional vol-
umes will yield exciting results.146 Moving forward, the
sole known application in the St Andrews Koran pro-
vides a concretely Bijapuri point of reference for the
study of “Deccani” metalwork (fig. 11),147 while under-
scoring that we have hardly scratched the surface of
understanding the Bijapuri codex in holistic terms. For
this reason, we must be wary of attributions of the type
recently applied to the Khamsa transcribed by Kha-
lilullah in Bijapur (see page 94)—“The manuscript’s
extremely fine Safavid binding indicates that the man-
uscript made its way [from Bijapur] to the Safavid court
in Isfahan”—which presumes that style is fixed in
place, rather than potentially in the hand of the maker.
In the interconnected Perso-Deccani context in ques-
tion, the Khamsa’s Safavid-style (not necessarily Safav-
id) binding could have been made in Bijapur by an
Iranian immigrant operating in a conservative Persian-
ate mode, much like the painter Farrukh Husayn, as we
shall see.149 It was perhaps vis-à-vis such an Iranian émi-
gré that the St Andrews Koran and other esteemed
books arrived in Bijapur in the first place, and that sug-
gestion leads us to the question of how the city’s collec-
tions were built.

Building collections: Ghariban contributions

In contrast to the genial nature of Mughal collecting,
wherein a new ruler absorbed the library of his prede-
cessor/father and genealogical seals were common,
ʿadil shahi collecting appears to have been more of an
individual, rather than dynastic, enterprise.150 Only a
handful of manuscripts in ibrahim’s known collection
were previously owned by his predecessor and father,
ʿali i (r. 1558–80), or subsequently acquired by his suc-
cessors (Muhammad, r. 1627–56; ʿali II, r. 1656–72).151
The former circumstance raises questions about how,
where, and from whom ibrahim obtained his books. The
extant scribal notations reveal that, with the exception
of volumes acquired during military conflict (especially
the conquest of Muhammadabad/Bidar in 1619), the ma-
jority were gifts from individuals or their estates. The
notations therefore function as a veritable “Who’s Who”
of Bijapur’s courtly culture, particularly its iranian con-
tingent.

Given Zuhuri and Malik Qummi’s praise of Shah Na-
vaz Khan’s literary knowledge and other sources’ insis-
tence that the prime minister played an instrumental
role in Ibrahim’s linguistic and literary education, it is
not surprising that this illustrious immigrant had a sig-
nificant impact on Bijapur’s libraries.152 In 1617, Shah
Nawaz Khan’s son (farzand) presented at least thirteen
books as gifts (pīshkash) to the kitābkhāna-i ʿāmira,
which were sometimes overseen by one Salim Khan.153 We
can presume that Shah Nawaz Khan himself had acquired
many of these volumes in Iran and, more specifically, in
Shiraz. A few are impressed with the prime minister’s
seal,154 the majority belong to the Shiraz school of phi-
losophy,155 and some were copied in the city and/or as-
associated with its rulers. Examples include a first-class
sixteenth-century manuscript of Davani’s gloss on the
commentary by ʿAla al-Din Qushji (d. 1470) on the Tajrid
al-Kalām (Abstract of Theology) of Nasir al-Din Tusi (d.
1274), with Davani’s preface dedicated to the Aqqoyun-
Fig. 22. Impression of the scalloped seal binding stamp of Ibrahim II (dimensions: H: 95 mm). Detail from the front doublure (fig. 24) of the Bijapuri binding, ca. 1580–1627, of the Koran copied by Muhammad Mu‘min b. ‘Abdullah Murvarid (see appendix, no. 12). University of St Andrews Library, Ms. 19 O. (Photo: courtesy of the University of St Andrews Library)
lu ruler Sultan Khalil (r. 1478), who was earlier the governor of Shiraz (1471–78);\textsuperscript{156} a late sixteenth-century Shirazi copy of Davani’s gloss on the *Tahdīb al-Maⁿṭiq wa’l-Kalām* (Manual of Logic and Theology) of Sa’d al-Din Taftazani (d. 1389);\textsuperscript{157} a volume dated 3 Rabi’ II 984 (June 30, 1576) of Jurjani’s gloss on the commentary by Qutb al-Din al-Razi on the *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār* of Urmawi;\textsuperscript{158} and a second-class copy of the supergloss by Sayyid ‘Ali (d. 1455) on the preceding glosses of Jurjani.\textsuperscript{159} The Shah Navaz Khan group also included one book with an illustrious Deccani provenance: a manuscript dated 4 Rabi’ I 824 (March 8, 1421) of the commentary by Muhammad b. Abi Bakir al-Damamini (d. 1424) on the *Mughni al-Labīb* (a compendium of Arabic grammar) of Ibn Hisham (d. 1360) impressed with two seals of Bidar’s famous merchant-turned-statesman Mahmud Gavan (d. 1481).\textsuperscript{160}

In addition to Shah Navaz Khan, the names that appear frequently as donors in the scribal notations include Mir Muhammad Tahir Mousavi, Mir Muhammad Amin, Rustam Khan, Mulla Payanda, Shaykh ‘Alam Allah, and Shah Abu’l Hasan. While the identities of these individuals remain to be unraveled, the final name likely referred to Shah Abu’l Hasan Qadiri (d. 1635), a “reformist” Sufi who arrived in Bijapur during the first year of Ibrahim’s reign (1580) and has been credited with per-
suading the ruler to revert to orthodox Islam.161 According to the type A notation in a mid-fifteenth-century copy of the commentary by Shams al-Din Mahmud Isfahani (d. 1345) on the *Tawālī’ al-Anwār* of ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar Baydavi (d. 1286),162 the saint appears to have presented the book to the *jāmadārkhana* no later than 4 Rajab 1003 (March 15, 1595), the date recorded in a type B notation (ʿarżdīda) immediately below. The volume was assigned a first-class valuation, impressed with Ibrahim’s *nawras* seal (as described in the type A notation), and adorned with the ruler’s illuminated ex libris in the form of a large red *shamsa* (the inscription was never completed).163 By the order of the *jāmadārkhan*, the codex was subsequently transferred to the *kitābkhāna-i ma’mūra* on 2 Ramadan 1024 (September 25, 1615), an event that seems to have signaled the composition of the type A notation.

That this volume was a gift from the Qadiri reformist saint in question, rather than some other Shah Abu’l Hasan, is reinforced by its provenance, which in turn illuminates networks of taste, collecting, and knowledge within the Deccan’s *gharībān* circles. According to its colophon, the manuscript was transcribed by Ja’far b. Ja’far al-Riza al-Urayzi al-Husayni on 30 Rabi‘ I 861 (February 25, 1457) for Shah Habib al-Din Muhibullah (d. ca. 1506), a member of the Ni’matullahi Sufi family based in Bidar.164 In the early fifteenth century, Ahmad I Bahmani of Bidar (r. 1422–36) invited Shah Ni’matullah Vali of Kirman (d. 1431), the spiritual head of the order, to relocate to the Deccan.165 The shaykh declined, sending his grandson Nurallah (d. ca. 1430) in his stead, and his son Shah Khalilullah (d. ca. 1442–54) eventually led a second migration (arriving some time before 1435).166 One of Shah Khalilullah’s sons, Shah Muhibullah (for whom the volume in question was copied and whose seal appears on the flyleaf discussed above), married the daughter of ‘Alaudden Ahmad II (r. 1436–58), became Bidar’s most prominent religious figure, and received statesmen such as Mahmud Gavan at his feet.167 The link between Shah Muhibullah of mid-fifteenth-century Bidar and Abu’l Hasan of late sixteenth-century Bijapur is that the latter’s family had also migrated to Bidar (in this case, from Baghdad) during the Bahmani period.168 In fact, it was a combination of Ni’matullahis from Mahan/Kirman/Taft, Qadiris from Baghdad, and other émi-
The degree to which this gharibān-dominated book culture can be linked to Ibrahim specifically remains to be determined. The large number of Sufi texts, including the Majālis al-ʿUshshāq, could be indicative of the ruler’s mystical inclinations; alternatively, they could simply reflect widespread popularity. In some cases, the marks of ownership do seem to communicate a more precise, and perhaps intimate, relationship between Ibrahim and his collection. Consider, for example, the volumes preserved in the kitābhāna-i ḥuḍūr (appendix, nos. 3, 6, 8) or jāmadārkhana (wardrobe) (appendix, no. 15), described as khāṣṣ (special, outstanding) (appendix, nos. 4, 10, 13), bearing multiple seal impressions implying high worth and associated paranoia (appendix, nos. 1, 13), and sheathed in bindings with the scalloped seal stamp (appendix, no. 12). As a whole, Ibrahim’s book collection likely served two purposes for him personally: to contribute universality, depth, and discipline to his daily intellectual syllabus, one that was influenced by learned gharibān such as Shah Navaz Khan and Shah Abu’l Hasan, and to position him as a monarch who participated in a chief prerogative of Perso-Islamic kingship, that is, the formation of a coveted and comprehensive library.

This consideration of Ibrahim’s book collection has thrown into sharp relief the ruler’s cultural fluency and mutability. Nominally a Hanafi Sunni, Ibrahim surrounded himself with notable Shi’i Iranian émigrés, intervened on behalf of Shi’i causes, employed a Nād-i ‘Aliyyān seal, and issued coinage with the simultaneous legends Ghulām-i Muṭtazā ʿAlī and Ibrāhīm Ablā Bālī (Hindi, “Strength of the Weak”) (fig. 25). As Ablā Bālī and Jagat Gurū, Ibrahim excelled in creative endeavors of a personal and Deccan-centric kind, as exemplified by his Kitāb-i Nawras and trifold devotion to the Prophet Muhammad, Sarawati, and Gesu Daraz. As ‘Ālampanāh, Ghulām-i Muṭtazā ʿAlī, and Khalīlullah (the title held by his namesake), he participated in the universal paradigms of Islamic kingship and, in this capacity, was also cast as a repentant hanīf (recall his Koranic seal and its mutations; see figs. 10, 12, 14–16, 22). These multifarious identities were not rigid binaries but rather complementary and strategic conversations. Indeed, Ibrahim’s (and his court’s) skills of reconciliation and inclusivity must have played a central role in securing his kingship for nearly five decades (1580–1627), a phenomenon also equated with Akbar’s longevity.

“SARASWATI ENTHRONED” (AS BILQIS):
FARRUKH HUSAYN’S TRANSLATION
OF THE SOLOMONIC METAPHOR

With an understanding of Perso-Islamic intellectual patterns in Ibrahim’s Bijapur, we now turn to the question of how such systems may have impacted its painting ateliers. Perhaps the most effective way to map this relationship is through an actual immigrant, Farrukh Husayn, the artist singled out for praise in the Khān-i Khalīl.
At stake are the following questions: To what degree did a Khurasan-trained painter integrate Persian conventions into his Deccani repertoire? How did he negotiate his personal itinerant experience with the local paradigms espoused by Ibrahim? Finally, did his Bijapuri production in any way complement the Perso-Islamic knowledge systems outlined above?

During his decade-long tenure in Bijapur (ca. 1595–1609), Farrukh painted at least five album portraits of Ibrahim and two manuscript illustrations. Four of these paintings—"Saraswati enthroned" (fig. 1), "Ibrahim playing the tambur" (fig. 2), and two portraits of the ruler riding an elephant—appear fundamentally rooted in Kitāb-i Nawras iconography. The remaining three—"Ibrahim hawking" (St. Petersburg), "Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir" (fig. 3), and "Abu'l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion" (fig. 26)—immediately strike the viewer as conservatively Persian in both style and content.

The painting that initially seems the most indebted to the Kitāb-i Nawras and Deccani context—"Saraswati enthroned" (see fig. 1)—is in fact a brilliant exercise of visual translation and hence facilitates the exploration of Bijapuri art in light of the complementary (local/translocal) conversations called for above. To depict the foreign (to him) subject of a Hindu goddess, Farrukh

Fig. 26. "Abu'l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion" ("Sufis/Saints in a landscape"), attributed to Farrukh Husayn, probably Bijapur, ca. 1595–1609. St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Dorn 489, fol. 24v. (Photo: courtesy of the National Library of Russia)
relied heavily on Ibrahim’s book of songs, wherein Saraswati has four arms, wears a white dress, and sits on a throne (song 53). The Kitāb-i Nawras was also sourced for the verses in nastāla’iq that appear just beneath the arch (song 56: “Ibrahim whose father is guru Ganapati [Ganesh], and mother the pure Saraswati”). Additional details of local dress and accoutrement—striped gold patkas (sashes), large necklace pendants (known as urbasi), thick arm bracelets—contribute a Bijapuri spirit to the scene.

Upon sustained inspection of the painting, however, one increasingly exits the Bijapuri sphere of the patron and enters the peripatetic referents of its Iranian artist. The composition is neither a “fantastic” nor “dreamlike” landscape (of the type unilaterally associated with Deccani painting), nor is it populated with the naturalistic elements favored by the Bijapuri painter ‘Ali Riza. Apart from a handful of album paintings and manuscript illustrations from the Pem Nem, “Saraswati enthroned” is one of the few Ibrahim-era compositions framed by an architectural backdrop (landscapes being preferred, at least in the current known corpus). Whereas the palatial settings in the Pem Nem are conspicuously Bijapuri (low-springing ogee arches, bulbous domes on lotus-petal bases, projecting eaves and balconies), the arrangement in “Saraswati enthroned” is resolutely Persianate. The architectural backdrop recalls Farrukh’s earlier manuscript illustrations (especially “Babur receives a courtier,” fig. 27, and “The Prophet’s bier”186) but is aggressively condensed into three zones: a foreground garden with a fountain outlined in burgundy and rendered parallel to the picture plane; a large arch suggestive of a deep iwan; and the rear wall of the palace. Saraswati sits on a magnificent throne adjacent to the fountain (note the throne’s similar placement in fig. 27), a peacock strolls by, and an attendant approaches with a bejeweled ostrich egg vessel. The spandrels of the arch feature swans amid Chinese-style clouds, and the rear wall includes, from bottom to top, a dado of brickwork, an unadorned white zone, the aforementioned Kitāb-i Nawras verses, and a mural painting of Ibrahim riding an elephant. The lower zones of the wall are punctuated by a door leading to an exterior green space, yet another one of Farrukh’s favorite tropes (see fig. 27, where the white wall is embellished with tinted drawings of the type seen on the vases in “Saraswati enthroned”).

Like the formulaic Persian-style composition, additional details in “Saraswati enthroned” stand out as disconnected from Bijapuri iconography and the Kitāb-i Nawras. The sizable gold throne with a high scalloped back is at odds with the low-lying takht (lit. “throne”) ubiquitous in Deccani painting, and the prominent parīs shading the goddess with a gold brocade are a curious addition. The latter winged creatures provide the most conspicuous clue for understanding Farrukh’s masterful recasting of his Hindu-Deccani subject into more familiar terms. The iconography of parīs shading an enthroned figure (with their wings or other items) immediately recalls Solomonic imagery. In his Qiṣas al-Anbiyāʾ (Tales of the Prophets), Abu Ishaq Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Tha’labi (d. 1035) describes Solomon’s divan as protected by birds who shade the sun and create shadows with their wings. Such textual accounts have led Priscilla Soucek to conclude, “The use of flying creatures who hover over the ruler’s head is one of the most characteristic themes in Solomonic imagery.” In “Saraswati enthroned,” three sets of winged creatures (parakeets, parīs, cranes) constitute a veritable “living baldachin” above the goddess. The parakeets, in particular, recall the bejeweled pigeons perched on Solomon’s throne who sang every hour.

The Solomonic allusions of “Saraswati enthroned” are confirmed by comparison with contemporary Shirazi painting, specifically, the illustrated frontispieces of Solomon and Bilqis enthroned in luxury manuscripts. The architectural backdrop of the Bilqis painting in a Shāhnāma of circa 1580–85 closely parallels that of “Saraswati enthroned”; it, too, has a small fountain in the foreground and a door in the rear leading to a green exterior. Like Saraswati, Bilqis sits on an extravagant throne and faces left toward an approaching female attendant carrying a vessel, as a pair of parīs hover above (in this instance, they swoop down carrying gold vessels). Even more explicit parallels can be drawn between “Saraswati enthroned” and the Bilqis side of a Khamsa frontispiece of circa 1580. In both images, the wings of the parīs flanking the throne rise upward and nearly touch, thereby echoing the large arch above. In addition, both thrones feature a high scalloped back, vertical pan-
The precise mechanics of Farrukh’s casting of Saraswati in Solomonic terms remain to be determined. Did the artist rely on an actual Shirazi model in one of Bijapur’s libraries? To date, a Shirazi depiction of Solomon and/or Bilqis enthroned has not been located in a Bijapur repository, but there is a high probability that such imagery existed in the city, especially given the prominence of Shirazis in elite society (Shah Navaz Khan, Rafi al-Din Shirazi) and the existence of illustrated...
Shirazi manuscripts in the royal library (Dīvān of Jami, Majālsī al-ʿUshshāq; appendix, nos. 1, 3, 4). Even if Farrukh did not have a direct model at his disposal in Bijapur—and that seems unlikely—others would have circulated nearby. Qutb Shahi Golconda was a vital center of Shiraz-inspired manuscript production, and at least three major Golconda manuscripts—a Sīnbadnāma of circa 1575, a Dīvān of Muhammad Quli (r. 1580–1612), and a Fahlāma (Book of Omens) of circa 1600–30—include paintings of Solomon and Bilqis enthroned. We can presume a high degree of flow between Bijapur and Golconda during Farrukh's tenure, for Ibrahim and Muhammad Quli shared a fondness for Persian classics and ordered their best émigré imitations of Nizami. Moreover, important paintings and manuscripts were exchanged between the two courts. Shortly after its creation in circa 1605, the most famous of Bijapur's yogini paintings was assembled into an album for Muhammad Quli, and at least one of Muhammad Quli's books—an anonymous commentary on the Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam (Seals of Wisdom) of Ibn ʿArabi (d. 1322)—entered Bijapur's royal library.  

Farrukh also may have been prescient of Shirazi prototypes from his artistic training in Iran. Skelton has argued that the artist hailed from Shiraz and was perhaps raised in the household (under Mawlama Darvish Husayn) that hosted Zuhuri prior to the poet's departure for India (Skelton's next conclusion being that Zuhuri later lured Farrukh to Bijapur). That Farrukh was at least proficient in Shirazi models is suggested by his signature on the throne's steps in "Saraswati enthroned," which echoes the placement of 'Abd al-Jalal's in the Topkapı Khamsa frontispiece. Unlike 'Abd al-Jalal's simple 'amal formula, however, Farrukh signed with the more extensive harrarahu (?). Farrukh Husayn muṣavvir-i Ibrāhīm 'Ādilshāhī ([drawn by?] Farrukh Husayn the painter [in the service of] Ibrahim Adil Shah [11]). The harrarahu-muṣavvir formula was common in late sixteenth-century Khurasani circles, and Farrukh had employed it about fifteen years earlier in his portrait, dated 992 (1584–85), of the ruler of Kabul, "Mirza Muhammad Hakim with Hajji Yaqut" (fig. 28).  

Farrukh's translation of the Solomonic metaphor in "Saraswati enthroned" was but one reflection of a Bijapur courtly culture steeped in such allusions. The dated inscription on the south side of the Ibrahim Rauza describes Ibrahim's wife Taj Sultan as "dignified like Zubayda and exalted like Bilqis," and the first four verses on the turban worn by the ruler in the Copenhagen Bust Portrait of Ibrahim read: "He is Khalil / The celestial sphere has no pearl in the shell like you / Faridun and Jamshid have no offspring like you / Throne of Solomon [rest of inscription effaced]." With the exception of the opening hūwa 'l khalīl (a common reference to Ibrahim via his namesake), these verses were extrapolated from the Sāqīnāma (Book of the Cupbearer) of Hafiz (d. 1392). Of relevance here is the fact that the final words alluding to Solomon vis-à-vis his throne (takht-i Sulaymān) were deliberately changed from Hafiz's original reference to Sīkandār (Alexander), thereby solidifying the Solomonic metaphor. Similar Solomonic language characterizes the poems in the Sīh Naṣr. In Nawras, Ibrahim's castle is compared to that of Solomon, and the Khān-i Khalīl proclaims, "Just as the wind carried aloft the throne of Solomon [takht-i Sulaymān], so, also, the throne of his [Ibrahim's] fame is wafted on the shoulders of breath." A less explicit Solomonic reference can be found in the central bath hall of Kumatgi, the aforementioned pleasure palace east of Bijapur. One of the building's ceiling paintings depicts alternating peacocks and paris, the latter dressed in Persian garb (one with a topknot, one with a lobed Persian crown) and carrying a variety of vessels. Such imagery held widespread Solomonic allusion in bath halls throughout the subcontinent.  

Given the pervasiveness of the Solomonic archetype in Ibrahim's Bijapur, the formal dependency of "Saraswati enthroned" on Shirazi prototypes, and the fact that such Persianate models were commonly composed in double format, we are left with a final important question: In its original codex, was "Saraswati enthroned" possibly the left-hand side of a double-page composition? If so, did the right-hand folio depict a male counterpart cast in a Solomonic light, perhaps Ibrahim himself or the elephant god Ganapati? Would this male figure have been enthroned in a landscape surrounded by lions, leopards, hares, and other animals, as opposed to the architectural setting favored for Bilqis? At present, we can only speculate, but because the
Fig. 28. "Mirza Muhammad Hakim with Hajji Yaqut," signed by Farrukh Husayn, Kabul, dated 992 (1584–85). Folio from the Salim/Jahangir Album, north India, ca. late 1590s–1620s. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 199. (Photo: Keelan Overton)
Kitāb-i-Nawras verses selected for “Saraswati enthroned” positioned Ganapati as Ibrahim’s father and Saraswati as his mother, I currently favor the elephant god as the subject of a possible right-hand page.

“Saraswati enthroned” is one of the most successful known visual reconciliations of Bijapur’s local and translocal cultures. Its duality parallels the coinage described above (Ibrāhīm Ablā Balī and Ghulām-i Murtażā ‘Alī; see fig. 25), but the effect is subtler. The painting would have been immediately legible to its patron (Ibrahim), yet simultaneously familiar to the court’s Iranian notables, particularly its Shirazi savants. On a more personal level, “Saraswati enthroned” was a quintessential example of what is perhaps best termed “a painter’s painting.” While conforming to the expectations of the Deccani patron, as dictated by the Kitāb-i Nawras, it concurrently spoke an internal dialogue perhaps appreciated in full only by Farrukh himself. In this classic example of peripatetic visual translation, the artist synthesized more than two decades of artistic experience: his possible upbringing in Shiraz, formative training in Khurasan, tenure on the Mughal periphery in Mirza Hakim’s Kabul, decade in Lahore at Akbar’s court, and present circumstances in Ibrahim’s Bijapur. When we set aside the painting’s obvious Shirazi (Solomon and Bilqis) and Bijapuri (Kitāb-i Nawras) iconographies, we are left with an image whose technical precision in illumination, drawing, and calligraphy finds its closest parallels in the manuscript illustrations of Safavid Khurasan, particularly those attributed to Muhammadi and his school.219 Farrukh’s exactitude is exemplified by his handling of the throne, which is not filled with loosely painted floral designs in the typical Shirazi manner220 but rather with intricate, voluminous drawing recalling the borders of the Freer Jami (see the serrated leaves overlapping blossoms, and the lotuses with feathery edges).221 The artist’s apparent use of the harrarahu-muṣavvir formula was apropos, for the painting does indeed synthesize a wide range of artistic skill and specialization best conveyed by these two words in combination.

“YOUTH WITH SAFĪNA”: FARRUKH HUSAYN’S MEDIATION OF MUHAMMADI

As early as 1957, Robert Skelton emphasized Farrukh’s Khurasani training and drew stylistic parallels to Muhammadi, a topic that has been expanded by Abolala Soudavar in particular.222 Muhammadi is best known for his portraits of smiling, moon-faced youths holding cups, ṣafīnas, and flowers (particularly narcissus).223 That this genre of portraiture became popular in India and was there specifically associated with Farrukh is confirmed by seven paintings with Mughal ascriptions to the painter (ʿamal-i nādir al-ʿaṣr Farrukh Big [work of the Wonder of the age, Farrukh Beg]) in a Khamsa of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi copied in Herat and dated 978 and 979 (1570–72).224 The intimate gestures in the manuscript’s “Entangled pair” (fig. 29) can be compared to those in Muhammadi’s “Young man offering a wine cup to a girl,”225 while “Standing woman with cup”226 is closely related to several of the Khurasani artist’s portraits of ladies holding wine cups or flowers.227 Since the faces and backgrounds of the Khamsa paintings have been heavily overpainted and extended, it is difficult to assess the viability of Farrukh’s hand.228 Their ascriptions nonetheless confirm that, within Mughal circles, Farrukh was closely aligned with Muhammadi and the Khurasan School.

Farrukh’s affinity with Muhammadi during his subcontinent sojourns is further demonstrated by a group of four closely related portraits of a standing youth holding narcissus (fig. 30).229 The subject retains the sinuous and elegant form of the Muhammadi type but now sports three conspicuously Deccani items of dress and accoutrement: a flat turban wrapped in a gold sash, a long gold patka, and a gold belt that could secure the former or a sword. One of these portraits was inscribed in the picture plane ʿamal-i Farrukh Big,230 while another (fig. 30) was assembled into the famed Salim/Jahangir Album,231 where it was surrounded by excellent illumination and ascribed to Farrukh by the emperor himself (“drawn by Farrukh Beg in his seventieth year”).232 Regardless of actual hand (Farrukh or a follower),233 the four paintings confirm the widespread appeal of the Muhammadi poetic type in Mughal and
Fig. 29. “Entangled pair,” ascribed to Farrukh Beg (Farrukh Husayn) at the Mughal court, probably Khurasan or Lahore, ca. 1580–95. Folio from a Khamsa of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi, Herat, dated 978 and 979 (1570–72). Cambridge University, King’s College, Pote 153, fol. 101v. (Photo: courtesy of King’s College)
Deccani circles and further position Farrukh as its chief ambassador-conduit from Khurasan to India.

Farrukh’s mediation of Muhammadi provides a suitable foundation upon which to explore “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” (fig. 3), his most sophisticated portrait of the Bijapuri ruler in the guise of the Persianate collector and intellectual, as discussed earlier. Of Farrukh’s five portraits of Ibrahim, the Tehran example (fig. 30) has received the least attention, perhaps because it lacks conspicuous Bijapuri references (by way of the Kitāb-i Nawras) and its landscape is not as impressive as the celebrated St. Petersburg “Ibrahim hawking.” It is, however, closely related to this masterpiece, and there can be little doubt that the two portraits were painted in tandem. In both, Ibrahim’s youthful, heavily shaded face features rosy highlights, and he wears a pink robe accented with gold rosettes in combination with a Bijapuri turban sash and patka. In the St. Petersburg image, he holds a formidable hawk while seated on a richly caparisoned horse,234 and in the Tehran one, he sits on small gold throne and tilts his head toward an inscribed şafîna. Both landscapes invite the patient viewer to pore over their meticulous brushwork (note the incessant stippling), atmospheric waterfalls, dark hills streaked with golden highlights, and delicate trees perched incongruously on cliffs, but the St. Petersburg portrait is more elaborate and colorful (the Tehran example has been cropped and repainted on its lower edge).

The Tehran painting’s presentation of Ibrahim as a poetic youth is firmly grounded in the Muhammadi figural type genre described above, as well as the Khurasani artist’s expanded pastoral compositions in nīm qalam (lit. “half pen,” or tinted drawing). These landscapes depict princes participating in the leisurely prerogatives of kingship (feasting, poetic recitation, music making), as emphasized by various props (cup, şafîna, instrument).235 The popularity of the Muhammadi nīm qalam model persisted through the turn of the seventeenth century, when it was translated into fully saturated paintings. In “Youth and dervish in conversation,”236 a prince holding a şafîna sits before an ascetic in a tripartite composition (lower vegetation and stream, middle mountains, upper sky) closely paralleling that of “Ibrahim offering obeisance.” Yet another Safavid point of
Keelan Overton

was written by Jahangir's favorite calligrapher, Mir ‘Ali (fl. ca. 1505–45), and refurbished in the Mughal atelier, strengthens the assumption that the emperor was indeed familiar with the poem in question. That Jahangir sanctioned Ibrahim's message and appreciated the portrait in general is further implied by the painting’s assembly into the Salim/Jahangir Album.

The question of who exactly bore responsibility for the portrait's sophisticated interpolation of text and image returns us to the literary culture discussed earlier and the elusive issue of agency. Was this successful diplomatic painting a group effort—among the painter (Farrukh), the subject (Ibrahim), and various Iranian savants (Shah Navaz Khan, Zuhuri, Malik Qummi)—or should we assign credit to the artist alone? It may not be farfetched to imagine that Farrukh would have been capable of recasting poetic verse as political allegory.

The extrapolation of Hafiz in the Copenhagen Bust Portrait of Ibrahim suggests, however, that such word-image combinations may have been common practice in the Bijapuri atelier, as in most Indo-Persian kitābkhānas of the day.

As far as Ibrahim is concerned, we can infer a degree of involvement, or at least accommodation. The ruler appears to have favored Nizami and imitations of his work, as attested by the Bijapuri Khamsa copied by Khalilullah, the collected Khamsa of Amir Khusraw and Laylá va Majnūn of Hatifi (appendix, nos. 8, 9), and the commissioning of the Manbaʿ al-Anhār after the Makhzan al-Asrār. Some viewers of the portrait—Bijapuri ones, at least—may therefore have interpreted the couplet in a positive light, as emblematic of Ibrahim's literary fluency and patronage, rather than just his political fragility. A second level of intimacy vis-à-vis the ruler-subject can be found in his red nails, which derive from his Kitāb-i Nawras iconography (cf. fig. 2). Once again, Farrukh successfully integrated his patron's local and translocal identities (in this case, the emphasis being on the latter). Moreover, while positioning Ibrahim as compliant and metaphorically on his knees, he simultaneously cast him as a literary connoisseur capable of subtly extrapolating Nizami. It is difficult to imagine a more complementary and graceful image of submission.

While the precise agent or agents responsible for the poetic and political subtleties of Ibrahim offering obei-
sance to Jahangir” may never be known, we can be confident that Farrukh himself developed the painting’s visual mechanics. Like “Saraswati enthroned,” “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” was a culmination of decades of itinerant artistic experience. The portrait was far from Farrukh’s first depiction of a ruler in a pastoral-leisurely guise of the type associated with Muhammadi. His first documented forays into this genre occurred at the Kabul court of Mirza Hakim (d. 1585), where he created two tinted drawings of Akbar’s half-brother. “Mirza Muhammad Hakim and Hajji Yaqut” (fig. 28) depicts the ruler and his eunuch-counselor in animated conversation in a springtime landscape. Farrukh’s lengthy upper inscription, dated 992 (1584–85), identifies the garden setting (Shahrara Garden, Kabul). On the lower left, he has signed the drawing "ḥarrarahu al-mużnib Farrukh Ḥusayn-i muṣavvir," a typical Khurasani formula likewise used by Muhammadi (also see the earlier discussion concerning “Saraswati enthroned”).\textsuperscript{248} In “Mirza Muhammad Hakim and two pages,”\textsuperscript{249} two courtiers flank the seated ruler, a similar willow tree with birds engulfs the background, and Farrukh has signed his name on a rock (rāqimahu Farrukh Ḥusayn). Both portraits are rendered in Muhammadi’s favored technique of nīm qalam and include his codified vocabulary of forms (willow and almond trees, foreground stream with rocks, moon-faced youths, and striped turbans with fluttering endings).

When Farrukh painted “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” fifteen to twenty years later in Bijapur, his Kabul portraits surely loomed large in his mind. For Ibrahim’s pose, the artist recycled that of Mirza Hakim in his portrait dated 992 (1584–85) (fig. 28). He again perched his subject on the edge of a gold throne, and although he altered aspects of the lower body (legs not crossed), he repeated the upper part (right arm across the body and left hand gripping a waist sash, with the elbow jutting forward). What remained was to translate the Kabul ruler’s headgear and waist sash into their Bijapuri equivalents, replace the cup with an inscribed safina, and paint a more dynamic background. While the latter suggests a new direction in Farrukh’s landscapes—the dark hills with golden accents appear here, and in other Bijapuri works, for the first time\textsuperscript{250}—it simultaneously reflects his long-standing interest in enlivening his compositions with a variety of trees in different scales.

As noted above, Farrukh’s “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” was ultimately incorporated into the Salim/Jahangir Album. There it was appreciated in tandem with the artist’s five other pastoral portraits of individuals and figural types: his two Kabul drawings of Mirza Hakim (fig. 28); “Youth holding narcissus” (fig. 30); “Falconer,”\textsuperscript{250} which has been argued to be Jahangir, albeit as Prince Salim;\textsuperscript{252} and a second portrait of the Bijapuri ruler, the Prague “Ibrahim playing the tambur” (fig. 2). Although the latter is routinely positioned as the iconic visualization of Ibrahim’s verbal self-portrait in his Kitāb-i Nawras, it, too, is rooted in the conventions of Persian painting—specifically, enthronement scenes in which a seated ruler gazes down at courtiers (often overlapped to imply depth) while an attendant or attendants stand behind. Farrukh employed comparable figural groupings in his earlier manuscripts’ illustrations, including “Babur receives a courtier” (fig. 27) and “Youth holding a wine cup listens to the recitation of verses,” from a Dīvān of Hafiz.\textsuperscript{253} The Prague “Ibrahim playing the tambur” (fig. 2) and the Rampur “Youth holding a wine cup” are virtually identical in their handling of the main subject’s posture (seated Indian-style against large bolsters, with conspicuously flayed toes) and inclusion of a prominent tree trunk next to the standing attendant. The most significant differences rest in the background (landscape versus architecture).

Considered together, Farrukh’s six portraits in the Salim/Jahangir Album—which span at least two decades (ca. 1585–1605)—confirm a well-known fact: as both prince and emperor, Salim/Jahangir was especially fond of Persianate painting. The individual who played a formative role in influencing this taste was Aqa Riza, who was in the prince’s envoy by 1588–89 and then led his Allahabad studio (ca. 1600–1604). Prior to entering central Mughal lands, Aqa Riza appears to have worked in Mirza Hakim’s Kabul with Farrukh,\textsuperscript{254} an assumption borne out by close parallels between Aqa Riza’s portrait of Mirza Hakim\textsuperscript{255} and Farrukh’s two drawings of the same subject (see fig. 28).\textsuperscript{256} Given his probable tenure in Kabul with Farrukh, we
can imagine that he was instrumental in selecting his colleague’s six Persianate portraits for inclusion.258 We might further wonder if Aqa Riza was responsible, in theory or execution, for framing some of Farrukh’s works in exceptional Khurasani-style landscapes.259 Until the Salim/Jahangir Album is published in full, such speculations can be neither confirmed nor denied. It seems likely, however, that the personal connection between these two Iranian migrants played a significant role in the formation of this illustrious muraqqa’ (album), thereby underscoring the importance of the artist-artist relationship in Indo-Persian production, not just the artist-ruler one.260 If a lack of Safavid court benefaction often created the “push” out of Iran, itinerant colleagues frequently provided the initial “pull” to India and subsequently influenced circulation and patronage patterns within the subcontinent.261

CONCLUSION

The landscapes of “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” (fig. 3) and “Ibrahim hawking” lead us to a final work attributed to Farrukh: “Abu’l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion” (fig. 26). In this painting, the artist essentially reversed the landscape of “Ibrahim hawking”: the pastel-colored mountains now engulf the composition and the gold-streaked hills are limited to the background. A large chinār (plane tree) frames the scene, and Farrukh’s other staple trees and flowers are rendered throughout. In addition to numerous birds and animals, several anecdotal passages are visible: a hunter sits patiently while a ram peers down at him (a humorous element), two shepherds rest with their flock, and a man leads a pair of oxen bearing two women seated sidesaddle, one holding a baby, across a bridge (the latter two passages are in minute scale). Four large male figures stand in the foreground, and one holds a snake and is accompanied by a lion carrying wood. Skelton has identified the scene as a possible illustration to Jami’s Nafaḥāt al-UNS min Ḥadarāt al-Quds (The Breaths of Divine Intimacy), a collection of Sufi biographies composed in 883 (1478) for Mir ‘Ali Shir Nava’i (d. 1500) of Herat.262 The Nafaḥāt al-UNS section on Abu al-Ghays Jamil al-Yamani relates how, after a lion had killed his ass, the saint made the animal carry his wood and used a snake to whip him.263

Four aspects of this unsigned painting have prompted its attribution to Farrukh, and, more specifically, to his Bijapur period (ca. 1595–1609): the cityscapes with distinctly Bijapuri basalt architecture (note the bulbous domes with gold finials and lotus-petal bases, and the slender minarets or towers with comparable forms), the hunter wearing a Deccani sword hilt-belt (cf. fig. 30), the precise and vibrant landscape filled with the artist’s favorite trees (chinār, willow, almond, and unidentifiable examples that are overlapped and stippled), and similarly, his stock figural types.264 If the painting is indeed a product of Farrukh’s Bijapur period,265 it further confirms his freedom to embrace Khurasani paradigms as he saw fit in his adopted Deccani sphere. In this instance, the Khurasani references occur on two levels. The four men in the foreground immediately recall the figural types of late Timurid Herat, as practiced by Bihzad (d. 1535–36) and his immediate circle (see their gaunt faces, long beards, turbans with fluttering edges, plain scarves, and robes with extended sleeves).266 If the image was conceived as an illustration to Jami’s Nafaḥāt al-UNS, we may wonder if Farrukh deliberately adopted Bihzadian figures to lend a degree of contemporaneity between text and image. Concurrently, he placed his Timurid-style figures in an exuberant landscape recalling those of Safavid Herat and Mashhad in more recent memory (late sixteenth century).267 The painting’s overwhelmingly Khurasani, archaic, and foreign (to Bijapur and India more generally) aesthetics are underscored by comparison with the same scene in the Mughal Nafaḥāt al-UNS dated 1012 (1604–5) and copied by the celebrated ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Anbarin Qalam.268 The Mughal illustration includes standard Akbari figural types and a staid landscape, with the inclusion of the dead ass in the background.

Farrukh’s “Abu’l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion” stimulates a series of new questions while returning the discussion to Bijapur’s culture of Persian intellectualism. What is the likelihood that an illustrated copy of Jami’s Nafaḥāt al-UNS was produced at Ibrahim’s court? Although only a handful of Ibrahim-era manuscripts survive (Kitāb-i Nawras, Pen Nem, Ni’imatnāma, Shāhnāma, Khamsa), just two of which are Persian clas-
ics, the extant record must not be read at face value. This article has shown that Persian literature permeated many aspects of courtly culture and artistic production in Bijapur: recall Zuhuri and Malik Qummi’s imitation of the *Makhzan al-Asrār*, the portraits of Ibrahim extrapolating Nizami and Hafiz, the Kumatgi paintings of Rustam and Majnun. Moreover, it must be remembered that Bijapur’s library, which was substantial enough to supply Akbar with 2,000 books in 1604, suffered considerably during later centuries. With an increased understanding of Ibrahim’s marks of ownership and Bijapur’s library practices, new volumes will surely come to light, including those misattributed to other courts and Ibrahim’s.

If we return to the book culture outlined above, the possibility of an Ibrahim-era manuscript devoted to Jami’s *Nafahāt al-Uns* is left open. Ibrahim’s mystical inclinations are well known, and the extant corpus of his books suggests an interest in Jami and, by extension, the Sufi literary culture of late fifteenth-century Herat (appendix, nos. 1, 2, 5). The ruler also appears to have been fond of a second compilation of Sufi biographies written in late Timurid Herat, the *Majālis al-ʿUshshāq* of Gazurgahi (d. 1470), as attested by his two heavily illustrated Shirazi volumes, one of which was assigned the high value of 1,555 rupees (appendix, nos. 3, 4). That Jami’s biography of Sufi saints was known on the subcontinent and selected for luxurious production is further confirmed by the Mughal *Nafahāt al-Uns*.

Despite the mysteries surrounding it—part of a manuscript (albeit lacking a text block), a single-page unicum intended for an album, or an image whose fate and function simply shifted with time and circumstance?—“Abu’l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion” exemplifies the privileged place of Perso-Islamic systems in Ibrahim’s Bijapur. Between circa 1600 and 1610, at least nine illustrious Iranian immigrants (Shah Navaz Khan, Rafi’ al-Din Shirazi, Firishta, Malik Qummi, Zuhuri, Haidar Zehni, Kalim, Khalilullah, and Farrukh Husayn) occupied key positions in the fields of government, history writing, poetry, and the visual arts. Given this exceptional pool of expatriate Iranian talent, it is hardly surprising that the Adil Shahi court participated in widespread patterns of Perso-Islamic sovereignty, as evinced in titulature, diplomacy, collecting, and portraiture. Although scholarship to date on Ibrahim-era painting has emphasized local Dakhni texts such as the *Pem Nem* and *Kitāb-i Nawras*, and while the latter has conditioned an emphasis on the ruler’s personality and patronage, the material presented here calls for increasingly integrative and decentralized approaches moving forward. The intersections between Bijapur’s local and translocal ideologies, as conspicuously juxtaposed in Ibrahim’s coins (fig. 25) and delicately synthesized in Farrukh’s paintings (figs. 1–3), and the expansion of Bijapur’s patronage base to include its Iranian diaspora yield intriguing insights into a courtly culture poised at the crossroads of Indo-Persian experience.

In terms of art-historical practice, “Abu’l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion” also urges a degree of pause and revision, as it underscores the limitations of the extant visual record, complicates notions of agency and schools of production, and warns against the formation of rigid binaries (Mughal versus Deccani, naturalistic versus fantastical, Sunni versus Shi’a, Ḥāfizī versus Dakkanī). Like many of Farrukh’s paintings, it is a complex mingling of artistic reference that is most appropriately investigated as an “object of translation.” The mediations inherent to it rest first and foremost with its itinerant maker rather than in its place of physical production. While it can be tempting to classify its “fanciful” landscape as quintessentially Deccani, many of its tropes—including pastel-hued cliffs with tortuous surfaces and a variety of meticulously rendered trees—were far from “new” but rather established practices of the artist. That Jami’s biography of Sufi saints was known on the subcontinent and selected for luxurious production is further confirmed by the Mughal *Nafahāt al-Uns*.

Although this article has sought to illuminate connections between Bijapur’s visual culture and its Iranian diaspora, it has only begun to explore the resonance of Persianate painting in the Deccani city. In addition to Farrukh’s Khurasan-inspired works, a number of Ibrahim-era images can be compared to contemporary Safavid painting, as practiced in Qazvin and Isfahan by artists like Riza Abbasi. In “The kiss,” a princely type kisses a woman as she places her hands erotically in his lap, and in “Siesta,” an effeminate prince reclines lan-
guidly as attendants fan him and rub his feet.276 Were these androgynous, corporal, and informal figures independent Bijapuri developments, or were they indicative of increased aesthetic dialogue with the Safavid center?

The latter question underscores that this article has investigated visual translation primarily as a one-way street: from Iran and Khurasan to Bijapur via immigrants like Farrukh. It is imperative to emphasize, however, that many of these itinerants returned to their homeland, whether as temporary ambassadors or long-term residents. The case of the calligrapher-cum-diplomat Khalilullah, who traveled to the Safavid court on two occasions and was encouraged to return permanently by Shah ‘Abbas,277 leaves little doubt that portable examples of Bijapuri art (books, calligraphies, paintings, bejeweled items, metalwork, textiles) made their way into Safavid collections, whether as diplomatic gifts or endowments to religious institutions.278 Such circumstances leave open the question of the Bijapuri impact on Safavid art, a topic of increasing significance from the mid-seventeenth century onward.279 Future research will ideally balance the scales of cultural exchange and bring the dialogue full circle.

Independent scholar,
Santa Barbara, Calif.
## APPENDIX

Manuscripts and Album Folios belonging to Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) in Global Collections (excluding the British Library’s Asar Mahal collection)

* = not studied firsthand

### Manuscripts: Persian

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Details of the Codex</th>
<th>Ibrahim II’s Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenancea and Select Bibliography</th>
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</table>
| 1. *Dīvān* of Jāmi’ | – Shah Muhammad al-Katib al-Shirazi  
– Probably Shiraz, dated 971 and 972 (1563–65)  
– 2 double-page illuminated frontispieces and 19 paintings attributed here to Shiraz, ca. 1565–80 | 19 impressions of Ibrahim’s Koranic seal:  
– opening flyleaf, largely effaced (fol. 1r)  
– 18 illustrated folios (fig. 19) (one illustrated folio does not bear the seal, fol. 217v) | Sotheby’s 1988, lot 208; Christie’s 2000, lot 79; Overton 2011, 334 |
| | | Type A notation: illegible, effaced (fol. 1r) | |
| *Dīvān* of Jāmi’ | – Autograph copy? Attributed by Ashraf as “most probably by the poet himself”  
– Probably Herat, dated 5 Rajab 871 (February 10, 1467)  
– Illuminated ʿunvān (fols. 2v, 8v) | Ibrahim’s illuminated ex libris: dated 27 Rabi’ II 10[0]3 (January 8, 1595): *‘Dīvān* of Jami in *naskh ta’liq*. Newly bound with gold lines. Collected into the library of the Refuge of the World, Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah, may God protect his kingdom, on the 27th of Rabi’ al-Thani, in the year 103 [sic]” (fol. 1r, fig. 13)  
Type B notation: dated 27 Rabi’ II 1003 (January 8, 1595) (fol. 1r, fig. 13) | Ashraf 1967, no. 1568; Overton 2011, 335 |
| *Majālīs* | – Ahmad al-Hafīz  
– Shiraz, ca. 1580  
– 75 paintings, attributed by Uluç to Shiraz ca. 1580; most faces repainted in the Deccani style of ca. 1700  
– Double-page illumination signed by Jalal al-Din Baghnavi (fols. 3v–4r), attributed by Uluç to Shiraz, ca. 1580  
– The original Shirazi binding has been tampered with (see Uluç) | Ibrahim’s Koranic seal ex libris (fol. 3r, fig. 14)  
Type B notation: dated 22 Ramazan 1014 (January 31, 1606) (fol. 3r, fig. 14)  
Type C notation: “Price” (*qīmat*), followed by a valuation in *raqam* equivalent to 1,555 rupees (fol. 3r, fig. 14) | Richard 1993–94, 100, fig. 11; Richard 1997, cat. no. 135; Richard 2000, fig. 6–8, 243–45; Uluç 2006, 191n18; Overton 2011, 336–37 |
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Details of the Codex</th>
<th>Ibrahim II’s Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenance(^a) and Select Bibliography</th>
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– Illuminated double-page frontispiece (fols. 1v–2r)  
Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–99)  
Ethé 1980, no. 1871; Robinson 1976, no. 464; Richard 2000, 243–44; Overton 2011, 337 |
| 5. Yūsuf va Zulaykhā of Jami | – Shah Mahmud Nishapuri  
– Tabriz, dated 950 (1543–44) (fol. 54v)  
– Illuminated ʿunvān (fol. 2v) and title pieces, attributed by Richard to Bijapur  
– 2 paintings (fols. 17r, 32v) attributed by Richard to Bijapur, reign of Ibrahim II (this attribution is supported here) | Ibrahim’s Koranic seal (fol. 2r, fig. 17)  
Type A notation, directly below the Koranic seal, in five lines, cut off on the left edge but completed and expanded in the type D (fol. 2r, fig. 17)  
Type D notation, middle of the folio, in six lines: “Yūsuf va Zulaykhā of Mawlana Jami in beautiful nastaʿliq. Written by Shah Mahmud Nishapuri. With the large seal [Koranic] of the Refuge of the World [Ibrahim]. Eggplant binding with gold lines. Gift of the estate of Shah Mirza Naqib, head of the royal library collection. Newly bound with yellow lining [doubule] and red binding” (fol. 1r) | ‘ Alamgir (r. 1658–1707): a notation records that the book entered the Mughal library as “booty from the victory of Bijapur”; seal of Qabil Khan khānazāda-i ʿĀlamgīr dated 1097 (1685–86) (fol. 1v)  
| 6. Kulliyāt of Saʿdi | – Attributed by Rieu to Iran, “the close of the 16th century”  
– Double-page illumination (fols. 2v–3r)  
– No paintings | Ibrahim’s Koranic seal ex libris (fol. 2r, fig. 15)  
Type A notation, largely effaced, only two precisely written lines remain visible; assumed to have read: “Kulliyāt of Saʿdi in nastaʿliq. Gilded binding with the large seal. Collected into the royal library” (fol. 2r, fig. 15) | Rieu 1966, 599; Overton 2011, 340–41 |
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Details of the Codex</th>
<th>Ibrahim II's Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenance and Select Bibliography</th>
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</table>
| 7. *Shāhnāma* of Firdawsi | – Qazvin or Isfahan, late sixteenth century  
– Double-page illumination (fols. 1v–2r)  
– 49 paintings attributed by Robinson as "a transitional style between Qazvin and Isfahan . . . provincial work"; two paintings are unskilled Indian additions | Ibrahim's Koranic seal (fol. 1r)  
Type A or D notation, partially effaced: "Collected into the royal library" (fol. 1r) | Ethé 1980, no. 880; Robinson 1976, nos. 953–1001; Overton 2011, 341 |
| London, British Library, IO Islamic 3254 | | | |
| 8. *Khamsa* of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi | – Attributed by Black and Saidi to Yazd (?), 1430–40  
– 10 paintings, attributed by Black and Saidi to Yazd (?), 1430–40 | Ibrahim's Koranic seal ex libris (fol. 1r, fig. 16)  
Type B notation: dated 28 Ramadan [...], 1014 in light of other examples? (fol. 1r, fig. 16)  
The word *nawras*: upper edge (fol. 1r, fig. 16) | ‘Ali ‘Adil Shah I (r. 1558–80): circular seal with a radiating inscription naming the Twelve Imams (fol. 1r)  
Mughal library: a purchase note records acquisition in Aurangabad on 1 Rabi‘ I 1107 (October 10, 1695) (fol. 1r)  
Muhammad Shah (r. 1719–48): seal dated 1156 (1743), regnal year 26  
Black 2005, no. 27; Overton 2011, 342 |
| Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, Ms. 302 | | | |
– Herat, dated 969 (1561–62)  
– Illuminated *ʿunvān* (fol. iv) | Type A notation, dated 11 Rajab 1029 (June 12, 1620), in a variety of hands, with sloppy addendums, legible portions read: "Book of the *Laylā va Majnūn* of Hatifi in naskh ta‘liq. Gilded binding. Impressed with the *nawras* (?) seal. Written by Mahmud al-Nishapuri. Estate of the special *nawras* (*bābat-i huzūr nawras*). Collected into the royal library on the 11th of Rajab 1029" (fol. 1r, fig. 18)  
The word *nawras*: upper edge (fol. 1r, fig. 18) | ‘Alamgir (r. 1658–1707): seal of Qabil Khan *khānāzāda-i ‘Alamgīr*  
Nadir Shah (r. 1736–47): presumably booty from the sack of Delhi  
Adamova 2012, no. 5, 287–90 |
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Details of the Codex</th>
<th>Ibrahim II’s Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenance and Select Bibliography</th>
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<tr>
<td>*10.b Ikhtiyārāt-i Badīʿī of Ṭalḥa b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAnsārī</td>
<td>Bijapur, dated 990 (1582–83)</td>
<td>Ibrahim’s Koranic seal (fol. 1r)</td>
<td>Muhammad Khan, son of Dilavar Khan ʿAdil Shahi: written for his library</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Type D notation: “Collected into the royal library” (fol. 1r)</td>
<td>‘Alamgir (r. 1658–707): seal of Qabil Khan Khānazāda-i ‘Alamgir dated 1097 (1685–86) (fol. 1r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Type D notation, considerable stacking of words: “Special book of the Ikhtiyārāt-i Badīʿī of the blessed, prosperous, most noble, most holy, most high, Ibrahim ʿAdil Shah II” (fol. 43r)</td>
<td>Seyller 1997, 343; Ḥasīr Radawi 1921, no. 229; Overton 2011, 346</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calcutta, National Library, no. 229</td>
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**Manuscripts: Arabic**

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<th>Manuscript</th>
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<th>Provenance and Select Bibliography</th>
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<tr>
<td>11. Koran</td>
<td>Shiraz, ca. 1570</td>
<td>Ibrahim’s nawras seal (flyleaf, fig. 6)</td>
<td>Overton 2011, 343</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyderabad, Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 76.851, Ms. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Type B notation, dated 14 Safar 1003 (October 28, 1594) (flyleaf)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Koran</td>
<td>Hyderabad, Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 76.851, Ms. 1</td>
<td>2 impressions of Ibrahim’s scalloped seal binding stamp (one on each doublure, figs. 22, 24)</td>
<td>Abu Sa’id (r. 1458–69): said to be the original patron in the colophon (requiring further assessment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of St Andrews Library, Ms. 19 O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–99): note adhered to the front cover and flyleaf inscription</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muhammad Mu’min b. ʿAbdullah Murvarid</td>
<td>2 impressions of Ibrahim’s scalloped seal binding stamp (one on each doublure, figs. 22, 24)</td>
<td>East India Company: inscriptions dated August 15, 1805 and 1806, the latter recording the presentation of the Koran to the University of St Andrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dated 845 (1441–42) (reworked, not original)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lentz and Lowry 1989, cat. no. 14; Overton 2011, 102–15; Overton forthcoming (Research conducted at St Andrews in August 2016 [at the time of press] has significantly altered and enhanced understanding of the manuscript and will be presented in the co-authored Overton forthcoming.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Binding: Bijapur, ca. 1580–1627 (reign of Ibrahim II)</td>
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*10.b Ikhtiyārāt-i Badīʿī of Ṭalḥa b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAnsārī

[^1]: Calcutta, National Library, no. 229
[^2]: Muhammad Khan, son of Dilavar Khan ʿAdil Shahi: written for his library
[^3]: ‘Alamgir (r. 1658–707): seal of Qabil Khan Khānazāda-i ‘Alamgir dated 1097 (1685–86) (fol. 1r)
[^4]: Seyller 1997, 343; Ḥasīr Radawi 1921, no. 229; Overton 2011, 346
[^5]: Abu Sa’id (r. 1458–69): said to be the original patron in the colophon (requiring further assessment)
[^6]: Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–99): note adhered to the front cover and flyleaf inscription
[^7]: East India Company: inscriptions dated August 15, 1805 and 1806, the latter recording the presentation of the Koran to the University of St Andrews
[^8]: Lentz and Lowry 1989, cat. no. 14; Overton 2011, 102–15; Overton forthcoming (Research conducted at St Andrews in August 2016 [at the time of press] has significantly altered and enhanced understanding of the manuscript and will be presented in the co-authored Overton forthcoming.)
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 impressions of Ibrahim’s Koranic seal (opening and closing pages of text: fol. 4v, fig. 20, and fol. 36v)</td>
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<td>Rampur, Raza Library, 5207</td>
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<td>Type D notation: “Special book of the blessed, most noble, most holy, most high, Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah” (fol. 3v, fig. 21)</td>
<td>Aqqoyunlu Tabriz: – Rustam b. Maqsud (r. 1493–97): seal (fol. 3v) – a descendant of Ya’qub (r. 1478–90): seal (fol. 3v)</td>
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<td>Shah Isma’il II (r. 1576–78): seal (fol. 3r)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Siddiqi 1998, pl. 7; Qutba b. Aws 2010, esp. 43–44, 76; Overton 2011, 96–101, 343</td>
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**Manuscripts: Bijapuri Texts (Persian or Dakhni)**

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<th>Ibrahim II’s Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenance and Select Bibliography</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Misc. notation (does not appear to be the standard type A): “Book of the Nujūm al-ʿUlūm by order of the king of Bijapur, Ibrahim, the world teacher (Jagat Gurū), bought by Navab Sayyid Rustam Khan” (fol. 1r)</td>
<td>Leach 1995, 2:819; Hutton 2006, 50–69; Flatt 2011; Overton 2011, 344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, M. 177</td>
<td></td>
<td>Type D notation, dated 17 Jumada I 1037 (January 24, 1628): “Kitāb-i Nawras in Rayhān. Written by ‘Abd al-Rashid. Newly bound with a red binding with a gold medallion (turānī) [in reference to the central stamp] and chain (zanjīra) [in reference to the outer thin border]. From the wardrobe. Collected into the royal library on the 17th of Jumada I in the year 1037. Thirty-two pages. Colored lines (?)”d (fol. 1r, fig. 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Details of the Codex</td>
<td>Ibrahim II’s Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</td>
<td>Provenance and Select Bibliography</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Hyderabad, Central Records Office | A third seal of Ibrahim II: circular, inscribed ‘ahd Ibrāhīm ‘Ādil moḥur tabdīl (title page) | Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II/Aḥmad 1956, 84–86; Haidar 2011, 26–27, fig. 3; Overton 2011, 344 |
|       | Bijapur, before 5 Muharram 1022 (February 24, 1613) (the type D notation provides terminus ante quem) | Type D notation: “Kitāb-i Nawras written by the most noble, most holy, most high, the Shadow of God [Ibrahim]” (title page) | |
| 17. Kitāb-i Nawras of Ibrahim II | Khalilullah  
Dispersed: *Delhi, National Museum, Ms. 69-22/1-6; Cleveland Museum of Art, 2013.284.b | *Flyleaves have not been located | Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II/Aḥmad 1956, 37, 92; Skelton 1982, no. 43; Haidar 2011, figs. 5–12; Haidar and Sardar 2015, cat. no. 45 |
|       | Bijapur, ca. 1617–18 | | |
|       | Likely the copy presented to Ibrahim by Khalilullah in 1027 (1617–18) | | |
|       | Finely illuminated text blocks with drawings of birds and animals in landscapes | | |

**Album Folios**

<p>| *18.f Opening calligraphic folio, from an album with marbled borders | Per Jake Benson, 2015: | Ibrahim's Koranic seal: central calligraphic field, directly below the bismillah (the irregular piece of uncolored paper bearing the calligraphy and Ibrahim's seal was framed in a thin gold border and in turn enclosed in a perfect rectangle of borders and rulings) | Mir Hafiz Khan: seal dated 1155 (1742–43) or 1175 (1761–62) (the same seal is visible on the Ms. 55-45 folio reproduced as cat. no. 77 in Haidar and Sardar 2015) |
| * | Ms. 55-45 is comprised of at least three albums | | |
| | the folio in question features the bismillah and a portion of Koran 2:58 | | The word nawras: in the peach border framing the central field (same orientation as Ibrahim's seal) | |
| | the folio in question is likely the opening of a distinct marbled album | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Details of the Codex</th>
<th>Ibrahim II's Marks of Ownership (and/or the Bijapur Library)</th>
<th>Provenance and Select Bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *19. Calligraphic folio, originally part of the Qitāt-i Khushkhatt Album | Per Jake Benson, 2015:  
- Ms. 55.45 is comprised of at least three albums  
- the folio in question bears a series of prayers in Arabic  
- the folio in question is from the Qitāt-i Khushkhatt Album, which is generally attributed to Ahmadnagar, late sixteenth century (research ongoing). The majority of this album is preserved in the University of Edinburgh (Or. Ms 373) | Probable type A notation, on a strip of white paper in the lower left corner of the outermost marbled border: “From the wardrobe. Collected into the royal library on the 6th of [loss]”h | Haidar and Sardar 2015, cat. nos. 18–19 (dispersed folios attributed to the Qitāt-i Khushkhatt Album) |
| Delhi, National Museum, Ms. 55-45, page 15 (fol. 8r) | | Misc. notation, beneath the above, in the gold ruling: “Two pens” (in reference to naskh and suls, as in no. 16) | |

a When available, evidence of provenance (e.g., seal, inscription) is briefly described.
b I thank John Seyller for kindly sharing photographs.
c Seyller’s citation of the Buhar catalogue as no. 181 requires correction to pp. 181–82 (no. 229).
d Since Ibrahim died in September 1627 and he was the author of the book in question, it is safe to presume that the jāmadārkhana (wardrobe) mentioned in the notation was indeed his and that the volume was transferred to the royal library upon or shortly after the accession of his son Muhammad.
e I thank Jake Benson for his comments on these bookbinding terms.
f I am sincerely grateful to Jake Benson for bringing this folio (and no. 19 below) to my attention, sharing photographs, and offering his insight on the original albums. These critical folios expand our scope of inquiry into Bijapuri collecting beyond the manuscript alone.
g Benson’s essay on the Qitāt-i Khushkhatt Album is forthcoming in Overton, Iran and the Deccan.
h Since the type D notation was continued by a librarian who worked for Ibrahim’s son and successor, Muhammad (see no. 15, fig. 4, where it is dated 17 Jumada I 1037 [January 24, 1628]), we must leave open the possibility that this type A notation post-dates 1627. However, because it describes a type of transfer common during Ibrahim’s reign (from the wardrobe to the royal library), I currently favor his ownership (as with no. 15).
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY
(for the appendix)


NOTES

Author’s note: This article is the culmination of dissertation research carried out since 2007 and is dedicated to my adviser, Professor Irene “Renie” Bierman-McKinney (1942–2015), who introduced me to the Deccan and launched me on the path of Iran-India connections with her signature grace, encouragement, and intellect. For warm receptions and permission to publish images, I thank the staff of the Raza Library, Salar Jung Museum, Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Art, Gulistan Palace Library, Museum of Islamic Art (Doha), Nápestrek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, National Library of Russia, State Hermitage Museum, University of St Andrews Library, Cambridge University Library, British Library, David Collection, Bibliothèque nationale de France, and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. Mansoureh Azadvari, Gabriel Sewell, Maia Sheridan, and Ursula Sims-Williams deserve special thanks, and Klaus Rötzer and Ameen Hurlur kindly approved the use of their personal images. Finally, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to Gülru Neçipoğlu and Karen Leal for their exceptional editing and generous allocation of space and figures (I further congratulate the latter on her final volume and am delighted to have had the opportunity to work with her), the reviewers for their careful reading and support, and many colleagues who have shared their expertise over the years (specific contributions, of which there are many, are credited individually).


5. See Michell and Zebrowski, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates, 169, where it is also reproduced as pl. 1.


7. The word nawras was ubiquitous at Ibrahim’s court. Depending on the pronunciation of the first syllable (naw or nōh), it can be translated as “nine moods” (based on the rasas of Indian aesthetic theory), “nine juices” (alluding to a wine recipe combining nine flavors), or “newly arrived” (from the Persian “new,” naw, and “to arrive,” rasīdan, in reference to a fresh garden or something generally innovative). Hutton, Art of the Court, 110, underscores that the term’s popularity rested in its widespread appeal across Bijapur’s composite culture. Local Indian audiences likely interpreted it through the rasas concept (as a specific emotion conveyed by a work of art), whereas members of the Iranian diaspora (see Hutton’s quoting of Zuhuri) may have been more sensitive to the notion of freshness and newness (in light of linguistic parallels such as Nawriz, lit. “new day,” in reference to the Iranian New Year). At some point, the word evolved into a linguistic trope, as demonstrated by its designation of everything from coins (hun-i nawras [hun is Sanskrit for “pagoda”]) to the royal flag (‘alām-i nawras) to palaces (Qasr-i Nawras Bihisht/Nawras Mahal) to cities (Nawraspur). On the latter palace and city, see Hutton, Art of the Court, 111–19.

8. Dakhni is a Deccani vernacular and early form of Urdu. For an overview of Dakhni literature, including some of the Bijapuri texts discussed here, see D. J. Matthews, “Eighty Years of Dakani Scholarship,” Annual of Urdu Studies 8 (1993): 91–107. Each song in the Kitāb-i Nawras is set to a specific raga (melody), and the book also includes seventeen couplets (dohras).


11. As early as 1995, John Seyller concluded, “Abundant visual and literary evidence has encouraged some scholars to stress the role of the patron’s personality in the development of style,” particularly in the case of the Muslim states of the Deccan and the Mughal empire. In this view, the patron Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (reg 1579–1627) of Bijapur not only had the means and desire to summon talent to his court but also the force of personality to transmit his own poetical and musical interests to his painters, who translated them into melancholic colour schemes, fantastic landscape forms and sensitive rhythms of drapery and pattern [emphasis added].” John Seyller, “Indian Subcontinent, S XI, 2: Patronage: Painting,” in The Dictionary of Art, ed. Jane Turner (New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 1995), 739–40. Deborah Hutton subsequently emphasized the phenomenon of “historiomaticy,” in which modern scholarship
transforms prominent historical figures into heroes or villains, and further challenged Ibrahim’s presumed patronage of Bijapuri monuments such as the Ibrahim Rauza. See Hutton, Art of the Court, 18, 125–32, building off of Seyller and Carl Ernst’s assessment of “historiomachy” in Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 20, 285n61.


13. Navina Haidar and Marika Sardar, et al., Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 79. While I challenge aspects of this presentation of Ibrahim, such criticism is minor in light of the exhibition’s groundbreaking presentation of Deccani art and the catalogue’s significant scholarly contributions. It also goes without saying that curators face tremendous external and internal pressures in public outreach and branding when developing international “blockbuster” exhibitions of this scale.


15. Roberta Smith, “Sultans of Deccan India,” Unearthly Treasures of a Golden Age at the Met,” review of the exhibition “Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York Times, April 23, 2015, http://nyti.ms/1FnDL75 (accessed November 15, 2015). Like many of the reviews summarized in the final section of Roxburgh, “After Munich” (pp. 377–84), this example includes several neo-Orientalist recursions, particularly the trend toward formalism and aestheticization (note the use of terms such as “dazzling,” “ravishing,” “beautiful,” and “lavishness,” which are of course intended to appeal to the general public approaching the material for the first time). These criticisms aside, the reviewer aptly recognizes the technical sophistication of the artworks on display and acknowledges the rarity of their presentation in a single venue.


17. The painting was first published in Chandramani Singh and Madhvendra Narayan, From the Collection of Maharaja of Jaipur: Six Multicoloured Prints, Surat Khana, Jaipur, 16th–17th Century, Mughal and Deccani (Jaipur: Jaigarh Public Charitable Trust, 2003), pl. C, where the authors argue, “Ibrahim Adil Shah was a great devotee of Saraswati, the goddess of speech. His book Kitab-i-Nauras begins with an invocation to the goddess. The painting could be the unwan-opening page of the book or an independent work commissioned by the Sultan.”


ace Library, H. 1483) to Farrukh circa 1580–83, and one to Muhammad, arguing that this manuscript was begun at the court of Ibrahim Mirza and refurbished under Hamza Mirza. Soudavar, “Between the Safavids and Mughals,” 56–57; Soudavar, “Age of Muhammad,” 65. Hamza Mirza’s library-atelier was at one point controlled by the vizier Mirza Salman (d. 1583), and Soudavar posits (“Between the Safavids and Mughals,” 59) that the vizier’s assassination in 1583 may explain Farrukh’s migration to Kabul. For the most recent analysis of Muhammad’s production under Mirza Salman, see Abolala Soudavar, “The Patronage of the Vizier Mirza Salman,” *Muqarnas* 30 (2013): 213–34.


24. Farrukh’s Akbar-period production may prove to be his most ambiguous. Some of his ostensible (per ascriptions) *Baburnāma* and *Akbarīnāma* illustrations could have been painted in Khorasan or Kabul, and were simply recycled in these later Mughal manuscripts. See the critical observation in Susan Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: The Art of the Book, 1560–1660* (London: V&A Publications, 2002), 44; also Beach, “Farrukh Beg,” 196, 200. I thank Susan Stronge for ongoing conversations about this artist.

25. For the artist’s departure from Akbar’s court to Ibrahim’s, the date of which is again based on circumstantial evidence, see Seyller, “Farrukh Beg in the Deccan,” 340; Beach, “Farrukh Beg,” 204.


28. This binary is challenged in Subah Dayal, “The Career(s) and Memory of Nekhm Khan in Seventeenth-Century Deccan” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, Washington, D.C., January 2014, and chapter 3 of her dissertation entitled “Landscapes of Conquest: Patrons and Narratives in the 17th-Century Deccan” (University of California, Los Angeles, 2016). I thank the author for sharing her work in advance of publication.


37. Most of the known pages from this dispersed manuscript are preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi. See Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 45; Navina Haidar, “The Kitāb-i Nauras: Key to Bijapur’s Golden Age,” in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of the South, figs. 5–11.

38. Sotheby’s, Arts of the Islamic World, April 9, 2014, lot 60.

39. Private collection and former Sitaram Sahu collection (now missing), reproduced in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 31; fig. 50. A drawing of Atish Khan (Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, F1997.16) has also been attributed to Farrukh. Milo Cleveland Beach, Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, 201 (no. 5). Zehni was also reportedly asked to compose a response (javāb) to Nizāmī’s Makhzan al-ʿĀsrār, Devare, Short History, 205.

40. Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, 100. The color plate in Singh and Narayan, Six Multicoloured Prints, is the best available reproduction. The painting is in a private royal collection and unavailable for study.

41. An early copy of the Manbaʿ al-Anhār is preserved in a Kuldīyāt (Collected Works) of Zuhūrī bearing seals of Shah Jahan (r. 1628–38) dated 1045 (1635–36) and 1046 (1636–37). See Hermann Ethé, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office (London: India Office Library & Records, 1980), 820–22, no. 1500, no. 2; Devare, Short History, 85–86, 202 (no. 8), 219. For a maṣnāwī by Malik Qummi in the meter of Khusraw va Shirin, see Ethé, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, 820, no. 1499; Devare, Short History, 201 (no. 5). Zehni was also reportedly asked to compose a response (javāb) to Nizāmī’s Makhzan al-ʿĀsrār. Devare, Short History, 86.


43. For the rise of Mahdawi millenarianism in 1580s Ahmadnagar, and associated negative implications for Shiʿi Iranian émigrés such as Firishta, see Subrahmanyan, “Infernal Triangle,” 126.

44. Mir Muhammad Amin’s circulation patterns paralleled those of Kalim. Originally from Shahristan, near Isfahan, he migrated to the Deccan around 1600, rose to the post of mir jumla (prime minister) of Golconda during the reign of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (r. 1580–1612), briefly returned to Iran, and subsequently excelled under both Jahangir and Shah Jahan.


48. Ahmadnagar was annexed by the Mughals in 1636, Bijapur in 1686, and Golconda in 1687. On Bijapur’s tenuous political circumstances in the shadow of Mughal felicity, and the associated visual record, see Overton, Vida de Jacques de Contre.”


50. This letter is most recently discussed in Subrahmanyan, “Infernal Triangle,” 128–29. Also see Islam, Calendar of Documents, 2331–35 (Dn. 2981).


55. Staffordshire, Earl of Harrowby Collection, reproduced in Overton, “Ali Riza (The Bodleian Painter),” fig. 3.

56. London, British Museum, 1997.1108.03, reproduced in ibid., fig. 12; Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 46.

57. This is not to say that other texts were not commissioned and written during Ibrahim’s reign. In addition to the well-known chronicles and panegyric (Firshita, Shirazi, Malik Qummi, Zahuri), a treatise on perfumery (“Iriyya-i Nawras Shāh”) was composed for the ruler. A copy dating to the reign of Muhammad Adil Shah survives in the British Library. Ethé, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, no. 3076/B 490.

58. Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, M. 177. See the text page reproduced in Haidar, “Kitāb-i Nawras,” fig. 3. The date of 990 has been debated.

59. Hyderabad, Central Records Office.

60. Dispersed. For Delhi, National Museum, 69-22/1-6 and Cleveland Museum of Art, 2013.284.b, see Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 45.

61. London, British Library, Add. 16880. This Sufi romance by Hasan Manjhu Khalji was extensively analyzed in Deborah Hutton, “The Pem Nem: A Sixteenth-Century Illustrated Romance from Bijapur,” in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of the South, 44–63, building upon her earlier discussion in Art of the Court, 73–83. Also see the most recent publication in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 29.


63. Sotheby’s, Arts of the Islamic World, lot 60.


65. Ustād-i kānāt kī in kārkhana sākht / maqsūd ʿishq būd ki nawras bāhāna sākht. I am grateful to Wheeler Thackston for this amended translation of Zebrowski, Deccani Painting, 76.


67. Ibrāhīm ʿĀdil Shāh II, Kitāb-i Nawras [Kitāb-i Nawras], ed. and trans. Ahmad, 125, 146.


I thank Wheeler Thackston for his comments on Persian interpretations of nawras.

71. For the Asar Mahal, a pillared hall facing onto a large tank, see Mark Brand, “Bijapur under the Adil Shahis (1490–1686),” in Silent Splendour: Palaces of the Deccan, 14th–19th Centuries, ed. Helen Philon (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2010), 70–73, fig. 6.
On the Asar Mahal collection, see Qureshi, “Royal Library”; Otto Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (London, 1877). Volumes in this repository are henceforth identified as Loth xyz/B xyz (Loth’s Arabic catalogue is ordered chronologically by the former; the “B” number follows and indicates Bijapur/Asar Mahal volumes). Chapter 2 of my dissertation (“Collector and His Portrait”) built upon Qureshi’s critical scholarship but diverged in three ways: it focused on collecting during Ibrahim’s reign, identified the ruler’s marks of ownership, and used the latter to locate dispersed volumes (thereby expanding the scope of inquiry beyond the British Library’s Asar Mahal collection). I sincerely thank Ursula Sims-Williams for recently taking and sharing photographs of critical Asar Mahal volumes, and for accommodating (along with her colleagues) several research visits over the years.

Consider London, British Library, loth 525/B 181 (originally classified as a librarian under ʿalāmgar (r. 1658–1707) (see appendix, nos. 5, 9, 10). ʿalāmgar seems to have adopted the Asar Mahal library partially as his own, for some of the manuscripts bear his marks of ownership, predating the conquest of Bijapur by decades. The library was systematically inspected during the reign of Nizam al-Mulk (r. 1724–48), the founder of the Asaf Jahi dynasty of Hyderabad, and manuscripts dating to the early eighteenth century confirm that it was active until this period. The library suffered its most extensive destruction during Bijapur’s Maratha period (1760–1818) and not during ʿalāmgar’s conquest, as commonly assumed. See Qureshi, “Royal Library”; Loth, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*.

The appendix here (“Manuscripts and Album Folios belonging to Ibrahim ʿAdil Shah II [r. 1580–1627] in Global Collections”) is a revised and expanded version of appendix 3 in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait.” With the exception of the dispersed Kitāb-i Nawras copied by Khalilullah (no. 17), all of the codices contain at least one of Ibrahim’s marks of ownership. Because the Khalilullah Khamsa was presented to Ibrahim and earned the calligrapher the title pādishhā-i qalam, the ruler’s possession is presumed.

The two folios are currently part of a single album preserved in the National Museum, Delhi (Ms. 55.45), but research by Jake Benson, who kindly brought them to my attention, reveals that they originally belonged to two separate albums. It is currently unclear if Ibrahim owned these single sheets alone or their entire respective albums. On the art of marbling in the Deccan, see Jake Benson, “The Art of Abr: Marbled Album Leaves, Drawings, and Paintings of the Deccan,” in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 157–59. Benson’s essay on one of the albums in question (the example preserving no. 19) is forthcoming in Overton, *Iran and the Deccan*.

Kumatgi and its wall paintings are discussed in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” chap. 3.

As the wall painting is in very poor condition, the line drawing reproduced in Henry Cousins, *Bījāpur and Its Architectural Remains, With an Historical Outline of the ʿĀdil Shāhi Dynasty* (repr., Delhi: Bharatiya Publication House, 1976), pl. cxii (see fig. 8), proved critical to my identification of the scene.


For a discussion of the Rustam-Sohrab wall painting in light of the Bijapuri Shāhnāma and the collected Qazvin or Isfahan manuscript (appendix, no. 7), see Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 135–39, figs. 132–37.

Ibid., 143–44, figs. 149–52.


An overview of these ownership marks is provided in François Déroche, Annie Berthier, Muhammad Isa Waley, et al., *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script* (London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2006), 311–44. The study of Islamic seals is gaining momentum and visibility. Major contributions of recent years include Venetia Porter, Shailendra Bhandare et al., *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 2011); Annabel Teh Gallop and Venetia Porter, *Lasting Impressions: Seals from the Islamic World* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic

John Seyller’s meticulous cataloguing of Indian seals, and their related inscriptions, for over two decades requires little introduction (see some of his findings in “Inspection and Valuation”). The author and many others continually build upon his foundational work; see, for example, the exemplary Adel T. Adamova and Manijeh Bayani, Persian Painting: The Arts of the Book and Portraiture (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2015), 435–42. As this article was in press, Jake Benson informed me of an important essay on Qutb Shahi seals: ‘Ali Šaf’ar ‘Aqwal’ā, “Mūhrā va yāddāshṭa-yi Sulṭān Muḥammad Qūṭbshāh va muhr-i Sulṭān ‘Abdullāh Qūṭbshāh dar barkhī nuskhahā-yi Kitābkhanā-i Qūṭbshāhīyān,” Awrāq-i Ātq 4 (2015): 221–50.

This seal was correctly attributed to Ibrahim II in Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 297; and Francis Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale de France,” in The Making of Indo-Persian Culture, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Françoise ‘Nalini’ Delvoye, and Marc Gaborieau (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), 244. It was nevertheless misattributed to Ibrahim Mirza in Christie’s, Islamic and Persian Manuscripts, London, April 11, 2000, lot 79, 52–53 (concerning appendix, no. 1); and Croft Black and Nabil Saidi, Islamic Manuscripts (Catalogue 22) (London: Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts, 2003), 72–73, no. 27 (concerning appendix, no. 8), which further misidentifies the book with Ibrahim I (r. 1535–58). My current understanding is that this seal does not appear in any of the British Library’s Asar Mahal manuscripts.

Also see New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983.227; Paris, Musée du Louvre, MAO 209, among others. The approximately twenty vessels of this type are the focus of ongoing research by Abdullah Ghouchani and Navina Haidar. See their preliminary findings, with Marika Sardar, in “Inscribed Sacred Vessels,” in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Deccan India, 259–67.


For Koranic verses appearing on royal seals (for example, all of Sura 112), see Porter et al., Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets, 17, 60.

In some cases, the illumination was completed but the inscription never added. See London, British Library, Lot 422/B 177A; Lot 426/B 203, fol. 47; Lot 428/B 223A, fol. 3r.

The short inscriptions in Timurid ex libris begin with the phrase bi-rasm-i (by the order of) or li-khizāna al-kutub (for the treasury of books), followed by the ruler’s name and titles alone. For the ex libris of Baysunghur (d. 1433), see David Roxburgh, The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), fig. 19. An even more concise inscription appears in Shah Jahan’s ex libris in his eponymous album (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 55.121.10.39). See Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, ed. Maryam D. Ekhtiar et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), no. 250A.

Consider the Baysunghur example: Roxburgh, Persian Album, fig. 19.

Additional provenance recorded in the illuminated ex libris is as booty from the conquest of Muhammadabad/Bidar. See, for example, London, British Library, Lot 299/B 323, fol. iv.

London, British Library, Lot 525/B 181, fol. 3r (fig. 5) is dated 21 Dhul Hijja 994 (December 2, 1586); Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, M. 276, fol. 1r (fig. 13) is dated 27 Rabi‘ I 1010 (January 8, 1595); and London, British Library, Lot 299/B 323, fol. iv is dated 12 Sha‘ban 1027 (August 3, 1618).

The elevation of a seal to an ex libris (or the incorporation of a seal into an ex libris) is a rare but not unparalleled phenomenon. For a Timurid-Ottoman comparison, see Roxburgh, Persian Album, 77, where he writes, “Further signs of the Ottomans’ historical attitude are two discs of paper cut out and glued into the illuminated medallions added above and below Baysunghur’s ex libris. These paper circles are the impressions of the library seal of Ibn Husayn (d. 1513–14), son of Sultan Husayn (d. 1506), the last ruler of the Timurid dynasty. The seals have been elevated by the Ottomans from a mark of ownership to an ex libris.” A similar process can be seen on the second šamsa folio of the Shah Jahan Album (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 55.121.10.40), where the innermost circle elsewhere reserved for Shah Jahan’s titles (55.121.10.39) features the seal of ‘Alamgir (r. 1658–1707), clearly a later owner of the album.

For this laqab and Shah ‘Abbas, see Christie’s, Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds Including Art from the Collection of Dr. Mohammed Said Farsi, London, October 5, 2010, lot 249, discussed further in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 276. In the Mughal context, the phrase khusraw-i ’Alampanāḥ appears on a silver Jahangir-period rupee dated 1013 (1610–11), and Mughal officials often styled themselves ghulāmān-i ’Alampanāḥ (slaves of the Refuge of the World).

Christie’s, Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds, lot 249. For a manuscript that passed before “the vision of the most noble, most holy” (naẓar-i aṣhraf-i aqdas), in reference to Jahangir, see A. H. Morton, “Notes and Seal Imprints,” in

103. An inscription at the Gulbarga dargah (tomb complex) of Ibrahim's spiritual guide Gesu Daraz (d. 1422) opens with the following: ḥaṣrat-i navāb-i kānyāb-i gārdān iqtiādār-i humāyūn-i orfā’-i aqdas-i u’lā Ibrahim ʿAdilshāh (the prosperous, as potent as the celestial sphere, blessed, most high, most holy, most sublime, Ibrahim ʿAdilshāh). It then records how the young ruler made a pilgrimage to the shrine on 3 Muharram 989 (February 6, 1581), just a year after his accession, and that his “mother” (actually his aunt, Chand Bibi) ordered the digging of a well and planting of an orchard at the dargah in Muharram 994 (December–January 1585–86). See Major T. W. Haig, “Inscriptions in Gulbarga,” in Epigraphia Indica-Moslemica, ed. E. Denison Ross (Bombay: Education Society’s Press, 1907–8), 5.


106. The word avval is written in the same hand and blue ink as the ex libris and located to its lower left.

107. Two lines written on a diagonal (an oversight or afterthought?) further record the date of the original gift (21 Dhu’l Hijja 994), as first documented in the illuminated ex libris (fig. 5).


109. The valuation is in raqam and opens with qimāt (price). John Seyller has confirmed Francis Richard’s original reading in Splendeurs persanes, 197. E-mail correspondence, April 3, 2014.

110. In the Mughal context, most illustrated manuscripts were valued between 500 and 1,500 rupees, and manuscripts appraised at 1,500 or higher were all ranked first class (avval). Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” section entitled “The Valuation of Manuscripts,” 255–73.

111. As discussed throughout Uluç, Turkman Governors.

112. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, VR-995. My identification of this book’s Bijapuri provenance was made possible by the reproduction of fol. 1r in Adel Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, Paintings and Drawings from the 15th to the Early 20th Century in the Hermitage Collection, trans. J. M. Rogers and ed. Simon Hartly (London: Azimuth Editions, 2012), 287. Adamova emphasizes that Shah Mahmud Nishapuri is typically associated with Tabriz (under Tahmasp, r. 1524–76) and Mashhad, where he died in 972 (1564–65), but presents convincing evidence that the Laylā

118. Fol. 1r (see fig. 18) also contains a finely written valuation of 200 rupees (beginning with qimat, but not in raqam). This valuation may be a Bijapur notation and is distinct from the surrounding Mughal ones (thanks to John Seyller for his comments). For further information, see Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, 289, requiring some corrections informed by Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation.”

119. The answer could rest in chronology; that is, the newras seal may have been developed before the Koranic one. The earliest known application of the newras seal is December 1586 (fig. 5), whereas the earliest Koranic impression is 1605–6 (figs. 14, 15) (the discovery of additional volumes may certainly modify these numbers). Ibrahim’s Shirazi Koran (appendix, no. 11) further refutes any presumed parallel or consistency between the content of the volume and the selected seal (for the Koran’s newras seal, see fig. 6).

120. Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, Ms. 260, discussed further in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 89–96. The manuscript’s Koranic seal impressions have been erroneously associated with Ibrahim Mirza: “The only name in this quotation [Qur’an 2:130], Abraham or Ibrahim, could otherwise be attributed to yāqūt al-Mustaʿsimī and its Multiple Identities: From the Mognols to the Mughals and Beyond,” Ars Orientalis 42 (2012): 193–94. For an overview of Yaqūt and his legacy, see Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 243–60.

121. Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” fig. 41.

122. Rampur, Raza Library, 5207. For the library’s publications, see W. H. Siddiqi, Raza Library: Monograph (Rampur, U.P.: Rampur Raza Library, 1998), and Quṭba b. Aṣw. Dīwān shiʿr al-Hādira, copied by al-Yaqūt al-Mustaʿsimī, with an introduction and commentary by Mukhtar al-Din Ahmad (Rampur, U.P.: Maktubā Rūdā, 1431 [2010]). I thank Abusad Islahi for bringing the latter to my attention. My examination of the manuscript in 2010 was brief (see preliminary findings in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 96–101). The discussion here sets aside the question of authenticity (see note below) and focuses on the volume’s presence in Ibrahim’s collection.

123. One excerpt from the Sīh Naṣr reads, “If Yaqūt were living, [he] too would have [his] head bowed down [before Ibrāhim] like the letter vav” Zuhūr, Sīh Naṣr, ed. and trans. Ghani, 439.

124. Yaqūt’s original Dīwān al-Hādira was widely copied and forged, particularly during the Timurid period, and the Rampur manuscript’s early date of 629 (1231–32) immediately raises suspicion (e-mail correspondence with Nourane Ben Azzouna, October-November 2010, whom I thank for sharing her expertise). Also see Nourane Ben Azzouna, “Manuscripts Attributed to Yaqūt al-Mustaʿsimī (d. 698/1298) in Ottoman Collections: Thoughts on the Significance of Yaqūt’s Legacy in the Ottoman Calligraphic Tradition,” in Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art Proceedings, ed. Gëza Dávid and Ibolya Gereyyshe (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2009), 113–23, esp. 116. For another example of a forgery, see Nourane Ben Azzouna, “The Gulistān of Saʿdī Attributed to Yaqūt al-Mustaʿsimī and Its Multiple Identities: From the Mongols to the Mughals and Beyond,” Ars Orientalis 42 (2012): 193–94. For an overview of Yaqūt and his legacy, see Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 243–60.

125. Kitāb-i khāṣṣ-i hum[du]yān-i aṣḥraf-i aqdas-i arfa’ / Ibrāhīm ʿAdlshāh. In this context, khāṣṣ (lit. “royal”) refers to something particularly special or outstanding in a royal collection. See Morton, “Notes and Seal Imprints,” 170, where the term is discussed as “another form of appreciation” in luxury Mughal manuscripts. The Dīwān’s title page was first reproduced in Siddiqi, Raza Library: Monograph, pl. 7, where the author observed (p. 2) that the volume “once decorated the Royal Library of Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur.” Also see Quṭba b. Aṣw. Dīwān shiʿr al-Hādira, 43.

126. “This book is in the script of the ‘Qibla of calligraphers’ (qiblat al-kuttāb) Yaqūt al-Mustaʿsimī and each line is worth one piece of gold, written by Shaykh Muhammad al-Tabrizi al-Sultani.” It is possible that the scribe in question was Shaykh Muhammad b. ‘Alī Muhammad al-Tughra’i (fl. late fourteenth to early fifteenth century), an expert in writing tughra, who was known as Musharriji al-Tabrizi (after his father Hajji Muhammad Bandgir of Tabriz) and who signed both “Shaykh Muhammad” and “Hajji Muhammad.” I thank Marianna Shreve Simpson for sharing her thoughts on this matter. This Shaykh Muhammad worked for several Timurid rulers and princes—including Timur (r. 1370–1405) and Khalīl Sultan (r. 1405–9) at Samarkand, and Shah Rukh (r. 1405–47) and Baysunghur (d. 1433) at Herat—and his dated works span 1405–7. Biography drawn from Roxburgh, Persian Album, 119–21. Yaqūt’s Dīwān al-Hādira was copied by Shams Baysunghūr, an accomplished calligrapher under Baysunghūr, in 829 (1426). Istanbul, Ayasofya 3956, discussed in Ben Azzouna, “Manuscripts Attributed to Yaqūt,” 116. It is possible that a second copy of the text—the Rampur example—could have circulated at Baysunghur’s court and there caught the attention of Shaykh Muhammad. These hypotheses demand confirmation.

127. Each seal is accompanied by an identifying notation. I thank Denise Teece for responding to queries about these seals (e-mail correspondence, April 2010).


131. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, VR-1000, discussed most recently in Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, no. 1. In addition to the five impressions of Muhammad’s 1020 (1612) seal, the manuscript features one impression of his more elaborate example dated 1021 (1612–13) on the opening frontispiece (for a reproduction, see ibid., 45). Just below this impression is the seal of Abdullah Qutb Shah (r. 1626–72) dated 1037 (1627–28). An analysis of Qutb Shahi seals and inscriptions is forthcoming in Overton and Benson, “Deccani Seals.”

132. Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” documents three of Jahangir’s seal impressions: the first dates to his tenure as Prince Salim (p. 31); the second is dated 1015 (1666–7) (p. 336); and the third is dated 1025 (1668) (p. 289). The Muhammad Juki Shahnama is exceptional, because it bears two impressions of Jahangir’s 1015 seal. Morton, “Notes and Seal Impressions,” 170–71. For seals of Jahangir’s murids, see Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 253n44.

133. Shah ‘Abbas’s librarians clearly feared the looting of volumes from the Ardabil shrine. An inscription accompanying the waqf seal reads, “Whosoever wishes to read [this work] may do so, provided that he does not take it outside the shrine; anyone who takes it will be [considered] responsible for the blood [martyrdom] of Imam Husayn, may God’s blessings be upon him, 1017.” Simpson, Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Haft Awrang, 35. This paranoia was warranted, given the imminent Uzbek threat and the Freer Jami’s eventual accessioning into the Mughal library. For the Mughal seals and notations on fol. 304v, see Simpson, Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Haft Awrang, 345–46 (15.c–d); Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 285–86.

134. Although very few Bijapuri bindings survive (only a handful can be identified), scribal notations provide useful insight into acts of refurbishment. See figure 4, where the type D notation reads “newly bound with a red binding with a gold (tala) medallion (turānj; in reference to the central element) and chain (zanjira; in reference to the outer thin border),” and figure 13, where Ibrahim’s illuminated ex libris reads “newly bound with red binding with gold lines.” Some of Ibrahim’s books were also refurbished with new paintings and illumination, as was common. See the Paris Yasa’ va Zulaykhá (appendix, no. 5).

135. In addition to size, the most conspicuous difference between the paper seal impression and the leather stamp one is that the latter is not double-ruled. Minor variations in the calligraphy can also be discerned.


137. Jiddi, Danishnama-i Muhr va Hakkaki, 550–64 and figs. 497–99, explores the relationship between seals and binding stamps, but the marks in question belong to bookbinders (saḥaf or saḥafbāshī), and I do not see an example of direct replication comparable to the Ibrahim case study. For signed Mamluk stamps, see Gulnar K. Bosch et al, Islamic Bindings & Bookmaking (Chicago: Oriental Institute Museum, University of Chicago, 1981), nos. 2, 36, 41.

138. University of St Andrews Library, Ms. 19 O. Francis Richard (“Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts,” 244) was the first to emphasize a connection between Ibrahim’s seal and the St Andrews binding. My research is indebted to his initial and most critical observation.


140. For examples of Timurid illuminated frontispieces with a central lobed medallion set in a twelve-pointed star extending into an interlace of polygons, see Lentz and Lowry, Timur and the Princely Vision, cat. no. 102, color illus. 203 (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. 1500), and the 837 (1434) Koran copied by Shams al-Baysunghuri (Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Museum, TIEM 294), forthcoming as the cover image of Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., The Art of the Qur’an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2016).


142. That esteemed volumes continued to enter Bijapuri collections after Ibrahim’s reign is confirmed by the 1555 Khamsa of Nizami (Ahmedabad, Lalbhai Collection), which bears Muhammad’s seal and a type D notation.

143. An exception to this convention can be found in a Maghribi Koran dated 745 (1344) (Jerusalem, al-Haram al-Sharif Islamic Museum), whose front and rear covers include border panels recording the name of the Marinid ruler-copyst
Abu al-Hasan (r. 1331–52) and his donation of the manuscript to the Bayt al-Maqdis. See Khidr Ibrahim Salamah, *The Qurʾan Manuscripts in the al-Haram al-Sharif Islamic Museum, Jerusalem* (Reading: Garnet Publishing Limited, 2001), no. 3, esp. 70–73.

144. For a fore-edge flap reading *bi-rasm-i khīzāna-i* (by the order of the treasury of), followed by the name of the Ottoman ruler Mehmed II (r. 1444–46; 1451–81), see Raby and Tanudi, *Turkish Bookbinding*, no. 33. Similarly, the spine of a Mamluk Koran features the following stamped inscription: “by order of the library of the most just and most noble Abu Muzaffar Shah Isma’il [r. 1501–24].” See Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman, eds., *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, 3rd ed., 16 vols. (Tehran: Soroush Press, 1977), vol. 5, p. 1983, and vol. 10, pl. 966; David James, *Qurʾāns of the Mamlūks* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1988), cat. no. 20.


146. The largely effaced type A notation in Ibrahim’s *Kulliyāt* of Sa’di (appendix, no. 6) reads: “Gilded binding / with the large seal” (see fig. 142). Although the phrases “gilded binding” and “with the large seal” are likely meant to be read as separate descriptions (the latter referring to the Koranic material appears on the opening flyleaf (fol. 3r). the word *avval* is written prominently at the top of fol. 1r, just above the three-line type D notation dated 27 Shawwal 1026 (October 27, 1617). The type A notation on fol. 2r includes the phrase *jamʾ kitābkhana-i maʾmūra / avval shuda* (collected into the royal library, first [class]).

147. London, British Library, Loth 417/B 243. The word *avval* is written prominently at the top of fol. 1r, just above the three-line type D notation dated 27 Shawwal 1026 (October 27, 1617). The type A notation on fol. 2r includes the phrase *jamʾ kitābkhana-i maʾmūra / avval shuda* (collected into the royal library, first [class]).


149. London, British Library, Loth 526/B 181A. For this same text, also see Loth 525/B 181, discussed above, and fig. 5.


152. London, British Library, Loth 428/B 223A, fol. 3r. One Mulla Payanda also presented the same commentary. Loth 427/B 206.

153. With the exception of Ibrahim’s *navras* seal, all of this material appears on the opening flyleaf (fol. 3r). The word *avval* is written at the top of the folio and at the end of the type A notation below (in turn followed by the type B notation). Ibrahim’s illuminated ex libris occupies the lower half of the page, and five seals are impressed on the left edge.

154. For a transcription of the colophon, see Loth, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 111. Shah Muhiullah’s circular seal is second from the top on the flyleaf described above (fol. 3r). The volume apparently passed to his son Walullah (Wallah), as attested by the octagonal seal immediately below. I thank Jake Benson for reading both of these seals.


156. I thank Peyvand Firoozeh for sharing a detailed unpublished document (“Mausoleum of Khalilollah, near Bidar”) that reassesses and clarifies many of the dates associated with the Ni’matullahi saints who migrated to the Deccan, and their associated architectural monuments.


159. Ibid., 54–58.
170. London, British Library, Loth 211/10 Islamic 605. This manuscript was not discovered in Bijapur’s Asar Mahal, which explains its accession number of “Io Islamic 605” rather than the “B” preface assigned to all Asar Mahal volumes. As part of the British Library’s Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–99) collection, it presents an intriguing case study in the movement of manuscripts between Indian courts (and possibly beyond) of the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries. The volume, which was copied on 9 Shawwal 861 (August 30, 1457) and embellished with an illuminated title page, entered Mahmud Gawan’s collection in Bidar (his seal appears in the margin of fol. 6r and is glossed “seal of Khwaja Jahan”), was accessioned into Bijapur’s royal library (kitābkhāna-i ‘āmira or kitābkhāna-i ḥużūr-i ‘āmira) upon the conquest of Bidar in 1027 (1619) (see the notations on fol. 3r and fol. 283v), received the oval seal dated 1145 (1732–33) of one ‘abd al-Majid Khan (see fol. 6r; this seal appears in several other British Library volumes), and “finally” (in terms of its subcontinent peregrinations) entered the library of Tipu Sultan in Mysore. An additional hexagonal seal on fol. 6v likely dates to the mid-fifteenth century and may belong to the Ni’matullahi sufi order of Bidar. This seal is also present in a second Ibrahim volume acquired upon the conquest of Bidar and embellished with the ruler’s illuminated ex libris (Loth 299/B 325).


173. The distinguishing feature of this seal is the prominently rendered Mahmūd, with the letter īā dramatically extended (kashida) across the length of the circle.


175. For the legacies of these texts, see Robinson, “Ottomans-Safavids-Mughals,” app. 1–3.

176. The Ottoman sultan’s syllabus is discussed in Shahab Overton, “Adil Shahi Farmans,” ed. and trans. Ahmad, 146.

177. During ʿashura in 1596, Ibrahim ordered the house arrest of an anti-Shi’i Shattari Sufi who had disrupted the celebrations. Eaton, Sufis of Bijapur, 116.


179. Private collection and former Sitaram Sahu collection (now missing), reproduced in Haidar and Sardar, Sultans of Decan India, cat. no. 31, fig. 50.

180. This painting is also known as “Sufis/Saints in a landscape.” I use the more specific title proposed in Skelton, “Farrukh Beg in the Deccan: An Update.”

181. This discussion of “Saraswati enthroned” expands my original Solomonic/Bilqis interpretation in Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 163–68.


183. For the characterization of Deccani painting as reveling in “dream and fantasy,” in contrast to the “logic and verisimilitude” of the Mughal School, see Michell and Zebrowski, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates, 1. This particular “branding” of the Deccan persists, as demonstrated by the tagline of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s 2015 exhibition, Opulence and Fantasy. The Bijapuri painter ‘Ali Riza is discussed in Overton, “‘Ali Riza (The Bodleian Painter).”

184. See, in particular, fol. 87, reproduced in Hutton, “Pem Nem,” fig. 10.


187. Mark Brand has argued that the setting of “Saraswati enthroned” is Bijapur’s Farakh Mahal/Chini Mahal. Brand’s argument and the one presented here (in favor of a generic setting codified in late sixteenth-century Persian painting) are not mutually exclusive but rather differ in their emphasis on maker versus audience. Whereas Farrukh undeniably drew upon established Shirazi and Khurasani tropes to create his composition, local audiences may have interpreted the scene through a Bijapuri lens. E-mail correspondence with Mark Brand and Deborah Hutton, based on the former’s conference presentation entitled “Nauraspur after Bijapur: Re-Constructing the Sultanate of Ibrahim Adil Shah II,” January 2015, Delhi.

188. See, for example, Hutton, “Pem Nem,” figs. 32, 33.

189. Haidar, “Kitāb-i Nauras,” 37–38, suggests that the angels could have been drawn from song 17 of the Kitāb-i Nawras, in which the dargāh of Gesu Daraz is described as being attended by angels. I prefer to interpret them within the Solomonic Shirazi paradigm.


192. The phrase “living baldachin” is borrowed from Ebba Koch, “Notes on the Painted and Sculptured Decoration of Nur Jahan’s Pavilions in the Ram Bagh (Bagh-i Nur Afshan) at Agrā,” in Skelton et al., Facets of Indian Art, 59.


197. The throne does not include the superstructure comprised of stacked colored bands visible in some Shirazi paintings. Uluç, *Turkman Governors*, fig. 229.


199. We can, however, locate a Shirazi prototype in the contemporary Qutb Shahi royal library. A Solomon and Bilqis frontispiece (fols. iv–v) opens a finely illuminated and illustrated *Shāhnāma* bearing Muhammad Qutb Shah’s 1021 (1612–13) seal (Cambridge University Library, Ms. Add. 269, fol. 1r). The place of production is unknown, but it is likely Shiraz, and Muhammad’s seal provides the *terminus ante quem*. For a reproduction of the flyleaf, see Ağqal’ā, “Muhrāḥa va ‘Yāddāshthā-yi Sulṭān Muhammad Qūṭbshāh,” fig. 8.

200. London, British Library, 10 Islamic 3214. See Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 124–25, figs. 4.31–4.32; Weinstein, cat. no. 97, in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 203–4. Here the thrones are held aloft by demons in landscapes, thereby conforming to an earlier Shirazi mode, pre-1565.

201. Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153. See Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 190–91, figs. 5.13–5.14; Weinstein, “The Diwān of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah and the Birth of the Illustrated Urdu *Diwān*” in Parodi, *Visual World of Muslim India*, figs. 8.3, 8.4. The paintings are neither at the front of the manuscript nor side-by-side, and the depiction of Bilqis, like that of Saraswati, conforms to the post-1565 mode (the throne on the ground in an architectural setting).


203. For the *Khamsa-i Rūḥ al-Amin* of Mir Muhammad Amin Shahristani (Ruh al-Amin), which he dedicated to Muhammad Quli, see Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, 841–42, nos. 1539–40.


205. London, British Library, Loth 650/B 401. Three Qutb Shahi seals appear on the opening flyleaf (fol. 1r). Muhammad Quli’s impression is at the top, followed by those of Ibrahim (r. 1550–80) and Muhammad dated 1021 (1612–13).

206. Skelton, “Mughal Artist,” 401–2, is a persuasive argument, but the evidence remains circumstantial.


208. The opening line of Farrukh’s signature has been read variously as *kutubah, kamtarin, and harrarahu*. (Beach, “Farrukh Beg,” 189, no. 11; Haidar, “Kitab-i Nawars,” 34–35; Overton, “Collector and His Portrait,” 195, 207–8). I continue to favor the latter, which is based on the best available color reproduction (Singh and Narayan, *Six Multicoloured Prints*). On *harrarahu*, which was often employed by calligraphers and can be translated literally as “penned this,” “inked this,” “outlined by,” or “written by,” depending on context, see Simpson, *Sultan Ibrāhīm Mirzâ’s Haft Awrang*, 253n3. Given that the artistic product in question is a painted portrait, I here favor the generic “drawn by.”

209. On Muhammad’s use of the *harrarahu-mūsāvīr* formula in two tinted drawings of ca. 1580, see Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, no. 94, fig. 37. Also see ibid., 177, where the author argues, “the word mosaver . . . was here used to oppose the word *harrarahu*, which has calligraphic notations.”


211. I am grateful to Wheeler Thackston and Bruce Wannell for their amended translations of Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 73. Also see the most recent translation by Abdullah Ghouchani at the onset of cat. no. 27 in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 93.


213. I thank Navina Haidar for sharing the *Sāqīnāma* source, as identified by Abdullah Ghouchani, in advance of the publication of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s catalogue: Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. no. 27.


217. This circumstance was far from unique in the Deccan. On the Solomonic paradigm in Bahmani kingship, see Helen Philon, “The Great Mosque at Gulbarga Reinterpreted as the Hazar Sutun of Firuz Shah Bahmani (1397–1422),” in Parodi, *Visual World of Muslim India*, 116. Like Ibrahim, Muhammad Quli also cast himself in Solomonic terms. The title of his *Dīvān* reads: “Dīvan of the Solomonic royal highness, may God perpetuate his reign.” Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 175.


220. See the throne in Uluç, *Turkman Governors*, fig. 229.

221. For the fullness of the floral patterns in the borders of the Freer Jami, see Simpson, *Sultan Ibrāhīm Mirzâ’s Haft Awrang*, 65. Farrukh employed similar patterns in the gold rote of the “Falconer” (Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 47), reproduced in Beach, “Farrukh Beg,” fig. 6 (cropped to the picture plane); Muhammad ‘Ali Rajabi, *Iranian Masterpieces of Persian Painting* (Tehran: Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 443 (full...
folio). “Falconer” is signed in the picture plane kantarîn handa-hâ Farrukh musîr[avîr]. The letters vav and râ’ of musâvarî are cut off on the left edge, but the still visible mim and the beginning of the sad imply that this word was indeed musâvarî, as published in Badri Atâbâyî, Fihrist-i Murâqqa’ât-i Kitâbkhâna-yi Saltanatî (Tehran: Châp Zibâ, 1323 [1974]), 357.


223. Safavid court painters such as Shaykh Muhammad had earlier codified the safina and/or narcissus genre of portraiture. Sheila Canby, The Rebellious Reformer: The Drawings and Paintings of Riza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan (London: Azimuth Editions, 1996), figs. 17, 20.

224. Cambridge University, King’s College, Pote 153. The seven paintings of figural types appear at the end of each poem (as singles or in pairs) and bear no relation to the text itself. In one instance, the word bahâdur appears to follow Farrukh’s name but has been effaced. I am grateful to Yasmin Faghili for facilitating my study of the manuscript in December 2014.


226. Cambridge University, King’s College, Pote 153, fol. 149r, reproduced in Skelton, “Mughal Artist,” pl. 2, fig. 4; Soudavar, “Between the Safavids and the Mughals,” pl. XVIIb; Robinson, “Muhammadi,” pl. 1Xb, all of which emphasize the painting’s Muhammadi-Khurasani style.

227. See, for example, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 14.588; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 55.121.42.

228. It is likely that the seven ostensible Farrukhîs were added to the manuscript at the Mughal court, at which time they were overpainted and extended, often poorly. Scribal notations appearing to be Mughal are dated 998 (1589–90) and 1004 (1594–95), and the folios with the paintings in question bear the remnants of two seals, suggesting their value and appeal. I thank John Seyller for his preliminary comments on these marks.


231. I use the title Salim/Jahangir Album to refer to the codex commonly known as the Gulshan Album or Murâqqa’ât-i Gulshan, the latter inspired by the nineteenth-century notations in red ink on folios in the Gulistan Palace Library. Although this album is typically associated with Jahangir, it was in fact begun in the late 1590s, while he was still Prince Salim. Milo Cleveland Beach, “Jahangir’s Album: Some Clarifications,” in Arts of Mughal India: Studies in Honour of Robert Skelton, ed. Rosemary Crill et al. (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004), 111–18, esp. 117.


234. For a Khurasani comparison in which the horse has been transformed into a composite, see Rajabi, Iranian Masterpieces, 515 (Tehran, Riza ‘Abbasi Museum). The closest “Mughal” (yet tellingly by an Iranian immigrant) example of the ruler-horse-hawk triumvirate is ‘Abb al-Samad’s “Hunting scene” of ca. 1385 (Los Angeles, Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection), where the horse’s raised legs similarly imply his speed through space. See Sheila Canby, “‘Abd al-Samad,” in Beach et al., Masters of Indian Painting, vol. 1, no. 662–650, fig. 11.

235. See, for example, Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, F1946.154a–d; Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 14.587.

236. Toronto, Aga Khan Museum, 00074.

237. London, British Museum, 1920,0917,0.298.3.

238. Canby, Rebellious Reformer, no. 113. On Riza’s debt to Muhammadi, also see Soudavar, “Age of Muhammadi,” 69.


240. Dawlat-i an sar ki barâ’ pây-i tûst / bakht dar an dîl di darâ jây-i tûst.

241. As argued in Overton, “Vida de Jacques de Coutre,” 250–52, where I proposed the retitling of the painting from the previous “Ibrahim reading” to the more specific “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir.” The couplet in the painting is identical to that in the sole copy of Nizami’s Makhzan al-Asrâr known to have been in the Bijapur library (former Åsar Mahal; see Ethé, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, no. 306/8/132). I have not had the opportunity to consider the couplet’s wording in the recently surfaced Khamsa of Nizami copied by Khalilullah.


245. We may never know when exactly “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” was integrated into the Salim/Jahangir Album. It could have been a gift from Ibrahim to Jahangir upon the latter’s accession in 1605, a suitable moment for the expression of fidelity.

246. See Soudavar, “Patronage of the Vizier,” for his crediting of Mughamadi with masterful word-image combinations.

247. Zuhuri and Malik Qummi’s approach to the couplet in *Manbaʿ al-Anhār* remains to be explored.

248. See, for example, Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, no. 94 and fig. 37.


250. It is not within the scope of this article to consider the impact of Bijapuri painting traditions on Farrukh’s practice.

251. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 47.

252. Beach, “Farrukh Beg,” 200, 2009133, who further argues that “Falconer” should be dated to Farrukh’s first Mughal period under Akbar (1585–ca.1595), rather than his second under Jahangir (at least 1609 onward).


256. Additional manuscript illustrations in the album to the art- ist. Whether six, eight, or thirteen, Farrukh’s frequency in this renowned codex was significant, perhaps surpassing even that of Aqa Riza.

257. The gold border of “Ibrahim offering obeisance to Jahangir” (fig. 3) includes delicate chinārs, wispy willows, paired animals and birds, and dramatic vertical cliffs. The latter create a smooth visual transition between the outer frame and gold-streaked inner painting.

258. On personal networks, see Anooshahr, “Shirazi Scholars and the Political Culture.”

259. Additional push-pull factors are discussed in Subrahmanyan, “Iranians Abroad.”


262. For the first attribution to Farrukh’s Bijapur period, see Skelton, “Mughal Artist,” pl. 7, fig. 15. The bearded, pious gentleman leaning forward with his arms crossed and obscured in long sleeves was the subject of two portraits ascribed to Farrukh in Mughal circles. See London, Victoria and Albert Museum, IM 10-1925 and IM 11-1925, reproduced in Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor*, pls. 91, 92 (as in fig. 30, pl. 91 is inscribed by Jahangir: “The work of Farrukh Beg in his seventieth year”). The artist used comparable figural types in “Youth holding a wine cup” (Rampur, Raza Library, Ms. L/P.3277, fol. 156v), and “The Prophet’s bier” (Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 170), among others.

263. We cannot discount the possibility that Farrukh could have painted the work at Jahangir’s court (ca. 1609 onward) and simply recycled elements of Bijapuri iconography.

264. See Ekhtiar et al., *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art*, no. 127B (“Mantiq al-Ṭayr”), and 128 (“Dancing Dervishes”).

265. For a mountainous landscape filled with ebullient foliage, humorous animals and birds, and anecdotes of pastoral life (e.g., the milking of cows, and a hunter spotting prey), see, among others, Mughamadi’s “Throwing down the imposing” (Herat, ca. 1581), reproduced in Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, 233.

266. London, British Library, Or 1362, fol. 354v. The majority of this manuscript is preserved in the British Library. For six detached paintings remounted over pages of the *Farhang-i Jahāngīr* (*Dictionary of Jahangir*) of Mir Jamal al-Din Husayn Inju Shirazi (Akbar’s envoy to Ibrahim), see
Linda Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library*, 2 vols. (London: Scorpion Cavendish, 1995), 1330–20. For valuations on some of the manuscript's individual paintings, see Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 277 (also 290 for his full entry on the volume). Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, 311n6–7, references two other possible subimperial copies of the text. The only other known contemporary illustrated manuscript of the *Naṣīḥāt al-Uns* is the Ottoman example dated 1003 (1595) (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, T 474), reproduced in Elaine Wright, *Islam: Faith, Art, Culture: Manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library* (Dublin: Scala Publishers, 2009), figs. 128, 176.

269. Recall the erroneous associations of the Doha *Divān* of Jami and Doha *Khamsa* of Amir Khusraw (appendix, nos. 1, 8) with Ibrahim Mirza of Mashhad, and similar confusion surrounding the provenance of the St. Petersb父ur *Lāyā va Majnūn* of Hatifi (appendix, no. 9).

270. The emphasis here on Bijapur's Iranian diaspora (and related Persian literary culture) does not discount the contributions of local artists, officials, and savants (and related vernaculars), which were of course significant and likewise deserve further consideration. It is worth repeating, in part, the important conclusion of Phillip Wagoner: "Although art historians have long recognized the vibrantly composite nature of Deccani art...there is still a tendency to see the courts of the Deccan as primarily Persianate and Islamic spaces, where it was generally 'Westerners' from the Iranian world who set the culture tone...But if we wish to better understand the rich complexity of the social and cultural tapestry that is the Deccan, we must move beyond Persian sources alone and recognize as well the relevance of previously ignored sources in local 'Indic' vernaculars." Phillip B. Wagoner, "The Multiple Worlds of Amin Khan: Crossing Persianate and Indic Cultural Boundaries in the Qutb Shahi Kingdom," in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of the South*, 97.


273. Okada, *Indian Miniatures*, 123, contends that the painting "abounds with Deccan-style touches new to his [Farrukh's] world, such as the small castles in the background, the unusual handling of exuberant vegetation, and the vertiginous mounds of rocks whose tortured shapes recall the baroque rocks of Persian painters Dust Muhammad and Sultan Muhammad as well as the fanciful landscapes of many Deccan miniatures." Although Farrukh amplified these motifs in "Abu'l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion", they appear regularly in his earlier works. See “The Prophet's bier" (Tehran) and "Akbar's entry into Surat" (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, IS.217–1896), among others. The dark, gold-streaked hills in the background of "Abu'l Ghays al-Yamani and the lion" (also see fig. 3) are a potentially "new" element in Farrukh's Bijapuri landscapes. Comparable hills appear in the work of 'Ali Riza ("The Bodleian Painter") and may indicate a Bijapuri assimilation on Farrukh's part. For a potential relationship between the two artists, see Overton, “'Ali Riza (The Bodleian Painter),” 379–82.


276. The subject of the languid prince receiving a foot rub is a common trope of Khurasani painting and also visible in "Royal garden party," attributed to Farrukh (Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 1663, fol. 29).

277. For the quatrain that Shah ʿAbbas composed for Khalil-ullah, see Soetheby’s, *The Arts of the Islamic World*, lot 60.


279. Consider the artist Shaykh 'Abbasi and shared chūhil sūtūn (lit. “forty columns,” or more generally, a pillared hall) traditions. On Shaykh 'Abbasi, see Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, 367–68. For Bijapur's Asar Mahal, which is contemporary to Isfahan's Chihil Sutun (1647), see Brand, "Bijapur under the Adil Shahis," 70–73, fig. 6.
The Iranian city of Isfahan, located in a rich oasis on the western side of the Dasht-i kavir (Great Desert) and close to the geographical center of the country, has long been the site of urban settlement, favored not only by its position at a nodal point on the ancient routes from the Caucasus down to the Persian Gulf, but crucially by the Zayanda Rud (or Life-giving River) on which it stands—one of the few perennial streams on the Iranian Plateau and a vital resource for irrigation and agriculture. As is the case with many other provincial centers, Isfahan has at different times been more than merely a regional capital, but has served as the principal seat of a major ruling dynasty. This was particularly so under the Seljuks in the twelfth century,1 but never more so than under the Safavids (1501–1722), when Shah ʿAbbās (r. 1588–1629) made Isfahan his capital around the turn of the seventeenth century. The definitive date of this move remains a subject of scholarly debate,2 and is one of the topics to be addressed here. Under ʿAbbās and his successors, the city saw a rapid expansion, particularly in the districts south of the old center and on either bank of the Zayanda Rud, most dramatically with the development of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (Square on the Plan of the World) and the palace quarter to the west of it. This is still the area with the greatest concentration of architectural monuments of the Safavid epoch and the district with the main buildings described by contemporary chroniclers (fig. 1).3 Despite the attention paid to the city and the descriptions that abound in both the travel literature of the period and later scholarly studies, there remains considerable imprecision in establishing when individual buildings were started and completed. This is partly due to the nature of construction work, which might continue over a lengthy period and not be adequately recorded in the fabric of the buildings themselves, but also to the tendency of the documentary sources to record a description of all ongoing architectural patronage under one or two fixed dates. When a new source of information is found—such as the work on which this study is based—it is not always easy to harmonize the evidence it provides with the existing body of information. In the present case, indeed, fresh information may raise as many issues as it resolves. This paper aims to address some of these questions, with respect to the main architectural developments inaugurated during the long and prosperous reign of Shah ʿAbbās, concluding that building work was almost continuous throughout the first two decades of the seventeenth century rather than being concentrated in a few discrete phases.

The starting point for this discussion is Robert McChesney’s seminal article “Four Sources on Shah ʿAbbās’s Building of Isfahan,”4 which made accessible the descriptions of ʿAbbās’s development of the city in Afushta’i Natanzi’s Nuqāwat al-āthār fi dhikr al-akhbār (The Choice Traces in Mentioning Events), Munajjim Yazdi’s Tārīkh-i ʿAbbāsī (The History of ʿAbbās), Iskandar Beg Munshi’s celebrated Tārīkh-i ʿĀlam-ārā-yi ʿAbbāsī (The History of the World-Adorning ʿAbbās), and Junabadi’s less well-known Rawdat al-ṣafawiyya (The Safavid Garden). Two of these texts have been made more accessible since McChesney’s article through the publication of printed editions.5 As he noted, “the third volume of Fadli al-Isfahani’s Afdal al-tawārīkh, if located, may also provide new information about ʿAbbās’s great urban design.”6 Since then, the Afdal al-tawārīkh (The Best of Histories) has been located,7 although not yet fully utilized, and a more substantial study of the manuscript did indeed suggest that the work might contain further details of the embellishment
It turns out that Fazli’s history of ‘Abbas does not provide as much new data on the urban development of Isfahan as on other aspects of his reign. On reflection, however, it is clear that, combined with details already published in my earlier article, much of the “new” information provided by Fazli Beg is not without interest and gives a sense of the scope for further research. There are indeed many fresh passages to be found in the Afḍal al-
tawārīkh that will be of interest to historians of Islamic architecture: they concern not only Isfahan, but other important building complexes in Ardabil, Farahabad, and Mashhad, which will be the subject of future studies. Here, we will focus on Isfahan. In view of the considerable volume of work already written on this topic, the modest aim of this paper is to present the relevant passages in Fazlı’s chronicle as an addition to the existing documentary evidence.10

THE AFḌAL AL-TAWĀRĪKH AND OTHER SAFAVID CHRONICLES

First, a very brief introduction to the Afḍal al-tawārīkh and its importance as a source for the history of ‘Abbās, with regard to its previous misidentification and the extent to which it offers a different view of the reign from that found in the other Persian chronicles.11 As previously noted, for many years the manuscript Dd.5.6, housed in the library of Christ’s College, Cambridge, was miscatalogued as a copy of Iskandar Beg Munshi’s ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī before being identified by the present author as the third volume of a little-known chronicle of the first Safavid rulers of Iran; like the other two extant volumes, which cover the reigns of, respectively, Shah Isma’īl (r. 1501–24) and Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524–76), it is a unique copy. Consisting of 579 folios (1158 pages), the manuscript deals with the long and crucial reign of Shah ‘Abbās in very great detail.

The author, whose name is given in a crossed-out passage on fol. 20r, belonged to a well-established family of bureaucrats and officials, and the work contains many references to other Khuzani family members.12 He was born in 1593 and served in various capacities in the provincial administration, mainly in the Caucasus, between 1608 and 1624, which accounts for the enormous wealth of data on the province and on Safavid relations with Georgia.13 He then gained a post in Kirman in 1625, possibly short-term, after which he evidently remained at court. After the death of Shah ‘Abbās and the political purges that soon followed the accession of his grandson, Shah Safi I (r. 1629–42), Fazlı Beg left Iran for India. There, he continued to work on his chronicle, which was never completed; in fact, all three volumes are in some way defective and bear the signs of continuing revisions.

Ms. Dd.5.6 is dated 1045 (1635); volume 2 (now in the British Library, Or. 4678) was completed in the author’s own distinctive hand in India in 1049 (1639). This example of Fazlı Beg’s handwriting allows us to identify his authorship of the numerous marginalia in the volume on ‘Abbās. The fact that this was not only written outside Iran, but was never finished, helps to explain both why it had no impact on later Safavid historiography and why the author takes a more independent and distinctive line, remote from the pressures of court patronage. It may also explain discrepancies in details, although factual divergences are common enough in medieval historical writing and it is often impossible to decide where the “truth,” or greater accuracy, lies.

The misidentification of the Christ’s manuscript is not surprising, given that the first two pages of the text are indeed copied from Iskandar Beg Munshi’s ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī, no doubt to replace pages missing from the beginning of the volume at the time of its sale to Jean-Baptiste Gentil in Fayzabad (Faizabad, Awadh) in the 1770s. The relationship with Iskandar Beg’s work does not end there, however; apart from the fact that it is the only other contemporary chronicle to cover the whole reign, it follows the ‘Ālam-ārā closely in terms of its annalistic structure and the choice and sequence of topics covered. Furthermore, Fazlı Beg himself refers to his relationship with Iskandar Beg and explains how the latter began his work on the ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī in 1010 (1601) and he himself began work on the Afḍal al-tawārīkh over the winter of 1025–26 (1616–17), a point seemingly reflected in the manuscript (fol. 375r), suggesting a heavy reliance on Iskandar Beg up to this date, which also marked the completion of the first volume of the ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī.14 Both sources share the same flawed chronological system, which tries unsuccessfully to combine the hijri lunar calendar with the twelve-animal solar calendar and the regnal year of the shah.15 For all the great wealth of information it contains, Fazlı Beg’s chronicle provides very few dates. He was no Venerable Bede, and events or information that he places in one annal are often reported by Iskandar Beg—and other sources—in a different year. There are few ways to control this and anyway, there is no guarantee that dates, when given, are reliable; for now, it is enough to observe that some of Fazlı Beg’s information departs quite significantly from that given by Iskandar Beg,
calling into question, at least, the reliability of what has been universally considered up till now to be the principal contemporary source for the reign of Shah 'Abbas. In some cases the Afdal al-tawārīkh does not merely complement or expand the information found elsewhere, but contradicts it in ways that complicate what we currently understand about the building program of Isfahan.

Since most of these conflicts concern chronology, a very rapid survey of the characteristics of the other "four sources" is desirable, since any resolving of the discrepancies between them must be informed by an appreciation of the context in which these four authors were writing and their respective merits as historians.16

Afushta'i Natanzi's chronicle covers the period from the death of Shah Tahmasp in 984 (1576) to 1007 (1598).17 He began his work in 1590, at the age of 60, inspired by Shah 'Abbas' expedition to Shiraz that year to deal with the rebellious Ya'qub Khan, and ends it with 'Abbas's defeat of 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan Uzbek and reconquest of Herat in August 1598, both major stages in the shah's taking control of his kingdom.18 For the present purposes, it is important, therefore, to note that he was actively composing his work at the time of the shah's first visit to Isfahan, that he was an exact contemporary of the events he describes and must have been an eye-witness to some of them, and that he had access to well-placed sources of information. In terms of its structure, Natanzi's chronicle is episodic, not organized in annals, but he does give dates, rather sparingly, with reference to the hijri lunar calendar, and follows a broadly chronological narrative, although this is not always clear, nor consistent with other accounts.19 As reported by McChesney, Natanzi records building activities in Isfahan in the years 998–99 (1590–91), 1002 (1593), and 1004 (1595–96).

Junabadi's Rawdat al-safawīyya is similar in many respects to Natanzi's chronicle, notably in that he appears not to have been a court official or in government employment, and shared with Natanzi an interest in poetry.20 The Rawdat covers the history of the Safavids from the reign of Shah Isma'il 1 until 'Abbas's conquest of Baghdad in 1034 (1624). The work was begun in 1023 (1614) and completed in 1036 (1626–27); he mentions that he was writing about Isfahan in 1026 (1617), a little after the events concerned.21 More importantly, like Natanzi's, his work is episodic in its treatment of history and follows only a loose chronological framework, with relatively few precise dates.22 As noted by McChesney, Junabadi concentrates his information about the development of Isfahan in one main section, under the year 1012 (1603–4), following an earlier, “undated” passage.23 Like Natanzi, therefore, Junabadi was also a contemporary of the reign of 'Abbas, for the knowledge of which he claims his own direct experience and participation in events.24

Iskandar Beg's chronicle of the reign of Shah 'Abbas needs no introduction, long being regarded and used as the standard primary source for the period.25 Unlike the work of Natanzi and Junabadi, his chronicle is organized in annals, though the significant problems with his chronology have already been noted. Nevertheless, his narrative of the reign can generally be equated with the sequence of events provided by other authors, including Fazli Beg (who provides even fewer precise dates than Iskandar Beg). For the present purposes, it is useful to underline the fact that, not unlike Junabadi, Iskandar Beg concentrates his account of 'Abbas's construction of Isfahan under two annals, namely 1006 (1597–98) and 1020 (1611), giving the impression of two distinct moments of building activity, of which he also provides a separate summary list.26 Iskandar Beg was a munshī (secretary-scribe), closely connected with the court and the bureaucracy, and therefore well placed for access to reliable information. Nevertheless, despite being his junior, Fazli Beg considers the material he received from his own relatives, such as his brother Muhammad Beg, to be much superior, for instance, in his account of the reception of the Ottoman Mehmed Pasha in 1017 (1609).27 Like those of Junabadi, Iskandar Beg's descriptions of the construction of Isfahan were written by 1025 (1616), after which neither author refers to the matter again.

All these documentary sources present chronological problems, which to a large extent can be calibrated against the detailed framework provided by the court astrologer Jalal al-Din Munajjim Yazdi, whose work is arranged in annals according to the Islamic hijri lunar calendar, with other chronological or astrological indications, in the form of a diary—hence its apt secondary title, Rūznāma-yi Mullā Jalāl (The Journal of Mulla Jalal). It does indeed read at times like a daily record of events at court and, bearing in mind his professional qualification and the fact that he was in regular attendance on
the shah,\textsuperscript{28} his evidence carries great authority. Unfortunately, his diary continues only down to late 1020 (February 1612);\textsuperscript{29} although it is rich in dated information, the details he provides are not always internally consistent. It remains, however, a valuable corrective to the work of less punctilious authors, such as Iskandar Beg and Fazli Beg. As noted by McChesney, Yazdi gives a more continuous account of the building works in Isfahan, under the years 1000 (1591–92), 1005 (1596), 1006 (1598), 1011 (1602–3), and 1020 (1611).

All these sources, therefore, are more or less contemporary and involved in the events they recorded; Fazli Beg actually represents the next generation, writing somewhat later, though still within ‘Abbas’s reign, largely on the strength of evidence from family members who were themselves important figures in the Safavid bureaucracy.

A CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY OF BUILDING WORK IN ISFAHAN

With these points in mind, let us start with the information provided by the \textit{Afḍal al-tawārīkh} on the construction of the new Safavid capital, drawing attention to where this differs from or expands upon existing evidence.

998–1001 (1590–93)

First, it is noteworthy that, unlike some later authors, Fazli confirms the early interest of ‘Abbas in developing Isfahan that was reported by Natanzi.\textsuperscript{30} In 998 (1590), Fazli records that the shah went to Isfahan and stayed at the Mahdi Palace in the Naqsh-i Jahan (‘imārat-i mahdī-yi naqsh-i jahān) created by Shah Isma’il, where he drew up plans for buildings and gardens.\textsuperscript{31} Qadi Ahmad Qummi (d. ca. 1606) also refers to the shah entering Isfahan and residing in the \textit{dawlatkhāna} (palace) of the Naqsh-i Jahan, an exemplar of the gardens of paradise.\textsuperscript{32} We note here already something of a persistent problem of terminology and a lack of precision in the descriptive sources; it is not clear what distinguishes an ‘imārat (single edifice) from a \textit{dawlatkhāna} (perhaps a palace complex) containing the royal residence and offices, and later, a sarā (palace).

The first chronological discrepancy arises here, for Fazli makes this statement in connection with ‘Abbas’s lengthy sojourn in the city on his way south to deal with affairs in Fars, that is, in early 1590, before setting off for Shiraz in June, whereas Natanzi mentions ‘Abbas’s plans for the city on his return from Yazd and before heading back to Qazvin in late December 1590.\textsuperscript{33} This is only a minor difference, but it does mean that Fazli’s statement, if correct, is evidence that the shah initiated development of the city during his first visit there.

We may concur with Stephen Blake that this should be seen in the context of ‘Abbas’s assertion of control over southern Iran, a major concern in the early years of his reign.\textsuperscript{34} This does not necessarily mean, however, that the capital was shifted at the same time and that Qazvin ceased to be the center of government from this date, although there appears to be a statement to this effect in the account by the later chronicler, Junabadi.\textsuperscript{35} Apart from questions of terminology and the fluid use of epithets such as \textit{Dār al-Mulk} and \textit{Dār al-Salṭana} (seat of rulership) for both these (and other) cities, it is interesting to note that on his return to Qazvin in January 1591, ‘Abbas drew up plans for new streets and buildings around the Bagh-i Sa’adatabad,\textsuperscript{36} which suggests that he had not lost interest in developing Qazvin.

Junabadi specifically mentions that the \textit{maydān} (square) in Isfahan was at this time extended to the front of the shrine (imāmzāda) of Harun-i Vilayat;\textsuperscript{37} the square was thus enlarged and developed, thereby improving it for polo, \textit{qabaq} (literally “gourd,” referring to the wooden target used for a royal archery game), and other sports. This certainly makes sense, and is consistent with the account in Natanzi, who also mentions the preparation of the \textit{maydān} for \textit{qabaq}, polo, and equestrian sports, along with the rebuilding of the old bazaars (the word \textit{taʿmīr}, “rebuilding,” does not indicate new construction). It seems this much can logically be associated with the existing urban space, rather than a fresh development. It is also clear from the context of his report, and the date 999 (1590–91) immediately preceding this narrative, that Junabadi is associating these first building plans with ‘Abbas’s presence in the city at the time of the Fars campaign.\textsuperscript{38}

We will consider the arguments surrounding this issue shortly. Meanwhile, Natanzi states that the whole first stage of development of the bazaars and extension of the \textit{maydān} was finished in a short time, which may
be accurate if it refers to the area round the Harun-i Vilayat. Fazli continues that before leaving Isfahan for Qazvin, ‘Abbas acquiesced to the request by some of the notables of Isfahan, such as Muhammad Amin Husayniyya and Mir Taqi al-Din Muhammad, the kalântar (mayor), to destroy the castle of Tabarak, to prevent rebels from using it as a stronghold to dominate the city.39

Three years later, according to Fazli, in his annal for 1001 (1592–93), ‘Abbas was again in the city and bestowed many favors on the people, granting a one-year remission of taxes. He drew up a plan for the construction of a lofty building (‘imārat; within the dawlatkhāna?), the bazaar, the maydān, and the qaysariyya (covered bazaar).40 It is unclear to what extent, if at all, this refers to the old city center, or to the development of a new area round the Naqsh-i Jahan garden, but his information is essentially similar to that provided by both him and especially Natanzi for 1590 (as above). Fazli places this in the context of the Shah’s presence in Isfahan on his return from eastern Iran after abandoning his intention to visit Mashhad, which Natanzi puts in Muharram 1001 (autumn of 1592), stating that ‘Abbas went to Isfahan in view of his concern to develop the city (binā bar tavajjuhi kih nisbat bih ‘imārat wa tartīb-i dār al-salṭana-yi Isfahān dārad).41 Yazdi, whose chronology is generally much more rigorous and reliable, does not mention any visit to Isfahan at this time, but he does give details of work planned a year earlier, in Safar 1000 (November 1591), before ‘Abbas left for Yazd and soon afterwards for Ardabil.42 Yazdi gives essentially the same information as Fazli Beg, referring to ‘Abbas drawing up plans for the maydān of Isfahan, the bazaar, and the qaysariyya;43 it is reasonable to assume that both accounts refer to the same single occasion, but not clear which date (1591 or 1592) is to be preferred.

Interestingly, however, Fazli continues that ‘Abbas ordered that the old qaysariyya (qaysariyya-yi kuhna, i.e., the bazaars in the old center) should be destroyed; after touring and feasting in the gardens of Isfahan, he set off back to the Dār al-Salṭana, Qazvin, for the winter.44

This echoes the earliest report, by Natanzi, on the rebuilding of the bazaars and construction of a new qaysariyya but perhaps implies that ‘Abbas’s intention from the outset was indeed a radical relocation of the center of the city’s commercial activity, rather than a simple redevelopment of the old quarter. Only Junabadi gives a hint of the rivalries and opposition caused by the creation of ‘Abbas’s new quarter, but he does so in terms of ‘Abbas’s original intention to modernize and restore the old quarter, which, he says, was misconstrued by the powerful owners of the shops there, leading the shah to desist from this plan and start afresh elsewhere.45 Among those mentioned is Mir Muhammad Amin, the naqīb (leader of the sayyids) already encountered in connection with the destruction of the castle of Tabarak. Junabadi dates this opposition to 1012 (1603–4), that is, in the context of the completion of the shah’s definitive shift to the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan; but it serves as an introductory background to the move and makes it clear that ‘Abbas’s original building activities were at least partly directed at the Harun-i Vilayat area, as argued by Blake.46

Before progressing further, it might be useful to summarize the position so far. Natanzi, Yazdi and Fazli Beg all provide very similar, laconic statements about ‘Abbas’s initial orders concerning Isfahan, given over various early visits to the city between 998 and 1001 (1590–93), involving repairs, extensions, and possibly some destruction, as well as new building, in the bazaar area, the maydān, and the qaysariyya. Junabadi, writing in 1026 (1617), states that at least some of this activity concerned the old commercial center, as indeed is logical. Blake’s contention that these developments were connected exclusively with the area round the Harun-i Vilayat has attracted considerable opposition,47 and it is worth reviewing the evidence once more, before turning to the subsequent passages that clearly refer entirely to the development of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan.

In support of Junabadi’s observation about the extension of the old maydān (maydān-i kuhna), we may note that it should be taken together with his later statement about opposition to ‘Abbas’s plans for the old center, and that the two reports are compatible and consistent. If, as seems to be the case, his remarks about the concerns of the local notables have been accepted in the secondary literature, it is necessary to accept the remarks also about the expansion of the maydān near the

...
shrine of Harun-i Vilayat: an extension of this square presumably would have necessitated some modification to the surrounding buildings. If it were simply a case of accepting or rejecting Junabadi’s testimony (and rejecting it is to deny him any credibility as a source), it would be a straight choice, but other evidence must be taken into account.

In the first place, we are told that Shah Isma’il also made some adjustments to the maydān at the start of his reign, on the occasion of his stay in the city in 915 (1509–10), after passing the winter in Shiraz: the maydān seemed narrow (tang) and he ordered that it be broadened. He spent a week there riding (asb tākhtan) and shooting at qabāq, before heading for Hamadan.48 This is echoed by his exact contemporary, the author Amini Haravi: the shah pitched his tents there (Isfahan) and enjoyed riding (asb tākhtan) and practicing archery (qa-ba′q andākhtan) in the maydān there.49 We may also note the same author’s statement that Isma’il’s earlier prolonged residence in Isfahan for his winter and summer quarters in 910 (1504–5) had been profitable for the merchants’ business while the shah and his entourage (khadam wa hashar) were there. “The ruined houses were restored through the auspicious arrival of the royal army (tashkar-i īrān); the palace (sarā) and recently destroyed places were revived and the shah made the harīm of Isfahan a mansion (nishīman).”50 The same year saw the elimination of the rebel Muhammad Karra, who, after being captured in Yazd, was brought in a cage to the maydān in Isfahan and burned alive.51 The question is, which maydān? Iskandar Beg places this in the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, and this is followed by later scholars, including Blake.52 This seems to me illogical, if for no other reason than that such an event would best achieve its desired effect in a heavily populated public place, and forces a choice: is Iskandar Beg, writing after the construction of the new maydān, more accurate in his account of the reign of Shah Isma’il, than Junabadi, writing at exactly the same time, about the reign of Shah ‘Abbas? It would be more natural for Junabadi also to refer automatically to the new, recently completed maydān for ‘Abbas’s patronage, but he specifically mentions the old one.53 Unfortunately, in view of our defective knowledge about the maydān-i kuhna, it is all too easy to airbrush it out of history along with its physical disappearance.54 It is important to note that it was still used for polo games well into the reign of ‘Abbas.55 The same absence of information means that we have no real idea of the shape or development of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan before ‘Abbas’s constructions there, other than that it was a maydān in the garden area (bāgh). The question of antecedents, particularly the matter of the orientation of the new maydān, is best tackled by Masashi Haneda, but his comments are also pertinent to the question of its demarcation and the buildings that may have ringed it.56

If Isma’il’s patronage of the city, such as it was, seems incontrovertibly to refer to the old city center, it is also clearly the case that he himself resided outside the urban core in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan, where he evidently rebuilt or restored the existing structures later associated with his name, including the harīm (private quarters) and sarā mentioned by Amini above, and referred to as the ‘imārat-i maḥdī by Fazli Beg.57 It appears that little changed in Isfahan during the reign of Shah Tahmasp, although by the end of Muhammad Khudabanda’s reign (1578–87) there was evidently considerable destruction of the original dawlatkhāna, or palace buildings, which had become uninhabitable,58 necessitating ‘Abbas’s earliest instructions for refurbishments.

This is not to say that there are no problems with Junabadi’s account of the extension of the old maydān, chiefly that he says it was 300 jarīb long, a dimension he also gives later for the Naqsh-i Jahan square, suggesting a confusion in his mind between the two spaces59 the figure he gives is anyway a gross exaggeration.60 Nevertheless, I believe the main problem is with the interpretation of his evidence, which concerns only the maydān and its enlargement, rather than with the information itself. It is consistent to suppose that Natanzi also refers to this space, and some rebuilding round it. Fazli Beg specifically refers in his annal for 1001 (1592–93) to orders for the destruction of the old qaysariyya, which must be seen in the context of continuing development there, as one would expect from the newly active shah. At the same time, however, for reasons well-rehearsed elsewhere, there seems little doubt that ‘Abbas quickly appreciated the opportunities for developing the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan as a focus for the royal residence and
surrounding amenities, and started to draw up plans for a new qaysariyya and, with it, the extension of the markets towards the new square. The identity of the dawlatkhāna clearly refers to the construction or reconstruction of the royal palace in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan, previously used by Shah Isma‘il and earlier rulers. That these developments proceeded apace is clear from the accounts that follow (see below).

In other words, we can perhaps already discern a twin focus in ‘Abbas’s activities, one involving the bazaars and commercial district round the Harun-ı Vilayat and the other the development of the residential and imperial area to the south—similar to other examples of royal quarters being located in garden areas away from the busy urban center, but now also consistent with the Safavid vision of incorporating them into an integral part of the seat of government.

1002–1005 (1594–97)

Returning to Fazli Beg’s text, the following year, 1002 (1594–94), the shah organized a trip to Isfahan as a way to entertain the Uzbek chief Nur Muhammad Khan, together with the Khwarazmian Hajji Muhammad Khan, both of whom had taken refuge at the court in Qazvin. The visit is dated from 9 Safar 1002 (November 4, 1593) to 2 Jumada I 1002 (January 24, 1594) by Munajjim Yazdi, who does not mention either the Central Asian guests or any construction work, confining himself to recording a bon mot concerning riddles uttered by ‘Abbas on the roof (sic) of the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan. The visit is recorded in considerable detail by Natanzi, together with important information about the construction of a new palace on the maydān, which unequivocally refers to the new square, and also mentions another building round it; his dating of the visit is also rather precise, referring to the dispatch of Alpan Beg in early Safar (November) to build a suitable residence beside the Naqsh-i Jahan dawlatkhāna, which he accomplished on the eastern (sic) side of the building in a short space of time. The shah himself left Qazvin on 1 Rabi’1 (November 25) and arrived a week later at Dawlatabad, just outside the city, having meanwhile dispatched Hajji (or Hajim) Khan to Rayy. A magnificent istiqbāl (welcoming party) at the Tuqchi Gate had to be postponed due to a heavy downpour, and the shah entered the city five days later; the 15,000 troops lined up to greet him assembled “in the maydān in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan.” Here, the shah, having left the dawlatkhāna and entered the maydān, went onto the roof of the madrasa of Khwaja Malik Mustawfi, “which is situated opposite the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan,” to watch the parade; this is presumably the roof referred to by Munajjim Yazdi. The discharge of volleys from the 15,000 musketeers caused darkness and terror. The event ended with ‘Abbas pouring fruit down from the roof as largesse for the stampeding crowd below.

Fazli Beg is the only author to contribute additional information to this account, providing further details of the shah’s progress to the city via displays of lights (chirāghān) in the main towns on the way, organized by Alpan Beg, the Yasa-ʾul-bashi (aide-de-camp) going on ahead of the party, and an istiqbāl at the caravanserai at Sardehan, flanked by 30,000 troops (sic) for the benefit of the Chinggisid chiefs. Beyond the Tuqchi Gate, the ground was spread with carpets and precious textiles. Fazli Beg continues:

The buildings (ʿimārāt) of Naqsh-i Jahan had been appointed for the accommodation (nuzūl) of the Chinggisids and when they had arrived for feasting and conviviality (ṣuḥbat), Alpan Beg was to accompany them to his own residence (makān-i khud), while the shah would hasten to the buildings (ʿimārāt). As had been decreed, the most and the best of it (the palace?) had been built.

The shah then spent several days relaxing in Isfahan, and:

During that time drew up the plans for the Chahar Bagh and the building of the Guldasta. [...] The qaysariyya and the chahār bāzār, which had been founded beforehand, were half finished; more planners (ṭarrāḥīhā) then came to the shah’s attention and they designed a hammām in the guldasta; prostitutes and singers were then given permission, on the orders of Alpan Beg, to entertain the Chinggisid sultans while they waited for news from Khurasan.

These texts by Natanzi and Fazli Beg indicate clearly that—whatever the initial developments may have been around the old maydān—the qaysariyya and the chahār bāzār must be associated with the development of the northern side of the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan. As for the palace complex, however, the dawlatkhāna was evidently still inadequate for royal entertainment, and
it was necessary to erect a separate building to house the shah’s guests, while the maydān itself in this garden quarter was perhaps still not fully delineated and certainly contained no new structures suitable for the shah to use as a vantage point to survey the square. The madrasa of Malik Mustawfi, opposite the palace grounds, was evidently situated near the later location of the Shaykh Lutf-Allah Mosque, which must have been constructed close to the same site.73

According to Fazlī Beg, the shah brought Shaykh Lutf-Allah with him on the journey from Qazvin, and drew up the plan for the mosque opposite the Ala (sic ‘Āli) Qapu (Gate) of the dawlakhāna, which is very tall and well arranged. Overseers (sar-kārān) were appointed, as Fazlī adds in a marginal note at this point, to bring it to completion and to call it the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutf-Allah. The great Shaykh himself was appointed to supervise the rooms and nighttime prayer halls (shabistāns) and the places allocated for ascetics and worshippers. After it was completed, the Friday prayer and other religious obligations would be performed there, the reward for which would be a legacy for the fortunate era of the shah (haẓrat-i a’lā); and it was decreed that, for the renewal of the performance of retreat and worship, a sum would be allocated for the needs of his mosque from each of the incomes of the properties and commercial establishments of the crown land administration (khāṣṣa-yi sharīfa), and every year the tax collectors of the settlements (gaṣabāt) round Isfahan should give the amount requested by the Refuge of the Sadarat (sadāratpanāh, i.e., the Shaykh).74

This very precise account, if accurate, provides evidence (missing elsewhere) showing not only that Shaykh Lutf-Allah was indeed closely associated with the construction and even design of the mosque from the outset, but that this development occurred a decade earlier (in 1593–94) than usually assumed: the conventional date for the construction is 1011 (1602–3), supported by inscriptions from 1012 (1603–4) and 1028 (1618).75 It also gives explicit details about how the project was to be funded.

Since this is the first passage in Fazlī’s chronicle that departs radically from the other literary sources, the question arises of his reliability. First, a general observation that applies equally well to how we read all our sources—including Junabādī’s text, which has caused such dissension over the question of the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat: as noted above, it is not reasonable to pick and choose the information that seems to agree with what we think we know, and reject what does not fit, any more than it is logical to accept a “new” piece of information and then reject everything that contradicts it. Rather, as our knowledge base increases, we have more elements of the puzzle to fit together into a coherent narrative. As for Fazlī’s statements about the city this year (1002 [winter 1593–94]), we should note first that it is internally consistent with his previous reports, and second that it is logically acceptable. The context of the first of many visits of Chinggisid khans from Transoxania (as well as other potentates) provides a rational pretext for the need to develop appropriate accommodation in a royal residential district that was just beginning to take shape, and is consistent with the evidence of the earlier author, Natanzi. The existence of a madrasa opposite the dawlakhāna must have suggested to ‘Abbās a suitable site for developing a royal counterpart symbolizing religious as well as secular authority—and here there is also a context that makes such a development at this moment understandable.

Fazlī Beg’s account of the visit to Isfahan follows immediately on his report of the suppression of the Nuqtavi heresy (a Sufi movement founded in 1397 by Mahmūd Pasikhani) of Darvish Khusrav, which saw the shah abdicate for three days in favor of Yusuf the quiver maker.76 Shaykh Lutf-Allah is named by Fazlī Beg as one of the senior ‘ulama whom ‘Abbās involved in deciding the fate of the Nuqtavis and carrying out their punishment.77 What better moment to follow up this crisis with a powerful endorsement of Shi‘i orthodoxy and begin to give this concrete form in the shape of religious patronage. It is notable that Fazlī states that the mosque would be used to perform Friday prayer, the legitimacy of which had been a rumbling issue throughout the first Safavid century.78 Sussan Babaie has already noted how the conjunction of such factors helps account for the development of the mosque;79 here, we merely suggest that Fazlī’s description underlines the fact that these factors were already applicable in 1594. Although the bulk of the information comes in an authorial marginal note and was therefore written some time later than the other contemporary accounts, this does not alter the fact that it is embedded at a point in the text clearly
written much earlier. Finally, we may note that his kinsman Mirza Hidayat Najm-i Sani was among those senior officials involved in the arrangements for the shah's visit that year and would have been a source of eyewitness information.80

We can therefore accept that plans for the development of the maydān in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan area were already well under way by the end of 1594, with some projects in progress (the qayṣariyya and chahārbāzār, the dawlatkhāna), and others being initiated at this date (the Chahar Bagh, and Mosque of Shaykh Lutf-Allah), as ‘Abbas began to assert his authority in both the political and religious spheres. From the start, by these instructions, the shah may well have been initiating a coherent vision for long-term development of the city,81 anticipating a transfer of the capital from Qazvin, but this did not take place until the building works were more advanced.

The chronological problems remain, however, as we note that Munajjim Yazdi dates the design of the Chahar Bagh to the shah’s visit in late Safar 1005 (October 1596),82 a visit not specifically mentioned by either Fazli Beg or Iskandar Munshi.83 As there are several such discrepancies in the dating of specific building projects, it is perhaps easier to assume that they reflect different stages, from first conception to foundation to completion, rather than a one-to-one correlation between a building and a particular date, as many of them must have been several years in the making.

Of more concern is the need to reconcile the information provided by Natanzi, who under the year 1004 (1595–96) provides an extremely detailed account of building works in Isfahan and especially the decoration of the walls surrounding the maydān, and Munajjim Yazdi.84 The latter refers briefly to the shah’s visit to Isfahan in Jumada I 1004 (January 1596), and the astonishing display of lights and fireworks that greeted him—the main topic also of Natanzi’s account, with dates that more or less match, although they do not agree.85 By contrast, Natanzi does not mention any visit in 1005 (1596–97); indeed, he appears to pass over this year entirely, following the shah’s visit to Isfahan in 1004 with the start of the expedition to Khurasan in 1006 (1597–98).86 This permits Yazdi’s account to stand uncontested (rather than supposing that both refer to the same visit under different years), although we may note that Iskandar Beg puts the design of the Chahar Bagh in 1006 (see below), and quotes the same chronogram that Yazdi gives for 1005.87 In other words, much of Yazdi’s information for 1005 is unique, and it is perhaps not impossible that it could equally well be associated with the following year.

1006–1011 (1598–1603)

According to Munajjim Yazdi, Isfahan became (muqarrar shud) the Safavid capital in mid-Rajab 1006 (mid-February 1598), due to the need to counter persistent Uzbek raids on the Yazd district. The date of the transfer is also recorded by Iskandar Beg over the winter of 1006 (1597–98), the first time he mentions the subject of ‘Abbas’s vision for the city. Both authors give several details about the work accomplished or initiated that year, which there is no need to repeat.88 There is no particular reason to accept Blake’s belief that this occurred earlier, although it is entirely plausible that the move may have been in ‘Abbas’s mind from the outset.

Junabadi’s statement that the town became a Dār al-Mulk may be taken to reflect its reclamation as an official center of regional government after falling out of imperial control in the previous reign. Fazli Beg provides additional information about the progress and continuation of construction in the city, once more mainly in a marginal note.

After Nawrūz (New Day, i.e., the first day of the Persian solar year),89 the shah set off for Isfahan (here as always, Fazli provides a detailed list of the senior officials who went out to greet him, including Mirza Hidayat). He goes on, “The splendid buildings of the dawlatkhāna, the gardens, the hammams, the chahār-khyābān and the sūq having been designed, problem-tackling architects (muʿāmirān-i mushkil-guzīn) were appointed to bring them to completion.” In the margin, Fazli adds the following more precise information, as far as I know, not found elsewhere.90

The shah went to a madrasa opposite the bathhouse (ḥammām) at the end of the chahār-sūq, which is by the qayṣariyya and the polo maydān, beside the ‘Ali Qapu, and determined that it should be completed according to the wishes (farmūda) of Mawlana ‘Abd-Allah-i Sani Shushtari. They should make a water channel (nahr, the Fadin Canal)
that ran from the *maydān* and the gate of the *qaysariyya* on the Naqsh-i Jahan to flow through the madrasa. This was begun on the shah’s orders and in two years it was completed. A post was established for students and researchers according to the decision of the Refuge of Excellence, Mawlana ‘Abd-Allah, who would teach in that lofty dome every day and a place (*makān*) was assigned beside the mosque (*ṭaraf-i masjid*). It was decided that, with the permission of the Divan of the Loft Tazawi-Deputyship of Guidance (*Dīwān al-Hidāyat al-Wilāyat al-ʿAliyyat al-Radawiyya*), the clerks of the land holdings and commercial enterprises of the crown estates (*khāliṣa*), which he himself had set up in Isfahan, should treat this as an urgent matter. It was known as the madrasa of Mawlana ‘Abd-Allah and the ulama and faṣala prayered and studied and discussed learning there.

Once more, as in the case of the Lutf-Allah Mosque, Fazli provides clear information about the establishment of a major Shi’i religious building in the environs of the *maydān*, this time for one of Shaykh Lutf-Allah’s main contemporaries and rivals, ‘Abd-Allah Shushtari (d. Muḥarram 1021 [March 1612]), a scholar from Najaf. Fazli also indicates how the building was to be financed from the royal budget, with reference to a specific council (*dīwān*) whose task was to advise on matters of Imami doctrine, in this case presumably questions of independent reasoning (*jitihād*). Assuming his report is accurate, we may conclude that the construction of the madrasa was completed circa 1008 (1600).

Fazli makes no specific reference to the change of capital this year and his rather general statement in the body of the text implies that work was still continuing on the royal projects in the palace area and especially on the northern side, not that they were inaugurated or completed at this time. It also suggests that ‘Abbas was actively trying to bring these projects to completion. We may note in passing that on his triumphant return from the Balkh campaign, although he concentrates his account of ‘Abbas’s activities in Isfahan during the winter of 1009 (1600–1601), first about a trip he made along the banks of the Zayandeh Rud to explore the possibilities of bringing its water to Isfahan, and, more interestingly, about his visit to the parks and gardens on 10 Shawwal (April 14, 1601), as well as his outing to see the Uzbek and Georgian envoys and watch a polo game on the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat. Whatever else one may conclude about the rival development of the new *maydān*, this remark makes it clear that the old *maydān* was still functioning and could serve as a polo pitch.

In fact, Munajjim Yazdi provides further details of the progress of ‘Abbas’s plans in his annal for 1011 (1602–3), following the shah’s return from his Balkh campaign (November 1602). He mentions the completion of the *maydān* at the entrance to the palace, surrounded by two rows of shops and other amenities, as well as the *qaysariyya* and buildings in the bazaar, which was the focus of attention in the first phase of development. To signal and confirm the completion of the project, Yazdi records that on Thursday, 27 Jumada II 1011 (December 12, 1602), the bazaaris (merchants of the marketplace) moved their operations from the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat. They occupied the new quarters, which were endowed in the name of the Infallible Imams, along with the parks and gardens of the Chahar Bagh. He also mentions that by 12 Rajab (December 26), all this construction work, including the Allahverdi Khan Bridge, was completed. Essentially the same information is given by Junabadi, including the hints about opposition from the interested parties in the old *maydān* area (but no report that they moved to the new *maydān*), and also in the context of ‘Abbas’s return from the disastrous Balkh campaign, although he concentrates his account of the development all into one text, dated 1012 (1603–4).
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al-Salṭana of the [Seljuk?] sultans of Iran, he put it in order and, buying many properties from the owners of those districts, he planned gardens and cultivation.”

It is not clear whether this refers to an area round the old city center, or, as might be assumed, locations within the new palace precincts to the southwest.

By this date then, early 1603, there is concrete, consistent and reliable evidence of the completion of the commercial buildings at the northern end of the square and the perimeter development of Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (except on its southern edge), the construction of the Madrasa ofʿabd-Allah Shushtari, and the start of work on the Mosque of Shaykh Lutf-Allah, while other projects seem to have continued to be under construction (see table 1 and fig. 1; see also table 2 on page 171).

Table 1. Fazli Beg’s chronology of the construction of Isfahan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hijri annal</th>
<th>Date AD</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Alternative dates</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>998</td>
<td>Early 1590</td>
<td>ʿAbbas draws up plans for buildings and gardens; orders for Tabarak to be demolished.</td>
<td>Late 1590</td>
<td>Natanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001</td>
<td>1592–93</td>
<td>Plans for dawlatkhāna, maydān, bazaar, and qaysariyya; old qaysariyya to be demolished.</td>
<td>October 1591</td>
<td>Yazdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1002</td>
<td>1593–94</td>
<td>Buildings in Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan for visitors; plans for Chahar Bagh, Guldasta, and hammam in Guldasta; qaysariyya and chahār-bāzār “half finished”; founding of Mosque of Shaykh Lutf-Allah.</td>
<td>1005/1596</td>
<td>Yazdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1006</td>
<td>1598</td>
<td>Dawlatkhāna, gardens, hammam, and chahār-bāzār urged towards completion; work starts on Madrasa ofʿabd-Allah Shushtari.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Madrasa completed (implied).</td>
<td>1012/1603</td>
<td>Junabadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1009</td>
<td>1600–1601</td>
<td>Qaysariyya and chahār-bāzār recently completed.</td>
<td>1012/1603</td>
<td>Junabadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1011</td>
<td>1602–3</td>
<td>Restoration of buildings and some new constructions; old palace area restored; purchases land for development. Begins development ofʿabbasabad for Tabrizis.</td>
<td>1020/1611</td>
<td>Yazdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1013</td>
<td>1605</td>
<td>Begins development of New Julfa for Armenians.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1016</td>
<td>1607–8</td>
<td>Work starts on Allah Verdi Khan Bridge.</td>
<td>1006/1598 completed 1011/1602</td>
<td>Yazdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1017</td>
<td>1608</td>
<td>ʿAbbas inspects progress on bridge.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1018</td>
<td>1609</td>
<td>Urges progress on bridge and further constructions.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1019</td>
<td>1611</td>
<td>Dawlatkhāna and qaysariyya noted as finished.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1020</td>
<td>1611</td>
<td>Founding of Masjid-i Shah (Friday mosque) (under 1019/1610).</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1033</td>
<td>1624</td>
<td>Urges progress on completion of mosque.</td>
<td>1006/1598</td>
<td>Munshi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

not least in referring also to the Masjid-i Shah (Friday mosque), which was not begun for another eight years after 1012. Fazli Beg has nothing much to add to these accounts (especially the combined summaries of the whole development of the city by Iskandar Beg and Junabadi), but he does document ʿAbbas’s continuing efforts to develop the capital, once again in the context of the shah’s return from the Balkh campaign in the winter of 1602–3. He writes that after celebrating the Nawruz of 1603 and dispatching Hasan Khan to recapture the fort at Nihavand, the shah busied himself with the “restoration of gardens and the organization (tartīb) of buildings, striving for an increase of lofty constructions. Casting his eye on the location that had been the old Dār
Fazli’s evidence confirms what one would actually expect to be the case, that work continued on various projects and was not all completed by 1603. Our other sources, by contrast, do not refer to any further construction work until the years 1020–21 (1611–12).

1012–1020 (1603–1611)

Shah ‘Abbas was absent from the capital between September 1603 and November 1607, when he was on his successful campaign in northwest Iran against the Ottomans. Nevertheless, according to Fazli, after Nawruz of 1013 (March 1605), ‘Abbas gave orders to resettle the silk-weaving (julāhī) Armenians of Chakhursa’d (Yerevan), who had been earmarked for deportation to Isfahan. The shah instructed Mirza Muhammad, the vizier of Isfahan, and Mir Jamal al-Din Muhammad Sukhta of the khāliṣa (crown estates) administration to give a district for buildings and houses to “those who were merchants” on the far side of the Zayanda Rud, opposite the Tabrizi community. Fazli notes that two years earlier (i.e., in 1011 [1602–3], according to his chronology), by royal command, Hajji ‘lnayat-Allah and Sayyid Hasan Mutafarriqa Tabrizi were brought from Iraq and drew up the plan for ‘Abbasabad. Each of the groups mentioned was allocated 3, 10 or 20 jarībs (each jarīb being 62 cubits) for building, according to his needs. The shah purchased the area for development from the Isfahani owners of the nearby Shamsabad and Bidistan and other villages, and gave them [the incomers] the land. Each according to his circumstances spent from 3,000 to 100 tumans on construction, and 2,000 houses or more were planned on a grid (ṭarḥ) and on a street most of them having water running through the middle of the houses; hammams and gardens were designed and they strove to bring it to completion.

Each of the Armenians built a house according to his circumstances and ability and set up his trade and management of his affairs. Khwaja Safar and Khwaja Nazar, who were mayors (kalāntars) and nobles among the Julfans, on entering Isfahan, came opposite the Tabrizi community [i.e., on the other side of the Zayanda River], and they too built lofty buildings. Lands and excellent properties were given in quarters near the city also for those who engaged in agriculture and cultivation, and houses were arranged for them. Once more, Fazli throws new light on the development of this district and its timing, although his account is somewhat imprecise, combining the development of ‘Abbasabad, to the west of the city, for the Tabrizis, with new Julfa, to the south, for the Armenians. Either way, Fazli here provides much more precise information about the development of ‘Abbasabad, including its planners; his account is much earlier than the equally precise information provided by Yazdi, according to whom the Tabrizi quarter was established six years later, at the end of Safar 1020 (May 13, 1611).

The evacuation of the Armenians in 1605 is well documented. If correct, Fazli shows that the Tabrizis were already there before the arrival of the Armenians in 1605, possibly as a result of the prolonged Ottoman occupation of the city and the slow return of the inhabitants in the wake of ‘Abbas’s reconquest of Tabriz in 1012 (1603), The alternative, discussed by McChesney, is their arrival in the aftermath of the campaigns around Tabriz in 1019 (1610). The movement of Tabrizis to Isfahan seems equally likely on either occasion, in view of the destruction of property and the effects of the shah’s scorched earth policy. This would require a straight choice between the exactly contemporary evidence of Yazdi and the somewhat later but more circumstantial report of Fazli Beg. It is possible that there is some confusion here between the development of the urban suburb (shahr) of ‘Abbasabad and the gardens, later called Hazar Jarib, situated further away to the south, at the end of the Chahar Bagh, the development of which is described much earlier by both Yazdi and Iskandar Beg. However, the Hazar Jarib was situated south of (behind) New Julfa, whereas Fazli’s account of the location opposite the Tabrizis on the other side of the river seems unequivocal, so it is not easy to discern whose is the correct version of events.

In the course of his general description of building works in the city in 1012 (1603), Junabadi also gives an account of the Bagh-i ‘Abbasabad, clearly to be identified with the site south of the river, and connected to the north via the Chahar Bagh and the Allahverdi Khan Bridge (see below). Like Iskandar Beg, he says he will refer to the development of the suburbs of “Tabrizabad,” Julfa, and Shamsabad in due course, but he does not do so in a way that explains these developments in relation...
to each other. He mentions only Julfa and thus implies that Tabrizabad followed later, perhaps supporting the evidence of Yazdi and Iskandar Beg (although we might accuse Yazdi also of simply conflating earlier developments into a single account under 1020 [1611–12]).

Similar issues are raised by another piece of detailed evidence provided by Fazli Beg that is not consistent with information given in other sources. According to the Afdal al-tawārīkh, the Year of the Sheep, 1016 (1607–8), was a critical one for ‘Abbās’s building ambitions; his annal contains accounts of work in Ardabil, Mashhad and Mazandaran, which will be the subject of a separate study. In the late autumn of 1607, ‘Abbās returned to Isfahan after a prolonged absence on campaign in northwestern Iran and a devotional visit to Mashhad to give thanks for his successes, travelling over the stone causeway across the salt desert, which had now been completed. Once in Isfahan, he was presented with a petition from Allahverdi Khan, governor of Fars, to build a bridge over the Zayanda Rud. Fazli clearly presents this as the Khan’s initiative—most other sources mention that it was the shah’s idea and that he assigned the work to Allahverdi Khan. The shah gave permission for the work to be started and urged every effort to be made to complete it. In a marginal note, Fazli adds that

the architectural work on that elevated construction should be entrusted to Mir Jamal al-Din Muhammad Jabiri, son of one of the great Isfahani families and in the service of Allahverdi Khan. Good builders and carpenters with their tools were sought from the province of Fars and its environs. The design of the building of the bridge was to be on three levels (storeys), such that the eyes of the beholders were astonished. No one had ever seen such a good building over the water, which could become a place for the world to stroll (sayrgāh-i ‘ālam), with structures that allowed people to decamp [from their homes] for a few days and nights and stay there without becoming weary of it. It was all built of marble and yellow dolomite (yaraqān) stone and grey granite (abgha), which the pen is powerless to describe. By the good fortune of the shah, it took [only] five years to complete.

This account is interesting for a number of reasons, first for the details about the architect, previously unknown, and also for the date. Munajjim Yazdi, essentially reliable with his chronology, puts the completion of the work five years earlier, in 1011 (1602); Iskandar Beg, much less reliable (consolidating all his information together into two single accounts), dates the completion of the work even earlier, in 1006 (1598), though from a later perspective, in connection with the laying out of the Bagh-i ‘Abbāsabad. Junabadi also, like Iskandar Beg, links the construction of the bridge—which he describes in some detail—to the development of ‘Abbāsabad and the Chahar Bagh continuing across the river, in his account of the year 1012 (1603), i.e., implying agreement with the earlier date given by Yazdi, except that his general description is undifferentiated as to the sequence of building; he says it took three to four years to complete. Fazli’s account is also clearly linked to, and a logical consequence of, the development of Julfa on the other side of the river, mentioned previously. Support for his (later) date is that he continues to provide evidence of the work in progress on the bridge after 1607 (see below). It may be possible to reconcile the details given by Munajjim Yazdi and Fazli Beg by suggesting that the project was begun in 1011 (1602), following Yazdi, and brought (almost) to completion five years later, in 1016 (1607), following Fazli Beg. A similar solution, in reverse, could be applied to the development of the ‘Abbāsabad quarter for the Tabrizis, supposing its initiation in 1011 (1602–3) (following Fazli Beg) and its completion in 1020 (1611) (following Yazdi). The logical necessity of the bridge for the development of the Bagh-i ‘Abbāsabad and Chahar Bagh, the district of New Julfa, and, to a lesser extent, the urban suburb of ‘Abbāsabad, suggests that 1011 (1602) is the correct date for the initiation of work on the bridge, which in reality must have taken several years to complete.

The bridge clearly became a major amenity even before its completion, and we find ‘Abbās himself enjoying it. After overseeing more projects at Farahabad in Mazandaran, he returned to Isfahan in early 1017 (1608), where he spent several days touring the city and saw that work was in progress on the Allahverdi Khan Bridge as planned—before going to inspect the site of his Kuhrang River (Āb-i Kuhrang) project, the goal of which was to divert its water into the Zayanda Rud (more than doubling its flow). The coincidence of the work on the bridge and the investigation of the potential for increasing the flow of the river is understandable, as a successful diversion would surely have affected the design of
the bridge. But it is neutral in terms of deciding when the project was begun, for Yazdi documents ‘Abbas’s interest in the scheme from 1012 (1603), which is consistent with his date for the founding of the bridge the previous year. Fazli Beg, who first mentions the scheme in 1016 (winter of 1607–8), is similarly consistent. The shah was also reported to have been at the end of the bridge, the plan for the footings of which had been laid out (ţarh-i asas-i an mirikhtand), discussing the honest handling of financial transactions with the I’timad al-Dawla (chief minister), Hatim Beg Urudabadi. Later, in the autumn, when the latter returned from overseeing work on the Kuhrang scheme, he organized a great feast on the bridge that Allahverdi Khan had started, to celebrate the fact that some of it had been completed (evidently enough for it to be serviceable).

For a week the Shah relaxed and partied with the nobles and great ones of Isfahan, as well as the poor, the needy, and the ragamuffins (rinds). Each level (suffa) and iwan of the building above the bridge was assigned to one of the ladies (khâtûns) and sultans and intimates (muqarrab); each was decorated [differently], from majlis (gathering) to majlis and occasion to occasion, each one adorning the party face to face with the other, so it became the envy of the gardens of paradise.

These details suggest that Fazli’s account is essentially reliable and consistent with the chronology of the period. He reports the shah again strolling with his entourage, including the refugee Ottoman Jalali (Celâli) rebels, in the gardens and walking at the end of the Allahverdi Khan Bridge during the Nawruz holidays of 1609, and urging the sultans and the pillars of state to arrange buildings and gardens to develop and beautify the paradise-like city. The shah’s interest in these projects and impatience to see the work finished shines clearly through all these accounts.

‘Abbas then spent another substantial period away from the capital, during which time he could not personally supervise construction work in Isfahan. Shortly after the shah’s return in early 1611, the Uzbek chief Wali Muhammad Khan sought refuge with ‘Abbas. He was welcomed in spectacular style by the shah and, on entering Isfahan via the Tuqchi Gate, was escorted into the city. All authors give extended accounts of the reception of the Khan and his entourage, which included a tour of the city and its newly constructed buildings proudly shown off: the ādawlatkhāna and the qaysarîyya, from the roof of which the visitors watched a mighty artillery display before descending to a feast in the famous Mahdi Palace (khâna-yi mahdî) in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan. Fazli Beg expands on this detail, mentioning that the shah had allocated a place for the Khan to stay in the private quarters of the ādawlatkhāna (dawlatkhāna-yi khâss), but Wali Muhammad Khan was not content with this, and it was determined that carpets would be spread out in the ‘imārat-i mahdî, which the late Shah Isma‘îl had built in the Naqsh-i Jahan. It will be recalled that Fazli also notes that this is where ‘Abbas stayed on his first visit to the city (see above), though its separate existence is not identified in other sources: it was presumably the prototype of the later dawlatkhâna. Fazli remarks that ‘Ali-Quli Khan, charged with organizing the Uzbek visit, had already been instructed to spread carpets in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan palace (‘imārat) and arrange a place for them by the royal workshops (kār-khānajāt). The shah himself rose to propose they retire to rest, and ‘Ali-Quli Khan suggested that they be taken to the lofty buildings that had been prepared for them. Many other details are supplied by Fazli—including the placing of entertainers in the upper rooms of the shops overlooking the maydān—and by other sources. The main point to emphasize is that, by this date, the bulk of the new construction in the city was complete and in use, including the second line of shops facing the maydān, and that ‘Abbas used the opportunity provided by the Chinggisid’s visit to show off the new capital in all its splendor.

This year (1020) is of particular importance in the documentary sources because it is the date usually given for the foundation of the Masjid-i Shah or Friday mosque on the maydān. Yazdi mentions the decision to start work on Friday, 15 Safar (April 29, 1611), and has the further information that on Thursday, 5 Rabi’ II (June 17), the ulama congegated and determined the direction of the qibla. Iskandar Beg also mentions the founding of the mosque this year, before the arrival of Wali Muhammad Khan. There remains some residual ambiguity about the year, as some of the chronograms quoted to mark this event (and the visit of Wali Muhammad Khan) yield the date 1019, the year also given by Junabadi for
ʿAbbas spent some time receiving delegations, visiting the gardens and the buildings of the capital, dispensing justice, and rotating the office holders. Also, “he ordered a great effort to be made to complete the noble Friday mosque, which the shah had built in the Dār al-Saltana of Isfahan [and] Lala Beg was overseeing.” This confirms that the work was still continuing and that the shah maintained his interest, but as it happens, this was to be the last time he came to Isfahan, and thereafter his attention and creativity in urban development was focused almost entirely on Mazandaran. The only aspect of the construction of Isfahan in which he seemed to take a persistent interest was the project to divert water from the Ab-i Kuhrang to the Zayanda rud, to guarantee ample water for the city, and, less immediately, to enhance communications between Farahabad and Isfahan by completing the extension of the stone causeway that cut across the edge of the salt desert through the Mazandaran jungle. It is indeed rather remarkable, given the enormous energy the shah devoted to constructing a worthy capital at Isfahan, how quickly he moved on to other projects once this was as good as accomplished, and how little time he felt like spending in the city. The change from public display to more private seclusion as an aspect of his building projects is also noteworthy. Magnificent as his development of Farahabad may have been, it was hardly a public statement of his majesty or his policies, tucked away in one of the most inaccessible parts of his kingdom.

CONCLUSIONS

My aim in this paper has been to present the materials found in Fazlī Beg’s chronicle that refer to ʿAbbas’s development of Isfahan, focusing on information that supplements or questions the pool of existing data, referred to as necessary for comparison. Table 1 (on page 166) provides a chronological summary of this information and table 2 presents it according to the main buildings discussed. Fazlī Beg provides several items of information not mentioned by other contemporary Persian sources, falling into two groups: first, details not given elsewhere—such as the construction work on the madrasa (cum-mosque?) of ʿAbd-Allah Shushtari in 1006...
beg and Mirza Beg Junabadi, who concentrate all their accounts of the city’s development into a couple of composite descriptions, he gives a strong sense of the continuous construction of the city and the work done on different buildings over a long period, together with the shah’s tireless energy in pushing the projects forward on all his visits to the city.

Whether we are willing to accept his data when they conflict with the apparently extremely precise records of the court astronomer Munajjim Yazdi may have to await further research. In the meantime, perhaps the best way to reconcile conflicting data is to be cautious about accepting dates for the “completion” of substantial building projects, which probably continued over several years.

Fazli Beg confirms the shah’s interest in developing Isfahan from the time of his earliest visit in 1590, although he sheds almost no light on the vexed question of the initial activity around the old city center and the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat. For the rest, his evidence supports Sussan Babaie’s belief in Shah ‘Abbas’s systematic

Table 2. Fazli Beg’s information on specific buildings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buildings/sites</th>
<th>Development history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qayṣariyya and chahār-bāzār</td>
<td>Planned on ‘Abbas’s visit in 1592. Architests still working on it in 1594. Completed winter 1600–1601.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan</td>
<td>Planned on ‘Abbas’s visit in 1592.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chahar Bagh</td>
<td>Planned in 1593–94.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guldasta and hammam</td>
<td>Planned in 1593–94.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque of Shaykh Lutf-Allah</td>
<td>Founded 1593–94.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrasa of ‘Abd-Allah Shushtari</td>
<td>Development of existing building in 1598. Completed two years later, 1600.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Abbasabad residential quarter</td>
<td>Started in 1602–3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Julfa</td>
<td>Founded in 1605.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allahverdi Khan Bridge</td>
<td>Founded in 1607–8; took five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masjid-i Shah (Friday mosque)</td>
<td>Founded 1611. Still in progress 1624.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
vision for the design of the new capital and its implementation over two decades.

There is plenty of scope for further work here, not only in harmonizing the new construction data brought to the mix by the Afḍal al-tawārīkh, but also in studying other details about the personnel charged with running the city and about leading figures in the bureaucracy and the religious establishment, all of which can throw light on how the city worked.

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge

NOTES

Author’s note: I am most grateful to Professor Gülru Necipoğlu for welcoming me as a visiting fellow of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University in early 2014, and for the opportunity this gave me, stimulated by her own interest, to resume my long-neglected study of Safavid Iran. I am also grateful to her and an anonymous reviewer for their careful reading of the text and for offering several suggestions for its improvement. The fortunate coincidence that Dr. Kioumars Ghereghlou was bringing his edition of Fazli Beg’s chronicle to completion during this same period greatly facilitated my research, as did his help with discussing and clarifying the text. Robert McChesney’s assistance and friendship over many years have also materially advanced the realization of my research, quite apart from his essential pioneering work, which is acknowledged throughout the annotations to this paper.

1. See the fine study by David Durand-Guédy, Iranian Elites and Turkish Rulers: A History of Isfahan in the Saljuq Period (London and New York, 2010), esp. 23–26 and 75–88, for a brief account of the city and its advantages as a capital. A concise but detailed history of the city is also given by Masashi Haneda and Rudi Matthee, Encyclopaedia Iranica, s.v. “Isfahan vii. Safavid Period.”


11. For a fuller treatment of these topics, see Kioumars Gherghelou and Charles Melville, “Editors’ Preface,” in Fazlī, Afḍal, xxi–lvi.


16. These brief comments supplement the remarks made by McChesney, “Four Sources,” 104–5.


20. Tabātābā’ī Majd’s introduction to Junābādī, Rawdat, 17–20; so far the work has been little studied or used in the secondary literature. It is not discussed by Quinn, Historical Writing, and mentioned only briefly in Sholeh Quinn and Charles Melville, “Safavid Historiography,” in Persian Historiography, ed. Charles Melville (London, 2012), 215–16, 226.


38. McChesney, “Preface,” 138, wrongly states that the preceding date is 996, but rightly supposes that Junabadi “had a later time in mind.”

39. Fāżlī, Afḍal, 90/fol. 48r. Also in Munshi, 438, trans. Savory, 612, without naming the petitioners.

40. Fāżlī, Afḍal, 120/fol. 62r.


42. Date in Yazdi, 113; cf. McChesney, “Four Sources,” 108. Naṭanzī, Nuqāwat, 395–96, also mentions ‘Abbas’s visit to Isfahan in Muharram 1000 (November 1591), without detail apart from a large-scale hunt.


44. Fāżlī, Afḍal, 120/fol. 62r.

45. Junābādī, Rawdat, 739, trans. McChesney, “Four Sources,” 112, and his lengthy commentary on this issue, 117–19, including the identification of the leading personalities mentioned.


49. Quiring-Zoche, Isfahan, 64; Babaie, Isfahan and Its Palaces, 76.


51. Ibid., 249.


53. Junābādī, Rawdat, 183, merely mentions that Karra was burned in the maydān of Isfahan, without further specifics.
tion. Fażlī, Afjdl, vol. 1 (Eton Pote Ms. 278, Cambridge University Library), fol. 144r, also merely mentions the maydān. It seems probable that the maydān-i kuhna was effectively the only maydān at that time.


55. See n. 98 below.


57. Babaie, Isfahan and Its Palaces, 105n29, seems to argue against any development of the maydān under Isma’īl.


59. Junābadī, Rawdat, 714; McChesney, “Four Sources,” 112; also noted by Babaie in her review of Blake’s Half the World, 479.

60. According to A. K. S. Lambton, Landlord and Peasant in Persia: A Study of Land Tenure and Land Revenue Administration (Oxford, 1953; repr. 1969), 497, an Isfahani jurīb is 1,495 square yards; this would yield a total for the maydān of nearly 450,000 square yards or 375,000 square meters, whereas in fact the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan is not quite 90,000 square meters.

61. For a discussion of the qaysariyya, see McChesney, “Four Sources,” 117–19.

62. For this, see Babaie, Isfahan and Its Palaces, 123–25, and the sources quoted.

63. Ibid., esp. 42–47.

64. The standard narrative is by Munshi, 464, 468, 473, trans. Savory, 637, 642, 646, with the previous background. For a detailed account of Nur Muhammad’s reception in Qazvin, see Fażlī, Afjdl, 132–33/fols. 67v–68v. The visit seems not to have been recorded by Junābadī.

65. Yazdī, 125–27. Iskandar Beg says the shah spent the winter in Isfahan, returning to Qazvin at the end of Pisces (late March). The question of the roof is noted below.

66. If this is correct, it suggests that the existing dawlatkhāna was set back from the perimeter of the maydān and that the new accommodation fronted the square.


69. Fażlī, Afjdl, 145–46/fol. 74r–v. He makes no reference to the rain and gives no dates.

70. Ibid., 146/fol. 74v. Fażlī’s language is not the most elegant and his meaning is not always entirely clear. Perhaps ‘Abbas left to make sure the lodgings were properly prepared, or maybe for his own separate accommodation.

71. The identification of this Guldasta is uncertain. On Kaempfer’s “planographicum,” the rose garden in the precincts of the palace (labelled r) is called the “Guldistuwn” (sic), which should be taken to mean gulistaq, not a mistake that a Persian author would make. It does, nevertheless, have an octagonal palace (palatio) at its center, in the form that one might associate with a Guldasta. Kaempfer’s information and plan date from his visit in 1684–85. See Engelbert Kaempfer, Amoenitatum Exotica Rationum Physico-Medici

72. Babaie, Isfahan and Its Palaces, 105n29, seems to argue against any development of the maydān under Isma’īl.

73. Blake, Half the World, 478–539; see Hunafar, Ganjina, 657. ‘Abu’l-Qāsim Rafi’i Mihrābādī, Asār-i Millī-i Isfahān (Tehran, 1352 [1974]), 38, suggests that the madrasa should be equated with the madrasa-yi Arabān, a little to the north in the Ilamaza Ahmed district near the Saru Taqi Bazaar (cf. ibid., 222, 270, 481–82), but this would not give a view over the maydān.


76. Yazdī, 120–22, dates this episode to late 1001 (late summer 1593).


78. Abisaab, Converting Persia, e.g., 56, 71–72.


80. Haneda, “La famille Hūzāni d’Isfahan,” 83. He is mentioned as deceased in 1020 (1611–12) (Fażlī, Afjdl, 584/fol. 293v), having been previously reported as departing for the hajj, via Shiraz, in 1016 (1608) (Fażlī, Afjdl, 467/fol. 226v). Iskandar Beg describes the suppression of the Nuqtavis after mentioning ‘Abbas’s trip to Isfahan.


83. Munshi, 522, 529, trans. Savory, 698, 706, refers to the shah being in Isfahan once or twice in his annal for the Year of the Monkey (1596–97), as does Fazli, Afdal, 216–17, but both their chronologies are very vague and confused as to the correct hijri year.

84. Naṭanzī, Nuqāwat, 573–79, trans. McChesney, “Four Sources,” 107–8. It is interesting that the list of towns he gives from which troops were to be recruited is the same as that given by Fazli, Afdal, 89/fol. 47v, in the year 999.

85. Yazdī, 147; he also mentions the orders to erect the portico (sar-i dar) over the dawlatkhāna at an auspicious hour, under the supervision of Manuchihr Khan Beg, a member of the ghulāmān-i khāṣṣa-yi sharifa (slaves of the royal household), but this perhaps refers already to the shah’s return to Qazvin.

86. Naṭanzī, Nuqāwat, 579. Munshi also omits almost all the details of ‘Abbās’s movements that are recorded by Yazdī under 1005; cf. n. 83 above.

87. Yazdī, 151; Munshi, 545, trans. Savory, 725.


89. He says Nawruz of 1007, March 1599, presumably intending 1006. Yazdī, 162, indicates that ‘Abbās was already in Isfahan for Nawruz in 1598. Soon afterwards, the shah set off on his expedition to recapture Herat.

90. Fazli, Afdal, 244/fol. 109v. For the madrasa, see Blake, Half the World, 158, with references cited, esp. Hunfar, Ganjīna, 470–75. Mihrabādī, ‘Āsār-i Millī, 496, proposes the date 1007 (1599) on the strength of his more detailed account of Shushtari’s encounter with the shah and invitation to Isfahan, where he resided fourteen years before his death in 1021.

91. This sentence is not very clear and the identity of the “mosque” is uncertain. Blake’s note (Half the World, 158) confusingly represents Iskandar Beg’s two texts (Munshi, 83, 110), but it is possible that in referring to the madrasa on the northern side of the maydān this ‘Abd-Allah Madrasa is intended; cf. McChesney, “Four Sources,” 111 and n. 26.

92. Abisaab, Converting Persia, 81.

93. Junābadī, Rawdat, 747–48; for the date and further details of this visit, see Yazdī, 91–92.

94. Fazli, Afdal, 294/fol. 133r.


98. Yazdī, 203; also noted by Blake, Half the World, 22. Yazdī also reports a ceremony of spreading flowers on the water at the royal hammam.

99. The edited text, 237, reads maydān birûn vilâyat, clearly a misreading.

100. See Yazdī, 236–37, trans. McChesney, “Four Sources,” 109, for the whole account, which there is no need to reproduce here; see also below for the discussion of the bridge and ‘Abbāsabad.


102. Fazli, Afdal, 327–29/fols. 150r–151r, at the start of his annal for 1012, but this was still in 1011 (start of the Year of the Hare). He follows this with ‘Abbās’s expedition to Azarbaijan, neglecting entirely (as does Iskandar Beg) to mention another trip to Mashhad in May–June 1603, before returning to Isfahan and inspecting the possibilities for diverting the Ab-i Kuhrang to the city; on which, see Yazdī, 328–29; cf. Melville, “Shah ‘Abbās and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad,” 195–197.

103. ‘Abbās departed from Isfahan on 7 rabi‘ II 1012 (September 13, 1603) and returned on 26 rajab 1016 (November 16, 1607); Yazdī, 245, 330; Munshi, 638, 755, trans. Savory, 828, 947.

104. Presumably the same as Bidabad.


107. For the settlement of the Armenians in Isfahan, see E. Herzig, “The Deportation of the Armenians in 1604–1605 and Europe’s Myth of Shah ‘Abbās I,” in History and Literature in Iran: Persian and Islamic Studies in Honour of P. W. Avery, ed. Charles Melville, Pembroke Persian Papers 1 (London, 1990): 59–71; Fazli’s statement that this was decided at Nawruz of 1605 (or shortly before, see Afdal, 370/fol. 171r) is consistent with the other evidence adduced by Herzig. It is worth remarking that Junābadī gives information not confirmed elsewhere about the initial stages of this process: Herzig, “Deportation of the Armenians,” 62–63; cf. Junābadī, Rawdat, 771.


Yazdi, 162, refers to the Bagh-i ʿAbbassabad in 1006 (1598); Munshī, 544, 545, trans. Savory, 724, 725, mentions the garden being laid out in the same year, and says that he will discuss the development of the town later—which, as noted in McChesney’s discussion, “Four Sources,” 124–25, he does not do.


Junābadī, Rawdath, 762. Similarly, referring to the orders for the construction of Julfa during the Arzabjaijan campaign of 1012 (1603), he says (p. 772) that he will mention this in its own place, but does not do so.

Fażlī, Afḍal, 665/fol. 225v; six years previously, in 1010, it was constructed for the pilgrimage on foot (see Melville, “Shah ʿAbbās and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad,” 212–13), and later extended into Mazandaran (see below).

Fażlī, Afḍal, 466/fol. 225v; cf. Melville, “New Light,” 71. Thanks to Kioumars Ghereghlou for help with translating the building materials used.

Quiring-Zoche, Isfahan, 237–42, provides an account of the Jabiri Ansari family, without reference to this figure.


See above; Munshī, 544–45, trans. Savory, 724; McChesney, “Four Sources,” 111.


Yazdi, 339, dates his return to Isfahan as 7 Safar (May 23) this year, via an inspection of the work on the causeway across the salt lake, and his re-entry following his excursion to Silakhor, on 23 Rajab (November 2) (ibid., 349).

Fażlī, Afḍal, 476/fol. 230r.

Yazdi, 244; cf. Melville, “Qars to Qandahar,” 217.

Fażlī, Afḍal, 472/fol. 229r.

Ibid., 478/fol. 231v. Fażlī excised a sentence to the effect that this was the previous year, before the shah went to Mazandaran.

Ibid., 483/fol. 234r. The phrase “some of which” is added in the margin.

Ibid., 497/fol. 241r, start of the annal for 1018, though Nawruz fell at the end of 1017 this year. Yazdi, 360–61, confirms ʿAbbās’s presence in Isfahan for Nawruz, in honor of which he arranged a festival of lights in the Bagh-i Naqsh-i Jahan, had flowers scattered at the end of the bridge, and decreed the Chahar Bagh open for women only on Wednesdays.

Leaving for the north after once more inspecting the Kuhrang water project: Fażlī, Afḍal, 508/fol. 247v. Yazdi, 363, 398, has Rabi’ 11 1018 (July 1609) for the shah’s departure and Shawwal 1019 (December 1610) for his return; the movements are echoed, without dates, by Iskandar Beg. Fażlī, Afḍal, 575/fol. 287v, however, has the shah in Farahabad in the winter of 1610–11, returning to Isfahan only after Nawruz of 1020 (March 1611).

Yazdi, 414–15, gives the dates 4–15 Rabi’ 11, 1020 (June 16–27, 1611) for the khan’s stay in the city, though his detailed account of the visit (441–45), is rather less precise and somewhat inconsistent, saying the shah went to visit Wali Muhammad Khan on 13 Rabi’ 11, which would be over a week after he arrived and only two days before he left. Yazdi was an eyewitness to and participant in the khan’s visit and his record should be reliable, but the printed text has various inconsistent dates and there are numerous departures from the Ms. Or. 6263 in the British Library: cf. Melville “Qars to Qandahar,” 209–13.

Yazdi, 442.

A crossed out phrase mentions that he felt it would be the cause of impoliteness and impudence (gustakhi). Fażlī, Afḍal, 584/fol. 293v.

Ibid., 584/fol. 293v–294r.


Fażlī, Afḍal, 585, and Junābadī, Rawdath, 830, for the visit (he does not mention the founding of the mosque); Vāli Quli Shāmlū, a later source, gives 1019 for both the visit and the foundation of the mosque, in Qisas al-khaqānī, ed. Sayyid Hasād Nāṣīr (Tehran, 1992), 198.

According to the inscriptions recorded in the mosque, the first date mentioned is 1025 (1616): Hunfarar, Ganjina, 427–29.

The most reliable of these is Yazdi, whose chronicle ends this year with the shah in Mazandaran late in 1020 (early 1612). Later authors make no mention of the shah being in Isfahan again until early 1022 (late spring 1613). Fażlī’s account of the founding of the mosque is placed between a return from Qazvin and departure for Mazandaran, which seems to fit better with other indications for 1020; the very uneven length of his annals for 1019–1021 also suggests the possibility of the disorganization of his material for these years.

Fażlī, Afḍal, 617–18/fol. 313r–v.


The date given by Munshī, 1012, trans. Savory, 1234, writing exactly contemporary with these events.

Fażlī, Afḍal, 876/fol. 483v. As is often the case, Fażlī’s sentence is grammatically tortuous, which makes his precise meaning unclear.

The shah visited the site in 1028 (1619), on which see Melville, “Qars to Qandahar,” 216–17, and again in 1030 (1621): Munshī, 949–50, 959, trans. Savory, 1170–71, 1180. Fażlī, Afḍal, 746/fol. 383r, refers to ʿAbbās’s decisions about the scheme, involving Jamal al-Dīn Muhammad Sukhta Khuzani, the kalāntar of Isfahan, in 1026 (1617), and further financial dispositions in 1037 (1628) are mentioned in Fażlī, Afḍal, 963/fol. 552r.

On a summer evening in June 1619, foreign envoys residing in Isfahan gathered at the northern side of the city’s new plaza, Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (Plan of the World Square), to attend a reception with the Safavid ruler Shah ‘Abbas I (r. 1587–1629). The shah arrived in the Maydan mounted on horseback. After strolling around the square, which had been illuminated by numerous lanterns (chirāghān), the envoys were led to a brilliant space in the market: with myriad hanging lamps, reflected in a central basin, it resembled a starry sky. Seated in the alcoves, the emissaries were then entertained by young boys dancing and performing acrobatic feats. After the meal, a bitter black liquid called “cahue” was served in porcelain cups, but most of the ambassadors refused to drink it, preferring wine.¹

The bitter, dark beverage was, of course, nothing but coffee, and the setting a recently erected coffeehouse in Isfahan, a bustling metropolis of seventeenth-century Eurasia and the royal seat of the Safavid dynasty (1501–1722). The dual sense of aversion and exoticness that coffee aroused in European visitors of the time is perhaps best articulated by the Englishman Thomas Herbert (d. 1682), who described coffee as a drink “black as soot, thick and strong scented,” that “please[s] neither the eye nor taste.”² Nevertheless, just two or three decades earlier few even in Isfahan were familiar with coffee. Indeed, before the sixteenth century, no one in the world had tasted the beverage, save for the inhabitants of the southern shores of the Red Sea—i.e., the Yemen and Ethiopia—whence coffee began to spread around the globe. It was first in the Yemen, sometime in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, that the ground, roasted seeds of the berries plucked from the coffee tree (Coffea arabica, a plant native to highlands of southern Ethiopia) were mixed with boiling water to make a beverage destined to spread far beyond southern Arabia. A taste for coffee was initially cultivated among members of certain Yemeni Sufi orders, who found the awakening effect of coffee useful for their nightly rituals (dhikr), and the substance was subsequently disseminated by merchants, who turned coffee into a lucrative commodity.³ With coffee came a novel social institution: the coffeehouse, a new phenomenon in the realms of the Ottomans in the eastern Mediterranean, and later, in Safavid territories in Iran. Over the course of the sixteenth century, as physicians discussed coffee’s medicinal properties and jurists debated its legal status, coffeehouses grew in number and popularity, proliferating despite periodic bans issued by authorities anxious about the socio-political milieu engendered by the new institution. By the middle decades of the sixteenth century, major cities circling the eastern Mediterranean basin, from Cairo to Istanbul, were dotted with coffeehouses. By the early 1600s the habit of coffee drinking had spread eastward to Iraq and Iran. Prior to its popularity in Europe, the coffeehouse had been integrated into the social and urban fabric of southwest Asia.

And yet, despite coffee’s novelty, early-seventeenth-century European visitors often regarded it as a long-established substance that had originated in ancient times: the Italian aristocrat and adventurer Pietro della Valle (d. 1652), one of those present at the above-mentioned royal reception held in 1619, believed that coffee had been known in antiquity.⁴ In a similar vein, Herbert was certain that coffee pre-dated the Prophet Muhammad.⁵ An equally inaccurate and prejudiced notion underlies the Orientalist discourse of the nineteenth century, according to which Near Eastern coffeehouses
epitomized the quintessential indolence of Oriental men, who wasted their time chatting and smoking in these venues. In keeping with the Orientalist view, some recent studies have conceptualized coffee through a similar lens: as an exotic substance with essentially different social implications across the boundary that demarcates East from West. In this view, the “Oriental café”, unlike its “Western” counterpart, is an emblem of continuity over millennia, a key trope of Orientalism and colonialism—with the rapid rise of a socially transformative substance such as coffee and the proliferation of a novel social institution: the coffeehouse.

In recent years, nevertheless, the study of coffeehouses, particularly in Ottoman territories, has witnessed new methodological approaches. As elsewhere, the emerging scholarly discussion has been influenced by Jürgen Habermas’s conceptualization of the public sphere and the role of the coffeehouse in the genesis of what he calls a bourgeois public sphere (bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit) in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. The extent to which the Habermasian model provides an adequate framework for analyzing the public sphere in early modern European societies, let alone other settings and time periods, has of course been contested. Yet, as several studies have shown, the notion of a public sphere—broadly understood as a terrain of social interactions distinct from both state institutions and the private realm—can indeed provide new insights into the workings and transformations of the premodern societies of Eurasia. More important, the concept of the public sphere allows us to account for material conditions and social dynamics particular to each society, and to adopt a comparative approach that goes beyond the prevalent critiques of Orientalism. At any rate, rather than considering a monolithic public sphere, a more nuanced approach is to conceptualize it as a site of overlapping publics and divergent social groups. If the coffeehouse constituted a public sphere, it was not an abstract domain of rational-critical debate, but rather a material site closely entangled with concrete aspects of everyday life and spatial configurations.

This indeed provides a more useful model for understanding coffeehouses as public sites in all historical contexts, including, as we shall see, Safavid Isfahan. And in analyzing Eurasian societies in the early modern period, one needs to consider public spheres as interconnected realities, informed in the context of an unprecedented circulation of commodities and humans throughout the globe.

The intertwining of a local context with broader global transformations was a quintessential characteristic of Safavid Isfahan, where the introduction of the coffeehouse was concomitant with the restructuring of the political order, flowering of long-distance trade, and integration of diverse social groups into a unified built environment. Initiated as state-sponsored establishments, Isfahan’s coffeehouses were one of the main sites where the Safavid king represented himself to, and interacted with, the city’s cosmopolitan publics. (ʿAbbas even received ambassadors in an urban coffeehouse, as the opening anecdote of this essay illustrates.) Scholarship has shown how both the royal palaces and urban spaces of Isfahan were marked by a distinct notion of kingship based on “two opposing ideas of humility and absolutism,” and how this peculiar image of authority was mediated through rituals, feastings, and ceremonies. Yet this performative function did not remain a royal prerogative and was appropriated by the emergent publics of the Safavid capital. If the space of the coffeehouse acted as a stage set, it was not merely a venue for representations of kingship; it also hosted varied forms of cultural subversion and, at times, political dissent. The coffeehouse opened up a novel arena of public life operating, both physically and socially, between the spheres of royal authority and that of ordinary domestic existence.

This essay explores the ways in which the formation of a public sphere in Safavid realms, and particularly in the capital city of Isfahan, was closely associated with new architectural forms and conceptions of urban space. Through an analysis of the topography, urban configuration, and physical structure of the major coffeehouses of Isfahan, I show how these establishments contributed to the creation and expansion of a distinct public arena in the city, and how they altered the social meaning and perceptual character of the urban spaces along which they were erected. This will particularly be
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Illustrated through a reconstruction of the drinking houses that existed in the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan and the Chaharbagh, the two grand urban spaces of seventeenth-century Isfahan (fig. 1). This analysis not only leads to a fuller picture of the morphology of Safavid coffeehouses but also elucidates a less appreciated aspect of urban development in the age of Shah 'Abbas.

Recent historical studies have shed light on various aspects of coffee and other stimulants in early modern Iran, such as the role of commerce in their dissemination and the social functions of the coffeehouse. Building upon these studies, this essay probes the less-known architectural and urban features of Safavid coffeehouses. In doing so, it balances on-site investigations with an examination of visual evidence, such as earlier architectural drawings and nineteenth-century photographs. Together with evidence culled from a wide array of textual sources—court chronicles, biographical dictionaries, literary works, and travel narratives—the remaining physical traces of Isfahan's coffeehouses permit us to sketch out their architectural layout and their relation to urban spaces.

Dissemination of Coffee and the Coffeehouse

Coffee was introduced into Safavid territories in the last quarter of the sixteenth century through overland trade routes. By the middle decades of the seventeenth century, however, coffee was primarily shipped from the Yemeni port of Mocha to the shores of the Persian Gulf, a trade route along which European maritime companies as well as local sailors were active. Medicinal treatises reveal a great deal about the perceptions of coffee and the coffeehouse in the early years of its dissemination. As Aladin Goushegir notes, the earliest Persian-language text to discuss coffee appears to have been a treatise by the physician ‘Imad al-Din Shirazi (d. after 1577). In a brief section at the end of his manual, ‘Imad al-Din describes coffee’s medicinal properties and refers to its method of preparation and popularity in Mecca, implying that pilgrimage was one of the channels through which coffee was introduced to Iran. The writings of the succeeding generation of physicians and pharmacologists reflect the rapid rise of coffee as a popular beverage. In an untitled epistle on coffee, tea, and other substances (composed ca. 1600), Salik al-Din Muhammad Hamavi Yazdi, a physician active in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, discussed the medicinal properties of coffee in greater detail, while offering a more extensive account of the origin and spread of the substance. Describing coffee as the fruit of a tree native to the Yemen, Hamavi relates the popular narrative about the discovery and brewing of coffee by the disciples of the Sufi shaykh Abu’l-Hasan Shadhili (d. 1258), concluding that now, in Arab cities and particularly in Mecca [...], drinking coffee is common, and illuminated abodes and ornamented houses (masākin-i nayyira va manāzil-i muzayyan) have been constructed for this pastime. Those who seek pleasure gather there and all engage in carnal desires (mushtahīyyāt-i nafsānī) by the decree of nature. Gradually the practice has spread to the lands of Iran (mamālik-i ‘Ajam). In chief cities plenty of edifices have been built, where accouterments of pleasure are prepared and assemblies of the wits and companions take place.

The author further notes that “in Arab cities everyone and in most cities of Iran people of healthy temperament are accustomed to drinking coffee.” A remarkable aspect of this account is how the dissemination of coffee is associated with the development of public “houses” for its consumption: from the outset, coffee was known as a social beverage consumed in exquisite public structures.

Other sources suggest that inhabitants of Safavid territories first encountered coffee and coffeehouses in the Arabic-speaking regions of the Ottoman Empire, particularly the cities of Iraq. According to Hamavi, imbibers (arbāb-i mashārib) referred to coffee as the “wine of the Arabs” (khamr al-‘Arab). In a prose piece, the famed Safavid painter and litterateur Sadiq Beg Afsar (d. 1610) alludes to Yemeni coffee, and refers to “companions of the coffeehouse” and “youthful coffee-vendors” as among the primary joys of Baghdad in winter. Indeed, the first dated mention of a coffeehouse in a Safavid chronicle refers to an incident that transpired in 1596 in Ottoman-controlled Baghdad. The existence of coffeehouses in Baghdad is confirmed by the account of the Portuguese traveller Pedro Teixeira, who reported seeing several coffeehouses in the city in 1604. Teixeira specifically highlighted a coffeehouse by the Tigris
Fig. 1. Plan of Isfahan, ca. mid-seventeenth century, showing the main elements of the city and the sites studied in this article. (Plan: © Farshid Emami)
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River, with multiple windows and upper-floor galleries, as “a very pleasant resort,” further adding that there were many more coffeehouses in the city and “throughout Turkey and Persia.”

These reports indicate that by the early seventeenth century, coffee was ubiquitous in Ottoman lands and quite popular in elite milieus of Safavid Iran. The introduction of the coffeehouse in Safavid domains thus coincided with the period of territorial expansion and material prosperity that ensued after the accession of Shah ʿAbbās. With the intensification of mercantile interactions came an influx of commodities and substances that particularly converged in Isfahan, which became the capital in the 1590s.

COFFEEHOUSES OF THE CHAHARBAGH

Chronicles of the reign of Shah ʿAbbās suggest that coffeehouses were part of the original building program of the Chaharbagh, the famed promenade of Isfahan (constructed ca. 1596–1602). In his Rawżat al-ṣafavīyya (completed ca. 1626), the chronicler Mirzā Beg Junabādī reports that “taverns and coffeehouses” (maykhānahā va qahvakhānahā) were prepared for “wine-drinking companions and poor opium-consuming people.” Likewise, in the narrative of the court astrologer and chronicler Jalāl al-Dīn Munajjīm Yazdī, the coffeehouse plays a central role: on December 26, 1602, upon the completion of the Chaharbagh, Shah ʿAbbās spent the evening in the coffeehouse, and there he composed a three-verse poem containing a chronogram indicating the year of the project’s inauguration. As I will discuss below, several European reports also refer to venues for drinking coffee along the Chaharbagh in the seventeenth century.

The Chaharbagh (also known as khīyābān-i chahār-bāgh) was a ceremonial pathway and public promenade that constituted the fulcrum of the new Safavid developments in the southern outskirts of Isfahan. Four kilometers long and forty-seven meters wide, it stretched from a gate of the medieval walled city (Dawlat Gate) to an enormous royal garden known as the ‘Abbāsabad Garden or Bagh-i Hizar-jarib (Thousand Acres Garden) in the foothills on the south side of the Zayanda River (fig. 1). The Allah Verdi Khan Bridge, completed circa 1607–12, connected the two portions of the promenade, which was bisected by the river. In terms of physical layout, the Chaharbagh was conceived as an “elongated garden,” lined with four rows of plane trees (chinār), covered with pools and flowerbeds, and bordered with pairs of monumental gatehouse pavilions leading to gardens of various forms and functions (fig. 2). While the Chaharbagh functioned as a thoroughfare, connecting the newly developed neighborhoods of New Julfa (inhabited by Armenian merchants) and ‘Abbāsabad (settled by merchants from Tabriz) to the city’s commercial center, it was first and foremost a public promenade. The public character of the Chaharbagh was particularly apparent in its northern part, which stretched between the Dawlat Gate and the Allah Verdi Khan Bridge. Adjoining the palace complex (dawlatkhāna) and closer to the more populated areas of the city, the northern part of the Chaharbagh featured public institutions such as coffeehouses and Sufi convents, giving it a distinct social character. The southern portion of the Chaharbagh, between the bridge and the Hizar-jarib Garden, was lined with gardens erected by the military and bureaucratic elites.

Yet in its present state, Isfahan’s Chaharbagh Avenue retains little trace of its original landscape elements, gatehouse pavilions, and drinking houses. Indeed, the chief Safavid monument still standing on the Chaharbagh is the madrasa-cum-mosque complex erected by the last effective ruler of the Safavid dynasty, Shah Sulṭan Husayn (r. 1694–1722)—almost a century after the completion of the project under ʿAbbās I. Interestingly, the most telling visual clue to the original layout of the Chaharbagh and its coffeehouses can be gleaned from a plan of the madrasa drawn up by the French architect Pascual Coste, who surveyed the building in 1840. Coste’s plan depicts not only the entire complex (with the linear market and caravanserai) but also a portion of the Chaharbagh with its now-lost plane trees, canals, pools, stairs, and waterfalls (fig. 3). The most remarkable aspect of the Coste plan for this study, however, is the area in the northwest of the complex, south of the market’s entrance portal, which he labeled as a café (no. 35 on the plan); a cursory glance at the plan and façade of this part of the building reveals that the covered space
designated as a coffeehouse was not originally laid out as part of the complex. Rather, it appears that it was an existing structure incorporated into the madrasa. Moreover, it is evident in Coste’s plan that only this part of the building is aligned with the flowerbeds and stairs of the Chaharbagh, suggesting that it was laid out together with these landscape elements.32

This hypothesis about the earlier provenance of the coffeehouse is further confirmed by the madrasa’s endowment deed (vaqfnāma), which mentions “the entire land and building (ʿarṣah va aʿyān) of the coffeehouse located next to the auspicious madrasa” as one of the endowed properties and explicitly asserts that the establishment, which was “standing in the lands” of the complex, “had been purchased for [the use of] the madrasa” (bi jahat-i madrasa-yi maẕkura ibtiyāʿ shuda būd).33 The passage reveals that the pre-existing coffeehouse was regarded as a piece of private property at the time of the construction of the madrasa, not a royal estate. Another piece of evidence that hints at the existence of a coffeehouse before the erection of the madrasa is a schematic plan of the Chaharbagh (fig. 4a) drawn
in the 1680s by the German physician and adventurer Engelbert Kaempfer (d. 1716). Despite its sketchiness, it shows that a series of self-contained structures (two of them bearing the label kaşf)34 stood in the same part of the Chaharbagh before the construction of the Shah Sultan Husain Madrasa in the early eighteenth century.35 Moreover, the existing building, as it stands today, does not seem to have a sound structural relationship with the rest of the complex.36 Thus, while the coffeehouse’s external decoration is consistent with the rest of the madrasa, textual, visual, and physical evidence suggests that the structure itself had its origin in an earlier period, or was at least refurbished on the basis of a pre-existing construction.

A close study of Kaempfer’s plan shows that the extant coffeehouse was not a self-contained structure but was rather paired with another building on the western side of the Chaharbagh; in his plan both structures bear the same label.37 The plan further indicates that to the south of this pair was another pair of structures (i.e., those labeled “kaşf”), which in all likelihood would have flanked the other octagonal basin depicted further to the south on Coste’s plan (fig. 4b), in the area of the Chaharbagh illustrated in an engraving by Coste (fig. 4c).38 The existence of this second pair of coffeehouses is corroborated by the account of the Dutch painter and traveler Cornelis de Bruyn (d. 1726), who visited Isfahan in 1703–4, a few years before the construction of the madrasa; in his sequential description of the Chaharbagh, he refers to “two other buildings” farther to the south of the first area with coffeehouses, “where they retire to smoke.”39 Indeed, such a symmetrical configuration conforms to the overall layout of the promenade, where the bordering pavilions were all arranged in pairs flanking a sequence of large and small pools (figs. 1 and 5b). By the same token, it would be reasonable to assume that the southern pair of pavilions resembled the standing structure in terms of overall layout. These visual and textual records allow us to sketch out a hypothetical reconstruction of the Chaharbagh coffeehouses (fig. 5).40 Located at the very center of the northern part of the promenade, they lay at the corners of Bagh-i Tut (Mulberry Garden) and Bagh-i Angur (Grape Garden), where roads leading east and west linked the Chaharbagh to the adjoining areas (fig. 5b).41
Fig. 4. a) Engelbert Kaempfer, schematic plan of the northern part of the Chaharbagh. London, British Library, Ms. Sloane 5232, fol. 42a. (Photo: provided by the British Library); b) Plan of the Chaharbagh Madrasa (see fig. 3); c) Engraving after a drawing by Pascal Coste, showing the Chaharbagh with the Shah Sultan Husayn Madrasa in the background. Before the construction of the madrasa, there were drinking pavilions on either side of the Chaharbagh, in front of the two platforms depicted in Coste’s drawing. (After Pascal Coste, *Monuments modernes de la Perse* [Paris, 1867], pl. xviii)
Fig. 5. a) Hypothetical reconstruction of the coffeehouses along the Chaharbagh. The building rendered in black represents the coffeehouse that was embedded in the Shah Sultan Husayn Madrasa and still stands today; b) Reconstructed plan of the northern part of the Chaharbagh, showing the location of the drinking houses along with the chief structures and gateway pavilions that bordered the promenade: 1) Dawlat Gate; 2) World-displaying (jahānnamā) Pavilion; 3) Tent (khargāh) Garden; 4) Sweet-smelling (musamman) Garden; 5) Nightingale (bulbul) Garden; 6) Throne (takht) Garden; 7) Mulberry (tūt) Garden; 8) Grape (angūr) Garden; 9) Sufi convents (takiyyas) of the Ni‘mat-Allahi and Haydari dervish orders; 10) Allah Verdi Khan Bridge. (Plans: Farshid Emami)
Farshid Emami

Literary sources, however, suggest that initially these structures functioned not just as coffeehouses but also as wine taverns. Our first source is a biographical compendium of poets completed in the 1620s by Taqi al-Din Muhammad Awhadi Balyani (d. ca. 1629). In his entry on Baba Shams-i Tishi of Shiraz, Awhadi relates that in 1603 (1012) Shah ʿAbbās had a wine tavern (maykhāna) set up for Baba Shams in the Chaharbagh of Isfahan, noting that now he is still “inebriated from the cup of leisure” in that royal wine-house (maykhāna-yi shāhanshāhī), and that “whoever drinks wine in that tavern is exempt [from punishment].” This exemption was in effect, he further adds, “even if there was a prohibition on wine.” Interestingly enough, Awhadi, who was a contemporary witness, does not refer to any coffeehouses. In fact, unlike later literary sources, throughout his voluminous compendium the terms coffee and coffeehouse barely figure at all. (Since he moved to India in 1606, it is likely that he was not very familiar with coffee or had simply missed the popularization of urban coffeehouses in Iran.) The second source is a later biographical dictionary of poets, completed in the 1670s by Muhammad Tahir Nasrabadi (d. ca. 1688). Nasrabadi describes Shams as an ordinary person (avāsit al-nās) specializing in “the knowledge of music,” but relates that it was a coffeehouse that was built for Shams-i Tishi, and that a wine-house (sharābkhāna) was set up beside (pahlū-yi) it. Regarding the special dispensation granted for wine drinking, Nasrabadi gives a more detailed account: Shah ʿAbbās decreed that anyone who drank at this tavern would have his hand stamped and that the magistrate’s fellows would know not to harass anyone so marked. According to Awhadi, the reason for this order was Shah ʿAbbās’s interest in a young boy named Ganji who worked for Shams-i Tishi.

These two literary reports corroborate the conclusions reached on the basis of architectural drawings and sketches, suggesting that when Junabadi mentioned the establishment of “coffeehouses and taverns” on the Chaharbagh in his chronicle, it was not a figurative but a literal statement. Nasrabadi’s reference to a tavern erected beside a coffeehouse is indeed consistent with the proposed reconstruction, whereby two pairs of pavilions stood near one another. Based on these accounts, we can surmise that the conception and erection of a tavern coincided with the introduction and popularization of coffee, and hence both establishments were included in the program. Moreover, the existence of a tavern may not have been unrelated to the presence of a vineyard in this area of the Chaharbagh. According to the account of the French jewel merchant and traveler Jean Chardin, as well as Kaempfer’s map, the garden located on the western side of the thoroughfare in the area of the drinking houses was known as Bagh-i Angur (Grape Garden).

The juxtaposition of a coffeehouse and a wine tavern on the Chaharbagh of Isfahan is emblematic of the close historical affinity between the two social institutions. As elsewhere in the early modern world, in terms of social milieu, the coffeehouse was first and foremost akin to the tavern (or similar establishments serving alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages). When the coffeehouse first appeared in Mecca, in the early sixteenth century, it was often compared to the tavern, and, as Hattox notes, the origin of the coffeehouse as a social institution should probably be sought in the wine tavern, rather than Sufi circles. The perceived similarity between the two beverages is also reflected in the etymology of the word itself: before the emergence of “modern coffee,” the Arabic term qahwa referred to a type of thick wine with an acrid taste. In the early years of its introduction to Safavid Iran, too, the coffeehouse was reminiscent of the tavern, as a couplet by Sadiqi Beg suggests:

I did not sit in the coffeehouse for the sake of coffee; It is with the thought of wine that I drink coffee every moment.

Yet compared to the urban centers of neighboring empires, in Safavid realms wine appears to have been consumed with greater liberty in public spaces. As Matthee has shown, despite the Islamic prohibition on intoxicating drinks, except for periodic bans, public consumption of wine was generally allowed by the Safavids. In the 1620s, ʿAbbās even ordered Qazi b. Kashif al-Din, another physician active in Isfahan in the first half of the seventeenth century, to compose an epistle on the benefits and rules of drinking wine. Rather than substituting for wine, coffee was seen as complementing it. In fact, the proximity of a coffeehouse to a wine tavern provided a convenient amenity for the revelers.
Fig. 6. Plan showing the Chaharbagh coffeehouse along with the adjoining platform and landscape elements. Drawn on the basis of old photographs and surveys of the madrasa. (Plan: Farshid Emami)

Fig. 7. Interior view of the extant structure along the Chaharbagh (which once served as a coffeehouse), showing the central hall and the upper-floor gallery. (Photo: Farshid Emami, 2013)

Whether initially conceived as coffeehouse or tavern, the extant structure along the Chaharbagh still offers a glimpse of its original form and sensory experience. Measuring approximately thirteen by ten meters on perimeter, it consists of a double-height domed space, square in plan and about twelve meters high, surrounded by recesses on three sides (fig. 6). While the two lateral recesses are rectangular, opposite the entrance is a semi-octagonal alcove (shāhnishīn) carved with niches in the walls. Judging from Coste’s plan, an octagonal basin once stood at the center of the coffeehouse. The dome is supported by four piers with chamfered sides, from which spring pendentives covered with a pattern of intersecting arches that, together with the load-bearing connecting arches, form a base on which the dome rests (fig. 7). A staircase in the northeast corner provides access to a U-shaped gallery overlooking the central hall and offering screened views of the Chaharbagh landscape outside. In its present state, the structure is connected to a small room on the south side, which probably functioned as the service area of the coffeehouse, where coffee was brewed for clients.

Composed of a full-height arch flanked by two vertical bays, the coffeehouse’s elevation reflects the tripar-
ing pavilion from its contemporary or earlier prototypes is the omission of one of the four sides of the cross-shaped central space, a modification that provides a more direct link between the covered internal hall and the outside landscape. Indeed, the main novelty of the structure does not lie in its plan (variations of the cruciform layout were indeed common) or its façade per se, but rather in its urban configuration—that is, the manner in which the pavilion’s open plan sits along an elongated promenade/thoroughfare to serve as a public institution. Rather than self-contained pavilions, the Chaharbagh’s coffeehouses were street buildings with a single elevation. Here the perforated wooden façade does not screen a private reception hall from an enclosed courtyard but rather provides a transparent interface for a public building, from whose alcoves one could peer into the urban space. Like the mid-seventeenth-century Ipshir Pasha Coffeehouse in Ottoman

tite layout of the interior (fig. 8). The central arch has an elaborate wooden latticed screen through which air and light penetrated into the covered hall. Supported by two wooden columns, the screen featured glass panes and sashes (urusi or sliding panels). The lateral bays contain two arched windows of the same size, screened with perforated brickwork and surmounted by square tile panels bearing identical Koranic inscriptions in square kufic script. Added during the construction of the madrasa, the epigraphic panels, as I will discuss later, were an explicit proclamation of the coffeehouse’s integration into a religious institution in the early eighteenth century.

In terms of architectural typology, the plan of the coffeehouse represents a variation of the cross-in-square model, the most common scheme for residential buildings and garden pavilions since pre-Islamic times. What distinguishes the layout of the Chaharbagh drink-

Fig. 8. Old photograph showing the Chaharbagh coffeehouse in the late nineteenth century. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution. (Photo: Antoin Sevruguin, ca. 1880)
Aleppo, the Chaharbagh coffeehouses present a new conception of urban elevation: a perforated curtain filtering light, air, and views of the outside landscape.

The urban significance of the drinking houses is also reflected in the way they were laid out in relation to the open-air space of the Chaharbagh. As old photographs and Coste’s drawings show (fig. 3), a square platform stood in front of each drinking house. Between each pair of platforms, along the canal that ran down the middle of the Chaharbagh, lay a small octagonal pool, preceded by a water chute and flanked by two flights of stairs—all created through a sculptural terracing of the land’s sloping. As one strolled down the stone-paved axial pathway of the Chaharbagh, these pools and their flanking platforms marked the presence of coffeehouses/taverns: together, they formed a visual axis perpendicular to the axial walkway, directing one’s gaze toward the bordering structures. The area was given a further distinct character by a dramatic shift in planting: on the platforms were willow trees, which broke the rhythm of the regularly-spaced plane trees and, with their slender hanging branches, created a contrast of shade, texture, and color. On a hot summer day, seated in the shade of the weeping willows, patrons of the drinking houses would sip coffee, drink wine, or smoke tobacco while relishing the richest sensory experience that the Chaharbagh landscape had to offer. The dappled light of the sun filtering through the leaves, they enjoyed air cooled by fountains and scented by flowers, along with the gurgling sound of water flowing on the carved surfaces of the water chutes—all mingled with the scents of coffee and tobacco, which were as exotic in seventeenth-century Isfahan as they were anywhere else in the early modern world.

The direct spatial and visual connection between the covered space and an open-air sitting area, which suited the public function of taverns/coffeehouses, was remarked upon by multiple European visitors. Kaempfer noted that those in charge of the drinking houses spread carpets and mats on the bordering platforms, where people could sit, watch shows, and listen to poets and storytellers, all while drinking and smoking; only when the weather was hot would they move to the cooler adjoining rooms. It also appears that the coffeehouses were later outfitted with outdoor furniture. While in Isfahan in the early 1700s, de Bruyn observed that this area of the Chaharbagh was covered with “benches, wooden-chairs, and tables,” and “in the evening you always see a great number of Persians, smoking and drinking coffee.” De Bruyn also noted the distinct character of the Chaharbagh in the vicinity of the coffeehouses: “the ground here has a slope, where there are trees which afford the finest shade in the world.”

The public character of the Chaharbagh drinking houses, however, does not mean that they were used by all social classes in a similar fashion. Lying to the west of the Chaharbagh was the elite neighborhood of ‘Abbasabad and across the river was the Armenian quarter of New Julfa (fig. 1). With these well-to-do residential areas in its vicinity, it is no surprise that the Chaharbagh coffeehouses were used by the upper strata of Safavid society as a public stage for the demonstration of social status. This performative function was explicitly commented upon by the English traveler John Fryer, who when he visited Isfahan in 1677 found the Chaharbagh similar to London’s Hyde Park: “a place to see and to be seen.” He further noted that at nightfall all “the Pride” of Isfahan was met in the Chaharbagh: “the Grandees were airing themselves, prancing about with their numerous trains, striving to outvie each other in Pomp and Generosity.” Fryer’s observation illustrates how the physical setting of the Chaharbagh made certain socially-coded behaviors possible: “Near these Ponds, or Tanks, are Coffee-Houses, which furnish them when they dismount, with Coho, Tea, or Sherbets; while they sit in State, and smoke Tobacco with their Attendance about them.” Riding on horseback on the lateral pathways of the Chaharbagh—the central alley was exclusively for pedestrians—an elite Isfahani would dismount for a cup of coffee while a servant attended his horse.

One such member of the merchant class matching Fryer’s description is illustrated in a painting attributed to Mu’in Musavvir (active ca. 1630s–90s), which portrays a middle-aged merchant named Mirza Muhammad-Taqi Tabrizi, mounted on horseback and accompanied by a groom (fig. 9). As Massumeh Farhad has noted, the figure’s epithet suggests that he was a scion of the Tabrizi émigré families who resided in the neighborhood of ‘Abbasabad. The painting is a visual representation of the manner in which an upper-class Isfahani was
Vendors (zanān-i ahl-i ḥirfa) were allowed in. Since the main “vending spots” of the Chaharbagh were its drinking houses, it is reasonable to assume that on such days coffee and wine were also served by women. Yet the female participants of these weekly outings were not limited to royal ladies and their servants. Della Valle reports that one Wednesday his wife was invited to join the noble women of Isfahan for an outing with the court ladies. The presence of the local nobility, members of other religions (Della Valle’s Nestorian Christian wife and her peers), and female vendors suggests that on such days the domain of women was relatively extensive. As public spaces used by both genders, albeit segregated by day of the week, the coffeehouses of the Chaharbagh were not exclusively masculine spaces; they also provided a rare venue for women to socialize in a public setting.

These manifestations of class and gender reflect the myriad ways in which the presence of the coffeehouses affected the meaning and uses of the Chaharbagh as a public space. Consider the elongated space stretching between the Dawlat Gate and the Zayanda river (fig. 5): the novelty of the coffeehouses did not lie in their layout or decoration per se, but rather in the way they sat at the heart of a public promenade, and in the way their covered rooms and open-air platforms created a public venue for utterly new social pastimes such as drinking coffee and smoking tobacco. In its incipient form, a khīyābān was not merely a planted road or an elongated garden for age-old leisurely activities: it was a promenade lined with street cafés, if you will, a public space accommodating and shaping the social practices and habits of a new age.

**The Coffeehouses at the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan**

In the urban landscape of seventeenth-century Isfahan, the Chaharbagh coffeehouses stood out for their association with the institution of the wine tavern and for their integration into a monumental promenade. Yet, the city’s most famous coffeehouses were those erected on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (also known as the Maydan-i Shah, or Royal Square). In his detailed description
of the Safavid capital, Chardin refers to those establishments as “the most beautiful and the most spacious coffeehouses in the whole city.” The significance of the Maydan’s coffeehouses is also reflected in the references made to them in literary sources. In a versified travel narrative, for instance, the poet Bihishti of Herat describes the coffeehouses along with the palace complex and royal market, a reflection of their perceived significance in Safavid Isfahan.

Chronicles suggest that, as in the Chaharbagh, the coffeehouses of the Maydan were integral to its main building program. Munajjim Yazdi’s account is indicative of the commercial nature of the development program, which comprised coffeehouses, the Qaysariyya (royal market), stores, caravanserais, and bathhouses. Likewise, in Junabadi’s flowery description, one can get a sense of the close association of the coffeehouses with the Maydan and its elements: “through the Maydan flowed a large canal resembling the stream of paradise, and pleasant coffeehouses were built along it of marble, brick, and stucco. In those coffeehouses, the tulip-faced and rosy-cheeked ones served coffee, symbolizing the darkness surrounding the fountain of life.”

European reports render a vivid picture of the Maydan coffeehouses. According to Chardin, the rooms were very high and large, open from top to bottom, with scaffoldings inside made like the benches of tailors (établis des tailleurs), allowing one to sit or lean easily. Similarly, according to the French traveler and merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, the coffeehouses of the Maydan consisted of rooms opening onto the square, where people go to smoke tobacco or drink coffee. These rooms, he wrote, had amphitheater-style seating, and, in the center, a simple basin with running water, used for filling water pipes. Fryer, too, compares the coffeehouses to theaters: “they are modeled after the nature of our theatres, that every one may sit around, and suck choice Tobacco.” An oft-quoted passage in Chardin’s travelogue, which gives a generic description of Safavid coffeehouses, was most probably based on his observations of the Maydan establishments: “Several of them, especially those in the big cities, have a water basin in the middle. Around the rooms are platforms, which are three feet high and approximately three to four feet wide, more or less according to the size of the location, and are made out of masonry or scaffolding, on which one sits in the Oriental manner.”

Sources suggest that the coffeehouses were located on the northern side of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, in the arcades stretching on either side of the entrance portal of the Qaysariyya. Modified over the past century and taken over by shops, the present condition of the Maydan’s north side gives little clue to its original form and function (fig. 10).

To reconstruct the original layout of the coffeehouses it is essential to situate them in the broader framework of the Maydan’s development. As Eugenio Galdieri proposed in 1970 on the basis of an archaeological investigation, the arcades surrounding the Maydan were constructed in two stages: in the first phase, the plaza was circled by a one-story arcade leading to a row of shops on the outer perimeter; the row of shops facing the plaza as well as upper-level loggias (sing. bālākhāna) were added during a second stage of construction. In a detailed study of four Safavid chronicles, Robert McChesney proposed a textual basis for Galdieri’s hypothesis, arguing that in the first phase, finished before 1595, the Maydan was primarily intended for festivities and sports, and that it was in the second phase, completed by 1602–3, that the plaza took on a commercial character.
particularly with respect to the northern side of the Maydan, where the coffeehouses were once located. As Markus Ritter notes, in the northern side “the building mass surrounding the plaza is twice as deep as the other sides”; here an additional one-story gallery stands in front of the main gallery, which is lined with two rows of shops and encircles the plaza (fig. 11). Judging from physical additions and restorations, Galdieri erroneously suggested that this extra arcade dated from a later time. Galdieri’s plan (fig. 11) thus reflects the state of the northern side of the Maydan in the 1960s, when the arcades containing the coffeehouses had long been modified and integrated into the market. Yet, as Ritter remarks, a sketch plan of the Maydan drawn by Della Valle reveals that the additional gallery already existed in the early 1600s, during the reign of Shah ‘Abbas. Among modern scholars, Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth were probably the first to identify the three-bay-wide gallery on the north side as the original site of the coffeehouses described in European reports. They particularly highlighted the distinctive vaulting of this area, which is characterized by an alternation between tunnel vaults and domes. Every four bays surrounding a central hall, they noted, formed a quadripartite layout, which constituted one of the original coffeehouses.

Yet the key to the original layout of the coffeehouses lies in a plan of the Maydan drawn up in 1932 by the French architect Eugène-Elie Beaudouin. In contrast to Galdieri’s plan, this plan depicts the coffeehouses as six interconnected octagonal spaces stretching on the eastern side of the Qaysariyya portal (fig. 12). The above-mentioned sketch plan by Della Valle confirms that the coffeehouses were located in exactly this part. Moreover, this layout is consistent with the peculiar vaulting scheme of this area, as noted by Gaube and Wirth. (In the eastern four bays the original vaults of the coffeehouses are still preserved.) It is thus reasonable to assume that Beaudouin’s plan was based on the existing condition of the area in the early 1930s, i.e., prior to the modern renovation of the Maydan. More important, the plan matches another sketch by Della Valle (fig. 13), which depicts the coffeehouse where Shah ‘Abbas held an audience with foreign ambassadors in 1619. Della Valle’s drawing shows two of the six octagonal halls that constituted the coffeehouses on the north side of the Maydan.

These visual records, together with the physical remains and textual descriptions, allow for a rough reconstruction of the Safavid coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (fig. 14). Occupying the entire western wing of the plaza’s northern side—what is today known as the Bazar-i Sarrafha (Money-Changers’ Market)—“the coffeehouse complex” consisted of six domed halls with chamfered corners (each approximately seven meters across and six meters high). The domed chambers were lit through an aperture in the ceiling and, judging from Della Valle’s sketch, featured octagonal basins at the center. Alternating with these domed halls were lower barrel-vaulted spaces (measuring five by four-and-a-half meters), which both separated and connected the domed halls (fig. 15). (Shah ‘Abbas sat in one of these alcoves to receive ambassadors). Della Valle’s sketch (fig. 13) suggests that these interconnecting alcoves were lined on both sides with platforms, traces of which still remain in situ. This reconstruction conforms to the description of Della Valle, who noted that with no barriers between them, the coffeehouses appeared as one complex.

The overall scheme of the coffeehouses can be described as a series of cruciform spaces with overlapping alcoves on the sides. By using two different types of vaulting and by chamfering the corners of the main
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Fig. 12. Excerpt from the plan of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan drawn up by Eugène-Elie Beaudouin in 1932, showing the original layout of the coffeehouses on the northeast side of the plaza. (After Eugène-Elie Beaudouin, “Ispahan sous les grands chahs, XVIIe siècle,” Urbanisme, revue mensuelle de l’urbanisme français 2, no. 10 [January 1933], 25)

Fig. 13. A sketch from the diary of Pietro della Valle, showing the layout of the coffeehouse where Shah ‘Abbas held a reception for foreign envoys in 1649. Vatican, Vatican Library (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), Ott. lat. 3382, fol. 126v. (Photo: courtesy of the Vatican Library)

Fig. 14. Plan showing the northeast side of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan along with the reconstructed layout of the coffeehouses: 1) row of coffeehouses consisting of six octagonal rooms alternating with alcoves; 2) Bazar-i Qannadh (Confectioners’ Market); 3) Chaharsuq-i Shah; 4) Qaysariyya Market; 5) sherbet houses; 6) covered market leading to the Old Maydan. (Plan: Farshid Emami)
halls, the unknown architect of the complex masterfully created a new spatial configuration, suitable for the function of the drinking houses, without discarding the modular framework that underlines the overall design of the shops surrounding the Maydan. In addition to the eastern and western entrances, the coffeehouses were directly accessible from the open-air space of the plaza, and probably from the Bazar-i Qannadha (Confectioners’ Market) to the north. Alternating with the entrance bays on both sides were alcoves facing the Maydan in the south and the gallery in the north. Earlier plans indicate that small niches were carved into the walls, which would have provided ample space for storing china cups and other utensils.

In his description of the Maydan’s drinking houses (Schenke, Tavernen), Olearius referred to three distinct types of establishments—the wine tavern (shīrakhāna), the Chinese teahouse (chāy-i khaṭā’ī-khāna), and the coffeehouse (qahvakhāna)—and gave a fairly different picture of the prevalent milieu in each of them: the wine tavern was mostly frequented by “low people” (unzüchtige Leute), who would watch the lewd dancing of young servers; in the teahouse, meanwhile, they drank a “foreign warm drink,” and played chess and backgammon; and the coffeehouse was where tobacco smokers and coffee drinkers could be found. In all three, Olearius observed, poets and storytellers could be seen seated on tall chairs in the middle of the room, reciting with a stick in their hands.\(^9\) No other source refers to these types, but since Olearius, who visited Isfahan in the 1630s, is one of our earliest sources, it is likely that at least initially such a functional categorization did exist in the Maydan’s establishments.\(^9\) If so, as with the Chaharbagh drinking houses, here we can see a similar juxta-
position of the wine tavern and the coffeehouse. Also remarkable is the reference to a teahouse: sources suggest that tea was another “soft drug” popularized in the very same period, and although less common than coffee, it was consumed in elite circles. Writing in the early 1600s, Hamavi reports that the royal gardeners of Shah ‘Abbās had even experimented with cultivating tea seeds, a deed indicative of the existence of a penchant for domesticating exotic substances. Thus, even if the drinking houses on the northern side of the Maydan were formally identical and spatially interconnected, they were probably further distinguished by the type of drinks served in them.

There is no evidence in Safavid literary sources for the three types of establishments described by Olearius. The sources nevertheless suggest that the coffeehouses of Isfahan, including those on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, were known as distinct locales. In Nasrabadi’s oft-quoted compendium of poets, one finds references to several coffeehouses (qahva or qahvakhāna) with little indication of their exact locations. The Arab Coffeehouse (qahvakhāna-yi ‘Arab) was probably one of the first established in Isfahan; Nasrabadi relates two anecdotes about Shah ‘Abbās’s ad hoc conversations with poets in this establishment. The coffeehouse’s name suggests that it was probably run by a person from Arab lands, which hints at the role individuals from abroad likely played in introducing coffee and its drinking customs. Some coffeehouses were known for their attractive coffee-servers (sing. qahvachi): one poet was infatuated with a server named Tufan (Deluge), and the son of Haji Yusuf Qahvachi had at least two admirers among Isfahani poets. The central Asian litterateur Muhammad Badi’ Malīha of Samarkand, who visited Isfahan in 1679–81, refers to a coffeehouse in the Maydan-i Shah called Agha Qiyasa, which was “the seventh coffeehouse” on the Qaysariyya side. While the drinking establishments of the Maydan were similar in form and spatially unified, the fact that they were known after their proprietors or servers indicates that each coffeehouse had a distinct character, probably attracting a regular clientele.

It has been suggested that the architecture of the coffeehouse had its origins in public baths (sing. hammām), particularly the cloakroom (sarbīna or maslakh), which commonly consisted of octagonal spaces surrounded by platforms. This formal affinity is of course not without social implications. As in other Islamic contexts, the public bath was a social space in the urban centers of medieval Iran, where people gathered not just for bathing but also to meet and talk. What differentiated the architecture of the Maydan coffeehouses from that of the public baths was their dynamic relationship with the surrounding urban spaces. In contrast to bathhouses, which were introverted buildings constructed lower than ground level, the coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan were open and permeable structures, interconnected with the open-air space of the Maydan and the nearby markets. Accessible from multiple directions, they integrated the rhythm and flow of movement in and around the city’s main plaza into their very spatial structure.

The original articulation of the main elevation of the coffeehouses and the bays facing the Maydan, however, are not entirely clear. According to the Russian traveller Kotov, who was in Isfahan in 1624, on two sides of the coffeehouses there were “wooden lattices from where the Kizuilbashi [sic] watch the sport but pay no money.” The two renditions of the northern side of the Maydan, produced some time between 1670 and 1674, are the only available contemporary depictions. The engraving published in Chardin’s travelogue (fig. 16) depicts the coffeehouses as single-story structures with openings set at two-bay intervals. Above the bay along the entrance of each coffeehouse stands a small lantern marking the main spaces. A comparison with the existing appearance of the portal and late nineteenth-century photographs suggests that, despite its obvious errors in perspective, the engraving provides a fairly accurate depiction of the overall shape of the structure and its major components. Moreover, it gives a sense of the way in which the water canal and trees encircling the Maydan were laid out in relation to the configuration of the coffeehouses.

Regardless of their original appearance, there can be no doubt that the coffeehouses offered the most spectacular view of the Maydan. Clustered in the south side of the plaza, the triad of monumental structures—the Shah Mosque, the Ali Qapu, and the Shaykh Lutfallah Mosque—was best viewed from the north, where the coffeehouses were located (fig. 17). This placement was not lost on contemporary observers. In a prose piece
Fig. 16. Engraving showing the northern side of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, with the entrance portal of the Qaysariyya Market at the center and the arcades containing the coffeehouses on the right-hand side. (After Jean Chardin, *Voyages du chevalier Chardin, en Perse*, 4 vols. [Amsterdam, 1635], 2: N. xxxvii)

Fig. 17. View looking south on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, showing the ‘Ali Qapu (right), Shah Mosque (center), and Shaykh Lutfallah Mosque (left). (Photo: Farshid Emami)
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Coffeehouses, however, was not their physical shape but rather their nighttime appearance. The sources refer in particular to elaborate lighting structures hung from the ceilings inside the establishments. According to Kotov, “above the height of a man is stretched plaited iron wire like a net or a chessboard, and in every hole is placed a glass bowl and in these is poured rose water with oil and they light these glasses with oil.” The observation of the Russian merchant is repeated by Fryer: “at night here are abundance of lamps lighted, and let down in glasses from the concave part of the roof, by wires or ropes, hanging in a circle.” Since its first use by the Yemeni Sufi orders, coffee drinking had always been associated with nighttime activities and prolonged waking hours. In that sense, the coffeehouses had a tremendous impact on the appearance and uses of the Maydan as a public space: illuminating the plaza, they extended the social life of the city’s main public square beyond the working hours of daytime. Nocturnal activity was particularly intense during the month of Ramadan, when Kotov observed that “in the kafās and on the maidan they play and dance and have all sorts of games the whole night, with candles and tapers and lamps.” It is hard to conceive of any substance other than coffee that would be conducive to such a prolonged nighttime euphoria. At night, with other shops closed, the arcades of the northern side of the Maydan would have appeared as a row of bright arches, lit by a myriad of lamps burning in the coffeehouses.

To nighttime or daytime revelers of Isfahan, coffee and tobacco were just two of the pleasures available in the northern area of the Maydan. Indeed, it was probably no coincidence that directly behind the coffeehouses was the market of confectionaries (bāzār-i qannādhā), offering sweets (such as nabāt or ḥalvā) that could be consumed with coffee (Safavid physicians deemed it unhealthy to drink coffee on an empty stomach). Moreover, according to Kaempfer, “sherbet houses” flanked the Qaysariyya portal (fig. 14). It was the concentration of these functions that turned the north side of the Maydan into the primary hub of social life in Safavid Isfahan. Here, the monumentality of the royal palace and mosques gave way to the messy reality of everyday life, day and night. Exotic substances such as coffee, tea, and tobacco imbued all mercantile and social activities with the distinctive tastes of the early modern world.

From the intense commercial and artisanal activity going on in the northern side of the Maydan one can conclude that perhaps more than the literati, the coffeehouses attracted craftsmen and merchants. (Several of the poets who frequented these establishments were in fact engaged in crafts as well.) If men of letters were the main clients of the coffeehouses by day, the establishments probably hosted a more diverse roster of patrons at night. The immediate urban context of these establishments also points to an ethnically diverse and cosmopolitan clientele. Visiting Isfahan’s markets in its heyday, Olearius noted that “there is not any nation in all Asia, nor indeed of almost of Europe, who sends not its merchants to Isfahan,” and mentioned traders from Khurasan, Bukhara, and China, as well as Turkish, Jewish, Armenian, Georgian, English, Dutch, French, Italian, and Spanish ones. A Persian-language scroll on Isfahan’s caravanserais (composed in the second half of the seventeenth century) conveys a similar sense of the staggering ethnic and confessional diversity of the merchants who traded in the nearby commercial spaces: Jews of Shiraz, Armenians of Aleppo, Hindu Indians, Sunni Arabs, and Ottomans (Rūmīyān), as well as Samarqandi merchants. To this list of Asian tradesmen, one could also add the agents of the Dutch and English East India Companies who were stationed in their respective compounds in the northeast of the Qaysariyya Market, just a short walk north of the coffeehouses.

Armenians in particular were very much integrated into the commercial fabric of Isfahan. At the time of Della Valle’s visit, there were ten shops in the Qaysariyya run by the Armenians of Julfa, as well as a shop belonging to a Venetian. To be sure, all these merchants would have been able to spare a few coins to puff some to-
bacco or savor a few sips of coffee, engaging in pastimes that had become pervasive around the globe.114

A broader knowledge of the configuration of the coffeehouses and their relationship with the open space of the plaza allows for a new interpretation of the entire Maydan. The addition of a second ring of shops looking onto the plaza fundamentally transformed the relationship between the surrounding built mass and the open-air space of the plaza. “The initial project,” wrote Galdieri, “did not foresee a row of privileged shops open towards the square.”115 With this addition, rather than a unified monolithic space, the Maydan was now experienced as a continuous promenade, delineated by shops on one side and the water canal and a row of trees on the other. It was a space whose defining boundaries were formed, almost literally, by the flow of consumer goods and substances. The coffeehouses constituted an integral component of this emergent form of the public space. Indeed, they may have been the very motive for reshaping the space of the Maydan by adding a row of shops with a “street front.”

THE COFFEEHOUSES OF ISFAHAN

In addition to the Maydan and the Chaharbagh, Takhtgah (literally the “throne-place”) was another locale of Safavid Isfahan famed for its coffeehouses. Adjoining the shrine of Harun-i Vilayat (the city’s most popular site of pilgrimage), Takhtgah was located on the south side of the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat or Old Maydan (maydān-i kuhna), the pre-Safavid square of Isfahan (see fig. 1). One of the earliest references to Takhtgah can be found in a biographical dictionary dating from the early years of the reign of ‘Abbas, in which the author refers to “Takhtgah-i Harun-i Vilayat located at the end of the maydān,” and relates an anecdote about two poets “who were exploring the maydān atop Takhtgah.”116 In his biographical compendium, Maliha refers to a poet whom he met in “the coffeehouse of Takhtgah-i Sifah- an”; with his back to the steel screen of Harun-i Vilayat’s tomb, he would sit on a porch (ṣuffa) that lay opposite the ‘Ali Mosque (masjid-i ‘Alī). Maliha further remarks that in Isfahan there is no place finer than Takhtgah, where “one hundred coffeehouses are located side-by-side.”117 Maliha’s description is echoed by Chardin, who referred to Takhtgah as one of “the famous places of the city,” with numerous cabarets of coffee and kūknār (a beverage made from the opium poppy). In Takhtgah, Chardin noted, one could always find large crowds of people gathering to drink, converse, or visit the shrine.118

Maliha’s reference to two still-extant spots—the porch overlooking the tomb chamber of Harun-i Vilayat and the portal of the ‘Ali Mosque—leaves little doubt that the elongated space delineated by the main façade of the mosque and the east façade of the shrine complex was known as Takhtgah in Safavid times and that it featured drinking houses in the seventeenth century, if not earlier.119 Indeed, the symmetrical configuration of the blind arched panels on the façades of the two structures suggests that they were laid out to form an articulated space, with the shrine porch and the mosque portal standing at the center (fig. 18). Old photographs, and a view drawn by the French painter Eugène Flandin in 1840, indicate that the arched panels featured doorways leading to now-altered covered spaces (fig. 19). Hovering above the complex was the still-extant 50-meter-high minaret of the ‘Ali Mosque, the tallest structure of old Isfahan. Despite massive transformations, one can still imagine Takhtgah, with its tile mosaic ornaments and lined with drinking houses.

Since the two structures defining the area were built during the reign of Shah Isma‘il (r. 1501–24), it is likely that the construction of Takhtgah dates from the same period and that wine or other drinks were served there before the introduction of coffee and tobacco.120 Nevertheless, compared to the coffeehouses of “new Isfahan,” it appears that the establishments at Takhtgah were of a relatively different character. The sources refer to a widespread use of opium in this locale. In fact, as Chardin relates, the houses bordering the Old Maydan were known primarily as opium dens (küknārkhāna) rather than coffeehouses.121 Located adjacent to the shrine of Isfahan’s “patron saint,” venerated by all the city’s sects and minorities (including the Jews and Christians), these establishments were probably frequented by a broader spectrum of the populace, especially the residents of the old city. Moreover, if the Old Maydan of Isfahan was indeed the model for the new plaza that Shah ‘Abbas constructed, then it is likely that Takhtgah...
was the inspiration for building a row of coffeehouses on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan.

Except for Takhtgah, which lay at the heart of the old city, other coffeehouses of seventeenth-century Isfahan were located in new Safavid developments. Maliha refers to one near the gate of Chaharbagh-i Sa`adatabad, a tree-lined avenue (khīyābān) on the eastern border of the now-vanished Sa`adatabad Garden, laid out under Shah ʿAbbas II (r. 1642–66) (see fig. 1). This coffeehouse might have been one of the two structures that flanked the southern gate of the avenue, as depicted in the plan drawn by Beaudouin in 1932.122 Similar coffeehouses were located in other suburban areas. In his compendium, Maliha refers at least three times to a coffeehouse outside the Jubarah Gate, which was located north of the walled city.123

Coffee was also available on the Hasanabad (now Khvaju) Bridge, which was completed in 1659 (fig. 20). Visiting Isfahan in the early eighteenth century, de Bruyn saw many Isfahanis who, in “an infinite number of both sexes,” flocked to the bridge in the evening, smoking and drinking coffee.124 De Bruyn’s observation illustrates how social interactions on the bridge were enlivened by coffee and tobacco. Coffee was either prepared in one of the closed rooms on the lower level of the bridge, or perhaps sold by wandering vendors. Equally significant is de Bruyn’s reference to the presence of both sexes, which belies the notion of strict segregation by
gender in later Safavid times, suggesting that as late as the early eighteenth century, and despite the measures taken under later Safavid monarchs, social pastimes such as drinking coffee, smoking tobacco, and strolling in public spaces were enjoyed by both male and female urbanites. According to an endowment deed dating from the early 1700s, there was a coffee-house, along with a bakery and candle-making shop (shammāʿī), “behind the Chihil Sutun.” These were likely located along the public pathway running on the northern and western borders of the Chihil Surun Garden and connecting the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan to the Chaharbagh. The coffee trade also left its mark on urban topography. Judging from the aforementioned British Library scroll, coffee was one of the major commodities imported to Isfahan’s markets. A 1924 map of Isfahan indicates that there was an entrance known as the Coffee Gate (darvāza-yi qahva) on the eastern border of the city. Moreover, a market branching off from the main bazaar was known as the coffee bazaar (bāzār-i qahva), which led to a coffee market (timcha-yi qahva),

From the early seventeenth century onward, the coffeehouse also became an integral component of commercial and charitable complexes. Chardin alludes to a coffeehouse in the district of Hasanabad, which the secretary of the provinces (munšī al-mamālik) Mirza Razi had built, along with a bazaar, caravanserai, mosque, and bathhouse. Similarly, in a complex developed by the vizier Saru Taqi, there appears to have been a coffeehouse alongside the market. Its form, which closely resembles those on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, hints at its original function. According to an endowment deed dating from the early 1700s, there was a coffeehouse, along with a bakery and candle-making shop (shammāʿī), “behind the Chihil Sutun.” These were likely located along the public pathway running on the northern and western borders of the Chihil Sutun Garden and connecting the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan to the Chaharbagh. The coffee trade also left its mark on urban topography. Judging from the aforementioned British Library scroll, coffee was one of the major commodities imported to Isfahan’s markets. A 1924 map of Isfahan indicates that there was an entrance known as the Coffee Gate (darvāza-yi qahva) on the eastern border of the city. Moreover, a market branching off from the main bazaar was known as the coffee bazaar (bāzār-i qahva), which led to a coffee market (timcha-yi qahva),
where this commodity was probably traded and stored. Perhaps coffee beans were also roasted and ground here, to be distributed in Isfahan’s coffeehouses. According to Kaempfer, one could see “all over Persia and in the bazaars and in the roads day laborers” engaged in the roasting and grinding of coffee beans.

Another famed coffeehouse of Isfahan, located in the vicinity of the Lunban Mosque, was built by the poet Nasrabadi, who in his autobiography tells us that it was after the passing of his dear friends that he decided to abandon the coffeehouse he used to frequent and seek seclusion in the Lunban Mosque. Located to the west of’Abbasabad, the Lunban area was closer to the poet’s ancestral home in the southwestern outskirts of Isfahan (fig. 1). Maliha, who met Nasrabadi in 1679, reports that the latter walked from his home to the coffeehouse everyday.

Nasrabadi’s coffeehouse is probably the modest structure that is still standing in the rear area of the mosque (fig. 21). Although the building is undated, it is aligned with the seventeenth-century additions to the complex and its brick decoration is consistent with that of the mosque, suggesting that the coffeehouse was built as part of the same building campaign. Inscribed in a tile panel on a portal of the mosque is a poem by Nasrabadi himself, indicating that the renovation of the mosque was completed in 1669; it was around the same year that the poet, according to his autobiography, decided to build a coffeehouse and seclude himself in the Lunban area.

A study of old plans and photographs shows that the coffeehouse originally faced a verdant rectangular courtyard on the southeastern side of the mosque. The building’s tripartite layout is reminiscent of the coffeehouses on the Chaharbagh. Despite its dilapidated state, one can imagine the view of old plane trees framed in the arched iwan of the coffeehouse.

**Provincial and suburban coffeehouses**

Not long after they became established in Isfahan, coffeehouses began to proliferate in provincial cities. Testifying to their spread, Chardin pronounced coffeehouses “the most beautiful places in the cities” of Safavid Iran.
In Tabriz, he saw several public houses for drinking coffee and smoking tobacco (cabarets á Cawve et Tabac). The author of a local history of Yazd completed in the third quarter of the seventeenth century mentions several coffeehouses in the city, and refers to tarrying in the coffeehouse as “the habit of the time” (āādat-i ahl-i zamānā). Maliha, who travelled city by city from Samarqand to Isfahan around 1680, also visited several provincial coffeehouses. Indeed, so central were coffeehouses to his itinerary that McChesney suggests Maliha actually traveled “by way of the coffeehouses of those cities.” As in Isfahan, it was in the coffeehouses that he would encounter the literati.

Little is known about the layout of the coffeehouses in provincial cities, but the sources suggest that, as in Isfahan, they were also situated in major urban spaces. In Kashan, the Agha Qiyasa Coffeehouse was located on the Maydan-i Sangin, the main public square of the city, originally developed in the mid-fifteenth century. In Yazd, there were coffeehouses in the Maydan-i Khvaja and the Maydan-i Væqt-i Sa’at; even the cistern (chākhāna) of the famous Friday Mosque of the city had been turned into a coffeehouse. A review of the plan of Yazd reveals the degree to which the addition of coffeehouses had transformed the meaning and function of the city’s main public spaces, such as the Friday Mosque’s courtyard and the maydāns. In Mashhad, there was one coffeehouse near the shrine of Imam Riza; according to Maliha, it was located “opposite the steel screen (shabakah) of the imam’s tomb.” This coffeehouse was probably built on the urban spaces of Mashhad developed around the shrine under ‘Abbás I. As in the capital, these large-scale projects were not merely representations of imperial order but also conduits through which new social habits were disseminated across Safavid domains.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the coffeehouse had become an integral component of caravanserais, too. According to Maliha, coffee was served in a caravanserai outside a gate of the city of Sabzavar in Khurasan. Traveling from the Gulf shore to Isfahan, Fryer stayed in a caravanserai near the city of Ashkdez, where he took up residence “in a convenient room, formerly designed for a Coffee-House, having a Tank of Water in the middle, with broad Seats around, either to Lie or Sit on.”

A similar sense can be gleaned from Kaempfer’s travel journal, which refers to at least four coffeehouses along the route from Isfahan to Bandar Abbas on the shore of the Persian Gulf.

A Safavid coffeehouse is preserved in the Mahyar Caravanserai, located some fifty kilometers south of Isfahan (fig. 22). According to Fryer, coffee was served here in the Safavid period. With a double string of shops and a five-sided recess at the entrance, the design of the Mahyar Caravanserai is unusual, though it closely resembles the northern side of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan (fig. 23). Here, merchants and travelers heading north towards Isfahan were presented with an overture of the tastes and sights of the capital. Situated at the end of a row of shops, the caravanserai’s café is accessible both from the covered lane in the rear and directly from outside. The coffeehouse has a tripartite layout, with a central hall flanked by two alcoves. Also noteworthy is the pairing of the coffeehouse with a bakery; together they would have provided an apt mix of light meals and drinks to refresh weary travelers. As the example of the Mahyar Caravanserai shows, the coffeehouse perhaps played an integral role in shaping a new conception of caravanserais, too; no longer a castle-like impregnable structure, the roadside inn had also become more integrated into the surrounding landscape.

THE MILLIEU OF ISFAHAN’S COFFEEHOUSES: VISUAL AND LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS

While the proliferation of coffeehouses in provincial cities and commercial complexes testifies to the rapid dissemination of coffee in Safavid Iran, nowhere was the institution as intertwined with Safavid society and culture as in the cosmopolitan capital. The coffeehouses of Isfahan provided venues for rendezvous and hosted literary gatherings—which at times involved heated debates. Several poets and artists spent their entire days in coffeehouses, and some practiced their crafts there too: Mulla Ghururi, who earned a living through drawing marginal rulings in manuscripts (jadval-kashī), for instance, “resided in the coffeehouse” (dar qahvakhāna sākin būd). Coffeehouses were not only the main sites of literary circles in Safavid realms but also acted as hubs...
Fig. 22. Plan of the Mahyar Caravanserai, with the coffeehouse in the southwest corner. (After Maxime Siroux, Caravansérails d’Iran et petites constructions routières [Cairo, 1949], 59)

Fig. 23. View of the main façade of the Mahyar Caravanserai in 1937. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution. (Photo: Myron Bement Smith)
in a broader network of cultural exchange in the Persianate world. To meet with the city’s preeminent men of letters, a learned Samarqandi visitor such as Maliba did not require an invitation to a courtly assembly or a literary salon (majlis) at a private mansion—he need only step into a coffeehouse. In a similar vein, it was in Isfahan’s coffeehouses that artworks began to be sold on an open market to a broader range of clients: to purchase a single-page painting of Sadiqi Beg, an Indian merchant would only have to look for the artist himself in the coffeehouse. The coffeehouse was thus central to the formation of interconnected regional and trans-regional publics and audiences, whose patronage and engagement had a lasting impact on the formats and contents of both literary and artistic creations. The integration of coffeehouses into orderly urban spaces, in Isfahan and elsewhere, would no doubt have accentuated their public function.

The habit of drinking coffee altered the rhythms of everyday life in and around the urban spaces of Isfahan. In his aforementioned treatise, Qazi b. Kashif al-Din recommended a few cups in the morning, and two to three cups after a meal. The popularization of coffee drinking likely increased the consumption of certain other substances, too. To achieve humoral balance according to the prevalent Galenic precepts, coffee was often consumed with a wide range of spices, including cloves (qaranful), nutmeg (jauz), and ginger (zanjabil). Eating habits and the order of meals were also affected by coffee: by the end of the seventeenth century a new type of meal that was taken in the morning had become known as taht al-qahva (literally, “before coffee”). Many merchants and artisans working in the markets of Isfahan probably started their days in coffeehouses, with coffee and something sweet, in a manner that was becoming more and more cosmopolitan.

In coffeehouses patrons were entertained by storytellers (sing. qiṣṣakhvān). Performed around the clock in covered illuminated structures, storytelling was now unaffected by cycles of day and night or the vicissitudes of the climate, as it had been in medieval times. In addition to Firdawsi’s Šāhnāma (Book of Kings), which had its own professional narrators (sing. Šāhnāmakhvān), there were popular romances such as the Hamzanāma (Story of Hamza) and the Abū-Muslimnāma (Story of Abu-Muslim), as well as a growing number of newly forged narratives, which cast the deeds of the early Safavid kings as quasi-mythical heroic adventures. Yet storytelling was not merely a static oral recitation but was also accompanied by music and theatrical enactments. Nasrabadi tells us about a certain Sabuhi, who was not only good at reciting the story of Hamza and the Šāhnāma but was also unparalleled in adorning the scene (majlis-ārāʾ) and a master in music. Likewise, Mulla Mu’min, who recited the Šāhnāma in coffeehouses, was known for his peculiar demeanor and appearance: “he would wear a gown with printed designs (qabā-yi bāsma), which he embroidered in various colors, while placing the scroll [that he used for reciting] in his headgear.” In all likelihood, storytellers who used illustrated figural screens (sing. sūratkhvān) were also active in coffeehouses. The centrally planned architecture of the coffeehouses, with their surrounding raised platforms, provided an apt setting for such performances. The coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, in particular, would have allowed multiple storytellers to perform simultaneously.

Gradually, coffee and the coffeehouse permeated the capital’s literary parlance, and verses with coffee-related imagery began to appear. The new poetic imagery was largely derived from wine culture. The cultural trope of praising the young male sāqī (cup-bearer) was carried on into the coffeehouse, as indicated by the multiplicity of references to the fetching servers of Isfahan’s coffeehouses. Shams, who ran the drinking house on the Chaharbagh, hired good-looking youths as servers, and also composed new songs for each of them. Nasrabadi relates several anecdotes about poets infatuated with the youthful servers of Isfahan’s coffeehouses. In the homo-erotic milieu of the coffeehouse, the sāqī—the conventional beloved of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish poetry—had found a new counterpart in the qahvachi (coffee server).

From the early seventeenth century onwards, a similar dynamism between wine and coffee imagery emerges in Safavid visual culture. One of the earliest examples—and indeed one of the first visual representations of coffee in Iran—is a 1630 work by the famed painter Riza ‘Abbasi (d. ca. 1635). Typical of Riza’s later style, it depicts a youth kneeling on a golden landscaped
Fig. 24. Riza ‘Abbasi, “Kneeling youth offering coffee.” Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, Ms. 1668 (Muraqqa‘-i Gulistan or Gulshan), fol. 37. (Photo: courtesy of the Gulistan Palace Library)
background, offering a tray with three Chinese-style blue-and-white cups filled with coffee (fig. 24). While the overall posture and facial features of the subject follow conventional renditions of youthful cup-bearers, certain unprecedented features set this painting apart: unlike wine, coffee is served on a tray (sūnī), and the traditional long-necked crystal flask (ṣūrāḥī), often depicted half-filled with red wine, is here replaced with a drab metal coffee pot (qahva-jūsh or qarā-āftāba). Yet perhaps the most distinctive feature of the painting lies in the rendition of the figure’s hand gesture: in contrast to shallow wine cups (pīyāla or qadāh), which are customarily held from below with the forefinger and thumb poised in a delicate fashion, here the porcelain coffee cup (finjān) is gripped from above, with all the fingers placed around the rim, a gesture clearly suggesting that the beverage was hot, as do the undulating lines of steam rising from the cups. (Indeed, sources confirm that coffee was consumed very hot.) As Sheila Canby notes, the stance of the figure, the direction of his gaze, and even the swirls of steam rising from the cups, are all suggestive of a space extending beyond the picture plane. Exuding an instantaneous aura, the painting captures the moment the server has knelt, poured coffee, and placed the pot back down, before offering a cup to a client seated on the ground, as the direction of his gaze suggests. For the person being served, the aroma of coffee mingled with the scent of the narcissus tucked in the back of the server’s sash, a sensory experience further augmented by the sight of the server’s shining garment. (Note also the yellow wad underneath the server’s knees, which was probably laid on the ground to preserve his delicate garment.) Rather than the wine flask and shallow cup, here the coffee pot and porcelain cups point to the role of the represented figure.

Although the extent to which such portraits were drawn from life is contested, in this particular painting a sort of naturalism is definitely at work. Even if the stylized rendition of the youth’s face—as manifest in his bowed brows and fair complexion, as well as the tresses on his temples (zulf)—points to established tropes of beauty, the hand gestures, coffee cups, tray, and metal pot capture the new realities of everyday life for the elites of Isfahan, reflecting a yearning for desire and beauty in an evolving mundane context. The painting represents an attempt at incorporating new objects—and the bodily gestures associated with them—in a repertoire of familiar forms. Whether based on a live model or an impression, it is more likely that an urban coffeehouse of Safavid Isfahan, rather than a courtly or private assembly, was the source of inspiration for Riza’s painting. Moreover, the idealized facial features of the servant do not necessarily mean that contemporary beholders regarded the picture as a generic depiction; like one of the much admired coffee-servers praised in poetry of the time, the image may have been seen as a likeness of an individual server.

In addition to these cultural tropes, the painting reflects another novel aspect of Safavid coffee culture: the utensils used for drinking coffee. Beginning in the seventeenth century, a relatively new shape of vessel—porcelain coffee cups—began to be imported and manufactured in far greater quantities, which is indicative of the rapid development of coffee drinking as a social habit. For instance, the records of the Dutch East India Company indicate that in 1634 100,000 coffee cups were shipped to Bandar Abbas (Gomboron), the chief entrepôt of Safavid Iran on the Persian Gulf. The elements forming the moment rendered in Riza’s painting thus point to a broader web of maritime trade that emerged in the early modern period. Perhaps it was not just coffee that reached the Safavid capital from afar through a ship sailing from Mocha to Bandar Abbas; the porcelain coffee cups depicted in the painting may also have arrived in Isfahan from China by way of a Dutch vessel.

Riza’s painting is thus emblematic of the unprecedented ways in which seventeenth-century Safavid visual culture engaged with aspects of urban life. In both words and images, what was largely a metaphoric topos in medieval Persianate culture was now expressed with a more pronounced degree of realism. The emerging practice had multiple roots, to be sure, but one could argue that it was the very space of the coffeehouse that fostered an audience for such single-figure paintings, while encouraging a higher degree of social realism by contributing to the rapid expansion of material life. The youth in Riza’s painting might have been seen as a depiction of a real server in one of Isfahan’s coffeehouses—perhaps on one of the Chaharbagh outdoor
platforms—whose new spatial conception paralleled the transformations occurring in Safavid visual and literary culture.

THE COFFEEHOUSE AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE: EXPANSION, APPROPRIATION, AND DEMISE

European reports hint at a subversive political atmosphere in Isfahan’s coffeehouses. In these establishments, wrote Chardin, “people engage in conversation, for it is there that news is communicated and where those interested in politics criticize the government in all freedom and without being fearful.” A similar narrative is found in Fryer’s description: “Hither repair all those that are covetous of News, as well as Barterers of Goods; where not only Fame and Common Rumour is promulged, but Poetry too, for some of that Tribe are always present to rehearse [sic] their Poems, and disperse their Fables to the Company.” Even more telling is a passage in Tavernier’s travelogue, which is indicative of the great opportunity for free political discussion spawned by the coffeehouse, as well as the attempts of the state to control the public sphere:

All the Persians that have any spare time, fail not every day to resort to those places between seven and eight in the Morning, where the Owner of the Room presently brings them every one their Pipe and their Dish of Coffee. But the Great Shah ‘Abbas, who was a man of a great understanding, finding those places were only so many meeting-houses, where men assembled to talk and prattle of State-affairs, a thing which no way pleased him; to break the neck of those petty cabals, he ordered that a Moullah should be sure to be betimes at every place before the rest of the People came thither, and that he should entertain those Tobacco-whiffers, and Coffee-quaffers, sometimes with a point of the Law, sometimes with History, sometimes with Poetry. This custom is still observed: so that after this entertainment has lasted two or three hours, the Moullah rising up, cries to everyone in the Coffee-Room, Come my Masters, in good time, let’s all now retire every man to his business. Straight every one retires upon the Moullah’s words, who is liberally entertained all the while by the society.

Tavernier’s evocative description of those “talk[ing] and prattl[ing] of State-affairs” as well as “petty cabals” signals a vibrant subversive milieu, achieved through conversation. Equally remarkable were the measures taken by Shah ‘Abbas, indicating that such activities were seen as a serious threat to the authority of the monarch. Shah ‘Abbas’s frequent visits to coffeehouses were also noted by Kotov, who wrote that “the shah himself rides out to disport himself almost everyday and goes to the kafs.”

Obviously, the unplanned presence of the patriarch in the coffeehouse was not simply for the purpose of entertainment: it was also an instrument of control and surveillance. The imbrication of the realms of the ruling authority and the public sphere appears to have been a distinctive feature of the institution in early seventeenth-century Safavid society. During the reign of ‘Abbas I, coffeehouses were instrumental in representing the shah as a highly visible ruler; they constituted one of the main, and perhaps the most significant, spaces of the city in which the monarch appeared, and interacted with, the public. As stages for representation of power, then, the coffeehouses of Isfahan played an important role in the promulgation of an image of the omnipresent Safavid king, who relied on visibility to legitimate his power. In Habermasian terminology, the coffeehouse not only was an institution of the public sphere, but also acted as a stage for “representative publicness.”

In reality, however, this was not a consistent practice. Over the last two decades of his reign, Shah ‘Abbas spent limited time in Isfahan. Nor was the omniscience of the Safavid ruler perpetuated by ‘Abbas’s successors, who became more aloof and removed from the urban landscape, confining court ceremonies to the spaces of the palace. While royal patronage was initially significant in the formation of coffeehouses, the publics of late Safavid times altered and appropriated these spaces. As the royal presence waned, the new publics and social associations formed in Isfahan’s coffeehouses, urban spaces, and public institutions were further invigorated.

Throughout the middle decades of the seventeenth century, efforts to control coffeehouses and the social atmosphere they encouraged were waged under the banner of religion rather than politics. The first recorded campaign against the “immoral deeds” common in cof-
feehouses was instigated in 1645 by Khalifa Sultan, the devout vizier of Shah ‘Abbas II. Distancing itself from the folk Sufi ethos, a clerical Shari’a-based version of Shi’ism had come to dominate the Safavid state. Wandering dervishes and storytellers, who were instruments of propaganda in the formative period of the Safavid polity, were now seen as threats to the centralized bureaucratic state in the urbanized metropolitan context of Isfahan. By the mid-seventeenth century, the coffeehouse had turned into the most contested space of the capital, and was at the center of a heated dispute among clerics, the literati, and dervishes.

It has been suggested that following these actions against coffeehouses a fundamental transformation occurred in the prevalent social milieu of the institution, which began to accommodate less sensitive activities, such as games and light conversations. For Nasrabad, settling in the coffeehouse was synonymous with distancing himself from forbidden practices and entering an erudite circle of poets. A similar sense is conveyed in the aforementioned poem by Mir Nijat, which describes the coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan as a gathering place of the spiritual and learned, likening its platforms to “the kingdom of Greece.” The addition of coffeehouses to the Lunban Mosque in Isfahan and to the Friday Mosque in Yazd is also suggestive of an expansion in the social purview of the establishment, which is likewise confirmed by Kaempfer’s observation that coffeehouses were included in madrasas. This integration of the coffeehouse into madrasas and mosques can be read as the co-opting of a predominantly secular institution by the expanding religious public sphere of the late Safavid era. Obviously, the coffeehouse could coexist with normative religious institutions in a manner that would have been inconceivable for other establishments. If in the early years of its introduction, the coffeehouse had something of the antigomian ethos of the medieval wine tavern, it was now more aligned with the pursuit of piety and erudition. Nevertheless, this was by no means a pervasive transformation: even in this later period the coffeehouse was much vilified for the “improper behaviors” that it fostered. A late Safavid source, for instance, compared coffeehouses to “schools of Satan” (madāris-i shayṭān).

Such castigations were coupled with royal action after the accession of Shah Sultan Husayn, who, upon assuming the throne in 1694, embarked on an extensive campaign against violations of the Shari’a: wine, wherever it was found in Isfahan, was poured out on the ground in the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, and the vessels used to drink it were smashed; gambling was banned and brothels were dismantled. Indeed, the enormous royal madrasa built by Sultan Husayn must have been deliberately placed on the site of the drinking houses in the very heart of the Chaharbagh. When the coffeehouse reopened after the construction of the madrasa, it projected a very different message: physically incorporated into a religious establishment and decorated with verses from the Koran, the coffeehouse was now a beacon of piety rather than a bastion of hedonism, or so it seemed (fig. 25).

Despite these developments, it appears that until the early eighteenth century, coffeehouses continued to function as vigorously as they had in the earlier period. It was rather the fall of the Safavids in 1722 that ushered
in a rapid decline in coffee culture. Traveling in the late eighteenth century, the Frenchman Guillaume-Antoine Olivier was struck by the unattractive appearance of coffeehouses, a condition at odds with what he had read in the narratives of Chardin and Tavernier. Unlike in Turkey, coffeehouses were not popular in Iran, and indeed coffee was rarely served in them. By the end of the nineteenth century, Safavid coffeehouses had utterly receded from the minds of Isfahan’s inhabitants. Nothing is more telling in this regard than the statement of Mirza Husayn Khan, a local official who compiled a geographical study of Isfahan in 1893. Referring to the newly established coffeehouses of the city, he noted that earlier “the coffeehouse in the middle of the old Chaharbagh” was the only one functioning in Isfahan. “A few coffeehouses have been built in recent years,” he further adds, but people avoid them, “yet soon they will get used to it.” The coffeehouse had returned to the city again, serving tea this time, and seen, yet again, as a novel phenomenon with a potential for political subversion.

Coffee was not produced in Safavid lands. While it was initially disseminated by way of overland connections to Ottoman territories, by the mid-seventeenth century it was mainly traded through sea routes dominated by European companies. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the coffee imported to Safavid territories came not just from Yemen but also from the Dutch colonies in Java. The prosperity of Isfahan in the seventeenth century stemmed from a global equilibrium between overland and maritime trade networks. Coffee and tobacco were exotic commodities consumed by a privileged group of urbanites who enjoyed a culture of consumption made possible by a prosperous urban economy that relied on long-distance commerce as a major source of wealth. In the nineteenth century—when the elite quarters of Isfahan were all in ruins, when the drinking house of the Chaharbagh was the only one functioning in the city and the coffeehouses on the Maydan had been taken over by the market—it was hard to imagine the once vibrant coffeehouses that had existed in the Safavid era. When commodities ceased to flow, so too did the beat of life in Isfahan’s foremost public institution.

CONCLUSION

By bringing the architectural layout and urban configuration of Safavid coffeehouses into sharper focus, this study examined the role of the coffeehouse in fashioning new forms and conceptions of the built environment in Safavid Iran. Seen in this light, the grand maydāns and khīyābāns of early modern Iran were not merely expressions of power or venues of royal leisure but also public spaces containing and shaping a wide range of novel social practices. The coffeehouses on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan altered the perceptual character and social meaning of the city’s main urban plaza. As venues for poetic circles, meetings of merchants, and political discussions—hosting daytime and nocturnal assemblies animated by new stimulants—coffeehouses were indeed central to the transformation of the Maydan into a constituent part of the public domain. In a similar vein, the drinking houses of the Chaharbagh played a key role in transforming the khīyābān from a suburban tree-lined road into a public space. The overall shape of the major coffeehouses of Isfahan was in turn informed by their urban positioning. Consider the coffeehouses of the Maydan, the Chaharbagh, or even Takhtgah: they were all constructed in rows or pairs along urban spaces.

The concentration of coffeehouses in the newly developed areas of Safavid Isfahan reflects the dichotomous social structure of the city in the seventeenth century. In contrast to the cities of the eastern Mediterranean, which featured a multitude of coffeehouses operating at different urban scales, the coffeehouses of Isfahan were mostly located in the quarters inhabited by the elite. In Isfahan, coffee clearly had a polarizing effect. Indeed, the sources give little indication that coffee was consumed beyond the urban coffeehouses of the new Safavid developments, a far cry from Istanbul in the same period, which reportedly contained more than six hundred coffeehouses. The urban topography of Isfahan’s coffeehouses therefore supports Matthee’s conclusion that, in Safavid times, coffee was primarily a luxury commodity “enjoyed by the upper and middle strata of late Safavid urban society.” This dichotomy was manifested in the dual urban form of Isfahan, in the contrast between the opium dens lining the Old Maydan and the coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i
Jahan. Compared with its medieval counterparts, the coffeehouse was definitely a more inclusive social institution. Yet rather than obliterating class differences, the presence of a broader spectrum of society in the space of the coffeehouse gave rise to new performative expressions of social distinctions. The coffeehouses gave shape to the elites of Isfahan and, by framing their bodies and cosmopolitan social habits in public spaces, spawned new patterns of social behavior and urban leisure.

In terms of architectural layout, coffeehouses drew on a variety of older prototypes—garden pavilions, bathhouses, and probably wine taverns. Yet despite this typological diversity, it appears that a centrally planned space with surrounding raised platforms was the most common scheme. Resembling theaters to European visitors, this layout was not only more suitable for watching performances and listening to storytellers but also provided an intimate space for socializing. The social practices that were scattered in the spaces of the medieval city had now found a permanent space, which heightened their intensity and influence.

Indeed, this performative aspect, shaped by architecture, was central to the politically and culturally subversive roles that the coffeehouse came to play. It was in these spaces of performance that the state and different societal groups confronted each other: the mullah installed by Shah ʿAbbas in Isfahan’s coffeehouses was an instrument of state propaganda, intended to maintain a degree of social order and curb the social leverage of wandering dervishes. It was not merely an action against unaccepted religious practices instigated by the fledgling Shiʿi orthodoxy of later Safavid times but also a measure against social mobilization and anti-state agitation. The theatrical physical character of the coffeehouse was thus central to its dual function as the locus of both political propaganda and social dissent. The coffeehouse was not simply a setting for the enactment of state power but also a venue for performing against its authority.

The earliest Safavid coffeehouses were state-sponsored public institutions, erected as integral components of the extensive building programs of the age of Shah ʿAbbas I. In that sense, their construction shares an affinity with an established practice in medieval Muslim cultures, whereby princes would build hospices, soup kitchens, or similar charitable institutions, not merely as a gesture of piety but also to create spaces that would mediate between the ruling elite and subjects. When the chronicler Junabadi wrote that taverns and coffeehouses were prepared for “wine-drinking companions and poor opium-consuming people,” he cast the creation of coffeehouses in a similar fashion: as a benevolent royal action for needy subjects. But as this study has attempted to show, there was much more to Safavid coffeehouses than serving the indigent. Indeed, rather than solidifying the social fabric, the coffeehouse was a source of tension. The distinctive nature of the coffeehouse as an urban institution affected the medieval social dynamic in various ways. The spatial structure of Safavid Isfahan encapsulated this altered social configuration.

All in all, Safavid coffeehouses should be explained as a transformative social phenomenon that emerged in the context of heightened interactions in the early modern world. As a novel public institution, the coffeehouse not only shaped and contained new forms of sociability but also affected established social practices and the urban spaces in which they were taking place. Embedded in a cosmopolitan metropolis, the coffeehouses of Safavid Isfahan contributed to the expansion of the public domain and engendered new conceptions of urbanity, civic space, and public architecture. Seen in this light, the impact of coffee—and the physical setting and social practices associated with it—on seventeenth-century Safavid urban society is fairly comparable to other contexts in the early modern world: the coffeehouse was a social institution flourishing in a realm of commodity exchange—the primary locus of an emerging public sphere.


NOTES

Author’s note: This essay began as a seminar paper, which I further developed as my qualifying paper at Harvard University. I would like to thank Professors Gülru Necipoğlu, David J. Roxburgh, and Nasser Rabbat for reading and commenting on various drafts of this paper. I would also like to express my thanks to the anonymous Muqarnas reader, whose comments helped me improve the essay’s argument, and to Karen A. Leal for her edito-
rial inputs and suggestions. Finally, I am grateful to my friends Hessam Khorasani Zadeh and Mira Schwerver, who assisted me with translations from Italian and German, respectively.


5. Relating an anecdote that coffee was invented and brewed by Gabriel “to restore Mahomet’s decayed moisture,” Herbert concluded that coffee is certainly “more ancient than Mahomet.” See Herbert, *Travels in Persia*, 261.

6. For an example of such views, see Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years* (New York, 1995), which begins with a cliché-ridden description of a typical “Middle Eastern café.”


8. Habermas’s model has been criticized for its teleological premises, its elite-centered and exclusive notions, and its idealization of rationalist discourse as the primary function of a public sphere. For more recent reflections and criticisms, see Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, eds., *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere* (Oxford, 2004); Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).

9. See, for instance, Miriam Hoexter, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, and Nehemia Levitzion, eds., *The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies* (Albany, 2002). Following the lead of Marshall Hodgson, the authors of this volume argue that institutions such as the waqf and madrasa, as well as Sufi orders, constituted a religious public sphere in pre-modern Islamic societies. Also see Babak Rahimi, *Theater State and the Formation of Early Modern Public Sphere in Iran: Studies on Safavid Muharram Rituals, 1590–1641 CE* (Leiden, 2012), which analyzes the formation of a public sphere in Safavid Iran, with a focus on the Muharram ritual.

10. This point is expounded in Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, “Concluding Remarks: Public Sphere, Civil Society, and Political Dynamics in Islamic Societies,” in Hoexter, Eisenstadt, and Levitzion, *Public Sphere in Muslim Societies*, 139–161.


14. For the most comprehensive study of coffee and other substances in Safavid Iran, see Rudi Matthee, *The Pursuit of Pleasure: Drugs and Stimulants in Iranian History, 1300–1900* (Princeton, N.J., 2005) (henceforth cited as Matthee, *Pursuit*). Also see Aladin Goushegir, “Le café et les cafés en Iran, des Safavides à l’époque actuelle,” in *Cafés d’Orient revisités*, ed. Hélène Desmet-Grégoire and François Géorgen (Paris, 1997), 141–76. The present study is indebted to the thorough examination of primary sources and inter-

16. ‘Imād al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Mas‘ūd Shirāzī, *Risāla-yi afyūnīyya*, ed. Rasūl Chūpānī, Umīd Šādiqpur, and Vajīha Panāḥī (Tehran, 1388 [2009]), 165–69. At the end of his treatise, ‘Imad al-Dīn Shirāzī (b. ca. 1515) relates that he used coffee as a cure for his addiction to opium, which suggests that coffee was available to him at the time. Yet since the treatise is undated and the date of the author’s death is not known, we do not have a precise date for this early reference to coffee. ‘Imad al-Dīn Shirāzī was the chief physician at the court of Shah Tahmasb (r. 1525–76), during the latter part of his reign. As one of his last works, the treatise on opium probably dates from the 1560s or 1570s. For a biography, see Cyril Elgood, *Safavid Medical Practice, or, The Practice of Medicine, Surgery and Gynaecology in Persia between 1500 A.D. and 1750 A.D.* (London, 1970), 21–25. In an earlier version (Aladin Goushegir, *Chaharbagh,* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 113–37; Mahvash Alemi, “Safavid Royal Gardens and Their Urban Relationships,” in *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, vol. 18, *Islamic Period: From Historic to Prehistoric Times to the Present*, ed. Michel Conant (Washington, D.C., 2007), 113–37; Mahvash Alemi, “Safavid Royal Gardens and Their Urban Relationships,” in *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, vol. 18, *Islamic Period: From the End of the Sasanian Empire to the Present*, ed. Abbas Daneshvar (Costa Mesa, Calif., 2005), 1–24; Mahvash Alemi, “Urban Spaces as the Scene for the Ceremonies and Pastimes of the Safavid Court,” *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre* 1–2 (1991): 98–107; Stephen Blake, *Half the World:...
The plan appeared in Pascal Coste, ***Monuments modernes de la Perse, mesurés, dessinés et décrits par Pascal Coste*** (Paris, 1867). It was based on a survey, made by Coste in Isfahan in May 1840, which is now preserved in Marseille, Bibliothèque de l’alcazar (formerly bibliothèque municipale), Ms. 1132, fol. 20. Pascal Coste (1787–1879) and the painter Eugène Flandin were sent by the Académie des Beaux-Arts on an artistic expedition that accompanied a diplomatic delegation to the court of the Qajar ruler Muhammad Shah (r. 1834–48). For an account of the journey, see Eugène Flandin, ***Voyage en Perse de MM. Eugène Flandin et Pascal Coste*** (Paris, 1859).

The authenticity of Coste’s rendition is confirmed by several nineteenth-century photographs depicting the ruins of the Chaharbagh. See, for instance, Ernst Höltzer, *Persien vor 137 Jahren* (Teheran, 1975), 100, 105; Ernst Höltzer, *Hizār jilvah-yi zindagi: Taṣvīrhā-yi Irnist Hūlstir az ʿahd-i Nāṣirī* (Teheran, 1382 [2003]), 483, 485.

ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sipantā, *Tārikhcha-yi awqāf-i Isfahān* (Isfahan, 1346 [1967]), 151. The rhetorical emphasis on the purchase of the coffeehouse seen here is typical of endowment deeds, which generally show a marked concern for the lawfulness of the endowed properties.

The term kaf appears to be short for “coffee” in Kaempfer’s manuscripts.

Kaempfer travelled to Iran as secretary of the Swedish delegation to the court of Shah Sulayman (r. 1668–94). During his twenty-month-long stay in Isfahan, he surveyed the gardens and drew sketches of buildings. Part of his observations appeared in the Latin-language *Amoenitatum Exotica rum*, published in 1712. Kept at the British Library, London, Kaempfer’s materials pertaining to Safavid gardens have been studied by Mahvash Alemi in the publications cited above.

Even in its present state, there is a gap between the structure and the adjoining façade of the madrasa. The awkward structural relationship between the coffeehouse and the rest of the madrasa is also alluded to by Siroux, who surveyed the building during a restoration effort in the 1960s. Not recognizing the earlier origin of the coffeehouse and some other elements of the madrasa, Siroux referred to this structural disjunction as a sign of concern over appearance in Iranian architecture. Siroux, *Anciennes voies*, 285.

Kaempfer uses the same label for both structures, which is indicative of their similar function. The label is yet to be deciphered.

As more accurate plans and old photographs show, a pre-existing structure seems to have been incorporated into the southwestern corner of the madrasa as well. See, for instance, the aerial photograph of the madrasa published in Henri Stierlin, *Iran of the Master Builders: 2500 Years of Architecture*, trans. Robert Allen and Nicolas Ferguson (Geneva, 1971), 92.


Coste’s survey is not accurate in terms of scale and details. The plans offered here are based on more recent surveys of the madrasa and my own fieldwork. The plan of the upper section of the Chaharbagh (fig. 5b) is part of my ongoing research on the other elements of the promenade.

In his oft-quoted description of the Chaharbagh, Chardin did not mention the coffeehouses. He did, however, refer to the “jardin des Vignes” (vine garden) and “jardin des Mûriers” (mulberry garden) on the sides of the “fifth pool” of the Chaharbagh, which corresponds to the area where the coffeehouses were located. See Jean Chardin, *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l’Orient*, ed. Louis M. Langlès, 10 vols. (Paris, 1810–11), 8:26.


A native of Isfahan, Awḥadī (b. 1565) became attached to the court of Shah ʿAbbās in the early years of his reign. In 1606, he moved to India, where, in 1613, he began to compile a compendium of short biographies and selected verses of 3,492 poets, one of the largest anthologies of this sort ever composed in Persian.


ʿū rá muhrī bar kaf-i dast bizanad ba ʿīān ‘alāmāt mulāzimin-dā dārīyah ʿū rá āzār narsīmánd. Ibid.

See Awḥadī, *Taẓkira-yi ʿarafāt al-ʿāshiqīn*, 2047. Shams-i Tishi and the servers of his drinking house were also favor-
ite entertainers at the court of Shah ‘Abbas. In 1611 (1020), during a nocturnal banquet held at the shah’s private palace (Khālvatkhānā) in the Naqsh-i Jahan Garden, for instance, Baba Shams-i Tīshī and “the boys of the coffeehouse” (pisarān-i qahvakhānā) were among the performers. See Khūzānī Isfahānī, *A Chronicle of the Reign of Shah ‘Abbas*, 1586.

47. Chardin, *Voyages*, 8:26. Visiting Isfahan in 1637, Adam Olearius, the secretary of the embassy of the Duke of Holstein to the court of Shah Safi, described the Grape Garden as a vast vineyard yielding a variety of specimens. Adam Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der moscovitischen und persischen Reyse* (Schleswig, 1636; repr. Tübingen, 1971), 562; English trans.: Adam Olearius, *The Voyages & Travels of the Ambassadors Sent by Frederick Duke of Holstein* (London, 1662), 301. Indeed, these vineyards may have been the *raison d’être* of the Chaharbagh: according to Chardin, before Shah ‘Abbas had the Chaharbagh constructed, the area was occupied by four grape gardens. See Chardin, *Voyages*, 8:26. Chardin also refers to a wine tavern inside the palace complex, located behind the Chihil Sutun Palace, which, interestingly enough, was also located in the vicinity of a vineyard. From Kaempfer’s drawings, we know that this now-lost pavilion was situated on the border of the Bagh-i Khalvat (Private Garden) and Bagh-i Anguristan (Grape Garden). For a reproduction of Kaempfer’s drawing, see Alemi, “Safavid Royal Gardens and Their Urban Relationships.”

48. Before the rise of coffeehouses, in addition to the winehouses, there were establishments known as *bangkhānā* (hashish-house), *ma‘jūnkhānā* (serving electuaries, often containing opium), and *būzakhānā* (houses serving *būza*, a slightly intoxicating drink made from millet). In Safavid sources, these are mentioned as the social activities that were banned when Shah Tahmasb issued an edict of repenance in the mid-sixteenth century. See Ahmad ibn Sharaf al-Din al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Qumī, *Khulāṣat al-tavārīkh*, ed. Ihsan Ishrāqī, 8 vols. (Tehran, 1980–84), 1:226, 233. For the transcription of the edict of Shah Tahmasb installed at the Mir ‘Imad Mosque in Kashan, see ‘Abd al-Husayn Navā‘ī, ed., *Shāh Ẓahmāb Šafavī, majmū‘-ī asnād va mukātabāt-i tārīkhī hamrāh bā yāddāshthā-yi tafsīlī* (Tehran, 1350 [1971]), 53–14. Before the introduction of coffee, *boza*-houses were ubiquitous in Ottoman Bursa as well. See İlkil O. Selçuk, “State Meets Society: A Study of Bozkahane Affairs in Bursa,” in *Starting with Food: Culinary Approaches to Ottoman History*, ed. Amy Singer (Princeton, N.J., 2011), 23–48.


50. For a discussion of etymology, see ibid., 18–19.

51. Šādiqī Bēg, “Hzazzīyāt,” 174. The affinity between coffee and wine is also expressed in other poems comparing the effect of coffee to wine.

52. This point was made by several European visitors. Herbert noted: “Great is the difference betwixt the Turks and Persians; for the Turks, being by law prohibited, abstain from wine, yet drink it covertly; but the Persians now (as of old) drink with freedom openly and with excess.” Herbert, *Travels in Persia*, 82–83. According to Della Valle, “in Persia, though it is a country of Muslims, all drink wine with alacrity, without scruples or shame.” Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 1:441: quoted and translated in Matthee, *Pursuit*, 66. Della Valle’s observation may be true only with regard to the elite, as Matthee suggests, but it should not change our understanding of the prevalent milieu of the “New Isfahan”: after all, it was a city made for, and inhabited by, the elite. It is also necessary to keep in mind that European observers’ proclivity for describing the Ottomans and Safavids in binary opposition to one another was, of course, informed by the geopolitics of the time, in which the Ottomans were seen as an imminent threat and the Safavids as a potential ally. These reports are, nevertheless, reflective of some concrete differences between the Ottomans and Safavids with respect to social practices such as wine drinking.

53. On wine in Safavid times, see Matthee, *Pursuit*, 37–96. The Chaharbagh of Isfahan was not the only Safavid city where coffeehouses and wine taverns existed in the same space. In the newly constructed market of Bandar ‘Abbas, too, Herbert saw, in 1628, taverns (with plenty of Shiraz wines brought in long-necked glasses), along with coffeehouses and sherbet houses. Herbert, *Travels in Persia*, 45.


55. This was at least the case when coffee was first introduced under ‘Abbas, although, as in other contexts in the early modern period, the Safavid coffeehouse gradually began to function as a gathering place for more respectable people. It appears that throughout the seventeenth century, the coffeehouse also provided a venue for the consumption of wine and other narcotic-based drinks such as *kūknār*. Wine was served during the reception that Shah ‘Abbas held for foreign ambassadors in one of the coffeehouses of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan.


57. In the 1690s, the coffeehouse was converted into a branch of Bank Melli Iran. In its present state, the whitewashed interior walls bear no trace of any ornamentation. Meager traces of poetic graffiti, however, give a glimpse of the building’s original function.

58. Kaempfer gives a detailed description of the preparation of coffee in a public coffeehouse: “These beans are roasted in a small flat vessel, and are regularly stirred, above a small charcoal fire, till they smell reasonably well and have become black-brown. Then they are poured into a circle (Orbiculum), and thus put, warm or cold, into a stone mor-
tar [...]. They grind the coffee with great effort, in a large mortar that is built into a bricked fixed place [...]. When this roasted powder has become sufficiently grounded, due to the pounding, they use it in the following manner: they take a spoon filled with this powder—that which is freshly roasted is the best—and put it in half pint (Puentche) of hot water that is already waiting on the fire in a copper tinned jar which is a handwidth long. Then the lid is put on it, some burning charcoal put on the jar, so that it boils quickly [...]. Then one puts two spoonfuls of cold water into the boiling coffee liquid, which makes the oil (oleum) milder, after which it is left on the fire [...]. Then it is ready and is served in small cups, and drunk as hot as one can tolerate." Engelbert Kaempfer, *Die Reisetagebücher*, ed. Karl Meier-Lemgo (Wiesbaden, 1968), 115; trans. from Floor, *Economy of Safavid Persia*, 142.

59. For instance, the layout of the coffeehouse resembles the pavilion located on the eastern side of the Fin Garden at Kashan, which dates from the reign of Shahʿ Abbas. The structure also bears stylistic affinities to the surviving Safavid mansions of Isfahan, such as the House of Sukas in New Julfa. Built in the first half of the seventeenth century, the Sukas mansion has a comparable domed hall, which is not only of similar dimensions and proportions, but also features analogous chamfered piers and arch-nets, as well as a wooden screen. See John Carswell, *New Julfa: The Armenian Churches and Other Buildings* (Oxford, 1968), 65–67; Karapet Karapetian, *Iṣfahān, New Julfa: Le case degli armeni; Una raccolta di rilevamenti architettonici = Isfahan, New Julfa: The Houses of the Armenians; A Collection of Architectural Surveys* (Rome, 1974), 119–56.

60. Although such raised platforms were common in garden design, those on the Chaharbagh may have indeed been conceived after a specific connotation of the *maṣṭaba*. The term in Arabic and Persian signifies a "place where people assemble" (Edward W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* [London, 1877, repr. 1984], s.v. "ṣ-ṭ-b"), as well as an "outdoor stone bench" or a "stone platform (for sitting)" (Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J Milton Cowan [Wiesbaden, 1979], s.v. "maṣṭaba"). In medieval Persian poetry, however, it primarily denoted a "platform outside a wine tavern," and often implied a tavern in general. See Ali Akbar Dikhhuḏā, *Lughatnāma*, 15 vols. (Tehran, 1998), s.v. "maṣṭaba." The term *maṣṭaba* is frequently used to signify a wine tavern in the works of medieval Shirazi poets, including three verses by the famous fourteenth-century poet Hafiz. One can surmise that since Shams was from Shiraz, the taverns of the Chaharbagh might have been modeled after those that existed in that city, famous not only for its wine but also for its taverns and gardens.


63. Also known as Tabrizabad, the ‘Abbāsabad district was laid out in the early seventeenth century to accommodate a group of merchants from Tabriz who were forced by Shah ‘Abbās I to settle in Isfahan. The Tabrizi émigré families and their descendants made up the majority of the elite of the New Isfahan throughout the seventeenth century.

64. Regarding these nobles, Della Valle wrote that they "chiefly hold aloof from the base people, and they so despise them that they think themselves contaminated merely by touching them. Thus in the streets, when a noble passes by, all the base people make way in order not to touch and so soil him." Pietro della Valle, *The Pilgrim: The Travels of Pietro Della Valle* (London, 1990), 131–32.


66. Ibid., 297.

67. Ibid., 287.

68. Visiting the Chaharbagh in 1840, Coste observed that only the axial walkway was paved with durable stone and that the unpaved lateral paths were used by horse riders: Coste, *Monuments modernes de la Perse*, 29. The central pathway of the Chaharbagh was interrupted by pools, making it more suitable for slow leisurely strolling, while the straight lateral pathways could be used by those who wanted to go about their business, whether walking on foot or riding on horseback.

69. For a study of the painting, see Massumeh Farhad, *The Art of Mu‘in Musavvir: A Mirror of His Times," in Persian Masters: Five Centuries of Painting*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (Bombay, 1990), 113–28. Also see Farhad’s entries in *Treasures of Islam*, ed. Toby Falk (exh. cat.) (London, 1985), 124–26, cat. nos. 96 and 97. The painting is paired with another illustration depicting Muhammad Taqī Tabrizi in a similar pose, but dressed in a different garment. The inscription on the latter painting indicates that it was made on the occasion of Muhammad Taqī’s pilgrimage to Mashhad.

70. Munajjim Yazdi, *Tārīkh-i ʿAbbāsī*, 361. According to Munajjim Yazdi, the celebration (*jashn*) began on May 28, 1609 (23 Safar 1018). The prohibition against men being present during outings by royal women, referred to as *guruq* in Safavid sources, was a common practice throughout the seventeenth century. While such bans were generally temporary, the *guruq* was a weekly event in the Chaharbagh.


72. The presence of women in public was of course not limited to such state-sponsored occasions. Awhadi, for example, refers to women mingling with men in Isfahan. See Awhādī, *Taẕkira-yi ʿarafāt al-ʿāshiqīn*, 2:1013, 3:2044. The prohibition against men being present during outings by royal women, referred to as *guruq* in Safavid sources, was a common practice throughout the seventeenth century. While such bans were generally temporary, the *guruq* was a weekly event in the Chaharbagh. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 230.

Chardin, Voyages, 7:366.


Munajjim Yazdī, Tārīḵ-i ʿAbbāsī, 236. For a translation, see McChesney, "Four Sources," 109. Munajjim Yazdī attributes the design of the entire complex to a single architect (muḥandīs), whom he hyperbolically praises but without providing any name. Junabadi gives the date 1603–4 (1012) for the beginning of construction on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan. Since Junabadi wrote his narrative a couple of years later, it is reasonable to consider Munajjim Yazdī's report more accurate.

Junābādī, Rawżat al-ṣafavīyya, 760. For the translation of the full passage, see McChesney, "Four Sources," 113.

Chardin, Voyages, 7:366.

Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, The Six Voyages of John Baptist Tavernier, Baron of Aubonne, through Turky, into Persia and the East-Indies, for the space of forty years, trans. J. P. Tavernier (London, 1677), 154.


McChesney, "Four Sources," 114.

The source of controversy is Blake’s argument, which disputes McChesney’s reading of the primary sources. Blake maintains that what McChesney has interpreted as a reference to an earlier stage of the construction of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan is actually concerned with the refurbishment of the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat, the pre-Safavid square of Isfahan. He further contends that, contrary to the common assumption, the relocation of the Safavid capital from Qazvin to Isfahan occurred in 1590 rather than 1598. Blake argues that the refurbishment of Isfahan’s old Maydan was the first building activity that Šāh ‘Abbās undertook and that the building of the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan was begun a decade later, in 1602. See Blake, Half the World, 15–28. For a critique of Blake’s work, see Sussan Babaei’s review of Half the World: The Social Architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590–1722 in Iranian Studies 33, nos. 3–4 (2000): 478–82. I agree with Blake’s proposition that ‘Abbās’ first construction project in Isfahan was the refurbishment of the Maydan-i Harun-i Vilayat. His two other propositions however—that the capital was relocated in 1590 and that construction commenced on the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan in 1602—are not supported by the available evidence. The second phase may have followed the first in rapid succession, though this is not necessarily reflected in textual sources.


Ritter, "Das königliche Portal," 361. For Della Valle’s sketch, see Alemi, “I ‘teatri’ di Shah Abbas,” 21. The sketch is found in Pietro della Valle, Diario, vollend. 1626: Vatican Library, Ms. Cod. Ottob. Lat. 3382, 126b (Della Valle-Del Bufalo Archive). For a new rendition of Della Valle’s sketch, see Ritter, “Das königliche Portal,” 363. As Ritter also notes, the physical remains seem to suggest that the additional gallery was also constructed at a later stage, together with the row of shops on the other sides of the Maydan. Ritter’s study focuses on the elements, such as the clock and naggarakhiāna (music hall), and does not discuss the coffeehouses.

Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth, Der Bazar von Isfahan (Wiesbaden, 1978), 93.

Ibid., 137, 138.


All other plans of the Maydan totally dismiss the coffeehouses. See, for example, the plan of the Isfahan Bazaar in Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture (Chicago, 1973). See also Klaus Herdeg, Formal Structure in Islamic Architecture of Iran and Turkistan (New York, 1990), in which the arcades containing the coffeehouses are eliminated from the reconstructions of the Maydan.

The plan was first studied in Alemi, “I ‘teatri’ di Shah Abbas,” 20.

Olearius, Vermehrte neue Beschreibung, 558. For an English translation, see Olearius, Voyages & Travels, 298. The term shīra here refers to shīra-yi angūr (grape juice), which was
a synonym for wine. For examples from medieval Persian poetry, see Dīkhudū, Lughatnāma, s.v. "shīra." According to a late Safavid manual of administration, composed ca. 1725, the royal wine cellar was also known as the shiraknhāna. See V. Minorsky, ed. and trans., Tadhkirat al-mulākā, A Manual of Safavid Administration, circa 1137/1725: Persian Text in Facsimile (B. M. Or. 9496) (Cambridge, 1943), 99, 137–38.

The only exception is the dubious travel narrative of Jan Jansz. Struys, which also refers to teahouses. Not all of his travel narrative might be fictitious, as Willem Floor suggests, but his description of the Maydan drinking houses is clearly based on Olearius. See Willem Floor, “Fact or Fiction: The Most Perilous Journeys of Jan Jansz. Struys,” in *Études safavides*, ed. Jean Calmard (Paris, 1993), 64.

For an overview of the introduction and consumption of tea in Safavid times, see Matthee, *Pursuit*, 238–41. According to Olearius, tea was imported by the Uzbeks from China. Safavid medicinal manuals often discuss tea together with coffee and tobacco, the very same categorizes that were available at the drinking houses on the Maydan, as described by Olearius.

*Ḥamavi Yazdi,* [*Risāla*] (Teheran, 1383 [2005]), 19.

*Kotov,* “Of a Journey to the Kingdom of Persia,” 19.


Fedot Afanasiyev Konov, “Of a Journey to the Kingdom of Persia,” in *Russian Travelers to India and Persia, 1624–1798: Kotov, Yefremov, Daniebegov*, trans. and ed. P. M. Kemp (Delhi, 1959), 1–42, at 19. In its present state, the second bay from the east has a peculiar design, which may have been a remnant of the original coffeehouses: from the corner of the adjoining octagonal hall a flight of stairs leads to a mezzanine, subdividing the vaulted bay overlooking the Maydan into two levels. This elevated platform would have provided a good view of events taking place on the Maydan, as noted by Kotov, while the lower level, which is connected to the interior space through two doors, might have been used for preparing coffee.

Both engravings are apparently based on drawings made by the French engraver and painter Guillaume Joseph Grélot, who was hired by Chardin and later joined the Venetian aristocrat traveler Ambrosio Bembo. See Ambrosio Bembo, *The Travels and Journal of Ambrosio Bembo*, trans. (from Italian) Clara Bargellini, ed. Anthony Welch (Berkeley, 2007), 26–32. In the drawing of the north side of the Maydan that appeared in Bembo’s travelogue, there seems to be a panel above the entrance arch of each coffeehouse, which may have included some sort of signage.

The drawing by Grélot included in Bembo’s travelogue is less precise than the one that appeared in Chardin’s book. One irritating difference is that in the latter there are four bays between entrance portals. One explanation was that the bays were subdivided by wooden lattices.


*Kotov,* “Of a Journey to the Kingdom of Persia,” 19.

*Kotov,* “Of a Journey to the Kingdom of Persia,” 27.

Indeed, the Maydan coffeehouses appear not to have featured any particularly impressive ornamentation. In their descriptions of the Maydan coffeehouses, European sources mostly focus on the lighting. The fact that the coffeehouses were considered attractive for their abun-
dant lighting, their integration into the urban space of the Maydan, and the social atmosphere they fostered is rather symptomatic of the novelty of the social institution and the urban experience that it had engendered.

109. See, for instance, Qāżī b. Kāshif al-Dīn, "Risāla-yi chūb-i chînî," 92. A similar phenomenon was observed in the Ottoman context. See Hattox, Coffee and Coffeehouses, 67.


111. Olearius, Vermehrte neue Beschreibung, 559; Olearius, Voyages & Travels, 299.

112. Dar dānî斯坦-î kârvânsârâhî-yi Isfâhân: London, British Library, Ms. Sloane 4094. For a facsimile and German translation of the scroll, see Gauke and Wirth, Der Bazar von Isfahan, 261–85, where the authors attribute the text to the reign of Shah Sulayman.


114. Although there might not be any explicit reference to the mingling of different ethnic or confessional groups in coffeehouses of Safavid Isfahan, there is evidence that non-Muslims frequented them. Indeed, considering the staggering diversity of merchants active in Isfahan’s markets, it is unlikely these groups did not socialize with one another in coffeehouses.


117. tā sad qahva dar yâli-yi yakdigar afštadah. Malîhâ, Muzakkîr al-ashâh, 344. McChesney suggests that “one hundred coffeehouses” is probably an allusion to the coffeehouses at the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, which were built in a row. See McChesney, “Barrier of Heterodoxy?,” 250. Although the figure appears to be a hyperbole, at least one other source makes mention of a hundred coffeehouses, which is indicative of their great, if not exact, number. As the reconstructed plan shows, the coffeehouses probably extended beyond the limits of Takhtgah, along the eastern side of the Old Maydan.


119. For an insightful discussion of the shrine of Harun-i Vilayat and Takhtgah, see Jalâl al-Dīn Humā’î Shīrāzī Iṣfahānī, Taẕkira (houses for smoking waterpipes) that looked like theaters. See Kaempfer, Die Reisetagebücher, 78.

120. Although kûnkâr was also served in coffeehouses, it appears that the kûnkârkhânâ was shunned by the upper classes. See Matthee, Pursuit, 107–9.


122. Malîhâ, Muzakkîr al-ashâh, 254, 281, 443. It has been shown that the northern suburbs of Isfahan were also subject to development in the seventeenth century. See Emrani, “Role of Gardens,” 134–35. It is possible that this coffeehouse was also located near a khâyâbân, which had become the main element of virtually any urban development throughout Safavid territories.


124. De Bruyn’s observation contradicts the idea that women were less present in public spaces in the late Safavid era, as is sometimes assumed. This assumption is particularly questioned by Matthee, who argues for a more complex and variegated picture of the role and visibility of women in later Safavid society. See Rudí Matthee, “From the Battlefield to the Harem: Did Women’s Exclusion Increase from Early to Late Safavid Times?,” in New Perspectives on Safavid Iran: Empire and Society, ed. Colin P. Mitchell (New York, 2011), 97–120.


127. See Sultan Sîyîd Rîza Khan, Naqsha-yi dâr al-Saltana-yi Isfahân (Tehran, 1363 [1984]).


130. For the transcription of Nasrâbâdî’s poem and a brief description of the Lunban Mosque, see Hunarfar, Ganjîna, 626–30.

131. For an insightful discussion of the shrine of Harun-i Vilayat and Takhtgah, see Jalâl al-Dīn Humâ’î Shīrāzī Iṣfahānī, Taẕkira (houses for smoking waterpipes) that looked like theaters. See Kaempfer, Die Reisetagebücher, 78.


133. See Sultan Sîyîd Rîza Khan, Naqsha-yi dâr al-Saltana-yi Isfahân (Tehran, 1363 [1984]).

134. McNab, Die Reisetagebücher, 115; trans. in Floor, Economy of Safavid Persia, 142.

135. Nasrâbâdî, Taẕkira, 672.

136. Matthee, “Role of Gardens,” 134–35. It has been shown that the northern suburbs of Isfahan were also subject to development in the seventeenth century. See Emrani, “Role of Gardens,” 134–35. It is possible that this coffeehouse was also located near a khâyâbân, which had become the main element of virtually any urban development throughout Safavid territories.

137. Malîhâ, Muzakkîr al-ashâh, 276, 306. In the city of Simnân, for instance, a native poet, ‘Ashiq-i Simnânî, opened a coffeehouse that came to be known by his name. It appears that the poet adopted the coffeehouse culture and brought it back to his hometown after spending several years in Isfahan.

138. Malîhâ, Muzakkîr al-ashâh, 104. This maydân and its adjoining establishments are also mentioned by Kaempfer, who notes that the plaza of Kâshân was bordered by two broad Kaljanhäuser (houses for smoking waterpipes) that looked like theaters. See Kaempfer, Die Reisetagebücher, 78.

139. Bâfqî, Jâmi-i mufîdî, 228, 444, 644.
140. Malīḥā, Muzakkir al-āṣhāb, 81, 266; McChesney, “Anthology of Poets,” 83.
141. It is possible that Safavid coffeehouses served as the model for Mughal ones, too. According to at least one account, in Shahjahanabad, the new Mughal capital, “scattered here and there were coffeehouses where amirs gathered to listen to poetry, engage in light conversation, and watch the passing scene.” Quoted in Stephen P. Blake, Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639–1739 (New York, 1991), 56.
145. Matthee, Pursuit, 164.
146. The proximity of bakery and coffeehouse recalls the coffeehouses at the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan, which were also located near confectionaries. Interestingly, a bakery was also included in the Ishpir Pasha Complex in Aleppo, not far from the coffeehouse.
148. Ibid., 410. A jadval-kash (ruling-maker) was one of the experts involved in the traditional bookmaking craft, along with the scribe, illuminator, illustrator, and binder.
150. This is based on an often-quoted anecdote related in Naṣrābādī, Taẕkira, 56. For an English translation of this passage, see Anthony Welch, Artists for the Shah: Late Sixteenth-century Painting at the Imperial Court of Iran (New Haven, 1976), 186–87.
152. See Hamavi Yazdī, [Risāla], fol. 71b. Hamavi reports that Shah ‘Abbas would always add ginger to his coffee, believing that the “hotness of the ginger” would balance the “coldness” of the coffee. Hamavi too shared this belief, but noted that adding less ginger would be more beneficial.
153. See Muhammad Husayn ‘Aqli Khurasānī Shīrāzī, Makhtzan al-advīyya (Calcutta, 1844; repr. Tehran, 1371 [1992]), 250; Dīkhhdūd, Lughat-nāma, s.v. “taḥt al-qahwā.” In Turkish, breakfast is referred to as kahvaltı (literally, “before coffee”).
154. Medieval sources suggest that storytelling was largely practiced in mosques or along roads and streets. For some of the references in Arabic texts, see Rāsūl Jaʿfarīyān, Qisas-khānān dar tārīkh-i Islām va Irān (Qum, 1378 [1999]), 104. One might also compare the situation in Safavid territories with the prevalent conditions in Central Asia, where the coffeehouse was not known. In contrast to Naṣrabādī, who refers to coffeehouses as the primary operating ground of storytellers, Malīḥā makes mention of Rigistan Square in Samarqand and Bukhara as the sites where storytellers performed. See Malīḥā, Muzakkir al-āṣhāb, 72, 31.
156. Ibid., 207.
157. See Awḥadī, Taẕkira-yi ʿarafūt al-ʿāshīqīn, 42646, where the author mentions a certain Mawłāna ‘Alī Suratkhwānī, who told stories in “the Maydan of Isfahan” using figural images (sūratkhwānī). Such performers may have become active in coffeehouses as well, considering the fact that Awḥadī’s observations date from the period slightly before the rise of coffeehouses. The practice, known by the term pardakhvānī (reciting a historical narrative illustrated on the screen), is well documented in the Qajar period, and the art form that emerged on the basis of this practice became known as naqqāshi-yi qahvakhāna’ī (coffeehouse painting).
158. Awḥadī, Taẕkira-yi ʿarafūt al-ʿāshīqīn, 32047.
159. Praising the sāqī or handsome young artisans of a city was a long-established literary trope and social practice, best exemplified in the Persianate genre of “City Beauties”—i.e., poems describing handsome young boys engaged in different crafts and professions in the city. Known as shahrāshūb or shahrangīz, the genre was especially in vogue in the Mughal, Safavid, and Ottoman realms from the sixteenth century onwards. See J. T. P. de Brujin, EL2, s.v. “Shahrangīz.” For a survey of Persian-language shahrāshūb poems, see Ahmad Gulchin Ma’ānī, Shahrāshūb dar shi’i Fārsī, ed. Parviz Gulchin Ma’ānī (Tehran, 1380 [2001]). For a study of parallel homoerotic practices in Ottoman culture, see Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society (Durham, 2005).
160. The painting bears the date February 14, 1630 (1 rajab 1039). The physiognomy, pose, and garment of the figure closely resemble a slightly earlier painting by Riza dated July 12, 1629 (20 ḍhu’l Qa’da 1038), which also depicts a youth standing holding a tray of coffee cups. See Sheila R. Canby, Rebellious Reformer: The Drawings and Paintings of Riza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan (London, 1996), 158–59. The production of two similar images in a short span of time suggests that Riza or his clients were likely obsessed with the same figure for a while.
161. As noted by Goushegir, “Le café et les cafés en Iran,” 150–51, the coffee pot depicted in Riza’s painting is probably a representation of what Minorsky (Tadhikrat al-mulūk, 68 [English trans.], 51 [Persian text]) refers to as a qarā-aṭfāba (literally “black ewer”). It is mentioned as one of the items put in the care of the official responsible for the royal coffee department (qahvakhāna). The other items included: the coffee container (qahva-dān), coffee roaster (qahva-biryan-kūn), cup (pīyāla), and tray (sīnā). The coffee pot also matches what Kaempfer refers to as the “copper tinned...
jar” used for mixing ground coffee with hot water. See n. 58 above.

162. Indeed, the fine quality of the outfit worn by the figure does not necessarily suggest that this scene derived from a courtly or private assembly. Sources mention that the young servers in coffeehouses wore garments embroidered with gold. See, for instance, Kotov, “Of a Journey to the Kingdom of Persia,” 21.

163. For a study of single-page paintings, see Massumeh Farhad, “Safavid Single-Page Painting, 1629–1666” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1987). In a similar but somehow more schematized painting signed by Muhammad Qasim, the name of an actual likeness is given. See Farhad, “Safavid Single-Page Painting,” 123.

164. Lisa Golombek et al., Persian Pottery in the First Global Age: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Leiden, 2014), 40–41. Also see Yolande Crowe, Persia and China: Safavid Blue and White Ceramics in the Victoria & Albert Museum 1501–1738 (Switzerland: La Borie, and London, 2002), 263. Other new types of medium-sized vessels may have been used not just in private assemblies but also in public coffeehouses, for serving sweets and appetizers to clients.


167. Chardin, Voyages, 468.


169. Tavernier, Six Voyages, 154.


171. See Necipoğlu, “Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces,” 306–12. Among the urban spaces of Safavid Isfahan that were subject to the informal visits of Shah ‘Abbas, the coffeehouses were definitely the most public ones.

172. Habermas uses the concept of “representational publicness” to differentiate between the notion of public in European feudal society of the medieval era and the bourgeois public sphere. See Habermas, Structural Transformation, 5–14.

173. See Babaie, Isfahan and Its Palaces.


176. Kaempfer, Am Hofe, 149.


179. Matthee, Pursuit, 242–43.


181. On the reappearance of the coffeehouse and the development of a public sphere under the Qajar dynasty in the second half of the nineteenth century, see Matthee, Pursuit, chapter 10.

182. Matthee, Pursuit, 159.

183. In his study of Ottoman coffeehouses, Mikhail suggests that “the café was a space that had more in common with the domestic world of the home than it did with the city, its street and its thoroughfares.” Mikhail, “Heart’s Desire,” 148–50. By contrast, the coffeehouses of Isfahan appear to have been enmeshed with the city’s urban life. The phenomenon of the neighborhood café, which was of immense social importance in Istanbul or Cairo, was negligible in Isfahan, where most of the coffeehouses functioned at the city level.

184. Matthee, Pursuit, 165.
The Maltese islands, situated at the crossroads of the central Mediterranean basin between Sicily and the North African coast of Tunisia and Libya, have throughout their history been ruled by diverse foreign powers, ranging from the Romans (ca. 218 B.C.–A.D. 395), the Byzantines (535–869), the Arabs (870–1090), the Normans (1090–1265), the Angevins (1266–82), the Aragonese (1283–1529), the Order of Saint John (1530–1798), the French (1798–1800), and the British (1801–1964). With the notable exception of Malta’s prehistoric temples dating to 5000 B.C., the imposing network of military fortifications and the Renaissance city of Valletta founded by the knights of the Order of Saint John have overshadowed other architectural legacies. In the aftermath of the Great Siege of 1565, the island of Malta, now under the rule of the Order, established itself as a strategic military base and bulwark of Christianity against the westward expansion of the Ottoman Empire. Local historical studies have tended to depict a heroic, predominantly Christian island state that throughout different periods in its history managed to successfully repel incursions by foreign Muslim powers. One unintentional result of this has been that the few local art and architectural forms emanating from non-Christian cultures have been underappreciated and not given the attention they deserve.

The main objective of this paper is to highlight the historical and architectural significance of a unique nineteenth-century Muslim cemetery complex built under the auspices of the Ottoman sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861–76). It is the final culmination of several Muslim cemeteries that were discreetly established on the island in various historical periods. The way in which a Muslim cemetery has been represented from a Western cultural perspective—through Orientalist imagery and the conceptual ideals of Romanticism—will be explored with specific reference to the establishment of this late Ottoman cemetery in a British island colony. However, prior to considering this subject in detail it would be useful to briefly trace the historical backdrop of the Muslim presence on the island.

Muslim cemeteries have been found in Malta since at least the eleventh century. The conquest of the island in A.D. 870, spearheaded by the Aghlabids in Muslim Sicily, would suggest the establishment of Muslim burial sites. Recent historical studies have postulated the theory that initially it was more the case of a violent razzia leading to a virtually depopulated island, rather than a wholesale occupation of Malta during the tenth century. Although Roger the Norman did temporarily conquer the island in 1091, political instability was still the order of the day and the Muslim presence and influence remained widely prevalent. It was not until the year 1224, subsequent to further military expeditions by the Normans from Sicily, that the Latin Christianization of Malta was virtually complete. Architectural remains and artifacts dating from the Arab period are sparse and no notable structures or buildings from this period have survived.

In 1881, archaeological excavations conducted on the site of the Roman Domus, just outside the walls of the settlement of Melite (Mdina), revealed the presence of an extensive eleventh-century Muslim cemetery estimated to have more than 245 graves placed directly over Roman-era floors. The bodies were buried in an east-west orientation, lying on their sides with the heads facing south. Between 1920 and 1925, Sir Themistocles Zammit led further archaeological investigations on a
number of fragmented tombstones made predominantly of local globigerina limestone and prismatic in form. The type of tombstones referred to here are known as *mqabriyyah*, with origins in the Maghreb region of North Africa. The Kufic inscriptions carved into the tombstones were mostly quotations from the Koran, although some record the name of the deceased along with their dates of death.⁴

Some five hundred years later, in 1675, another Muslim cemetery was established along the Strada Croce della Marsa, in the Menqa area and a short distance from Spencer Hill, Blata il-Bajda. That year, Grand Master Nicolo Cotoner granted land to be used as a cemetery to the predominantly Turkish Muslim slave community.⁵ It replaced an earlier one that had been destroyed by the knights when the Floriana line of fortifications was built after 1635. An eighteenth-century map shows the cemetery, designated as the “Cimitere de Turchi,” situated along the “Sciat El Kuabar,” underlying the Kortin headland (fig. 1).⁶ The Muslim cemetery remained in use until 1873, when the main road network leading to Floriana and Valletta was completely re-planned, necessitating the transfer of the cemetery to its present location in Marsa.⁷

On July 12, 1873, the local newspaper, *The Malta Times and United Service Gazette*, published the following short announcement:

A New Mahomedan Cemetery at Malta—we are credibly informed that the local Government has acceded a grant of wasteland on the rise to Casal Luca from the Marsa, in the vicinity of the former Paper Manufactory to the Ottoman Consul General for the formation of a more decent place of sepulture, than has heretofore been appropriated to those dying in Malta, professing the creed of Mahomet. We have also been given to understand that in this concession there is a special reference that the Consul General for the Empire of Morocco and the Regency of Tunis is to have the right of holding a key; but why a like privilege has not been stipulated in the contract in favour of the Consul for Persia, for the subjects of the Shah, is likely to form the subject of official enquiry through the Minister in London.⁸

Even before this formal notice in the local press, negotiations had been underway for quite some time. Correspondence dating to 1865 between Antoine Naoum Duhany, representing the Ottoman consulate, and Victor Houlton, the chief secretary of state, reveals several issues relating to the repair and maintenance of the old cemetery and ambiguities as to the title of ownership.⁹

In a letter dated March 2, 1865 and addressed to the local British governor, Duhany claimed that he “had been authorized by the Government of the Sublime Ottoman Porte to make some repairs in the cemetery destined for the internment of Mussalmans dying in the islands and requesting [sic] that before incurring the expense necessary for effecting those repairs that that [i.e., the Ottoman] Government be recognized as the sole and
exclusive owner of that ground." Almost six months later, the chief secretary of state responded to Duhany, saying, "I am directed to state that on receipt of that communication, His Excellency [the British governor] caused a careful inquiry to be made in to the circumstances connected with the original acquisition as well as the present possession and management of that burial ground." Houlton’s letter sheds light on the establishment of the cemetery and its administration over the years:

The result of that investigation is that the property of that cemetery the ground for which was purchased and paid for by the Government of the knights of St John in 1674 is now vested in the present Government of Malta, that the management of it was in 1842 placed in the hands of the late Mr Antonio Farrugia, the Consul for the Ottoman Porte as well as for the Empire of Morocco and the Regency of Tunis, and that gentleman as it appears from the correspondence as also from an epigraph on the door of the cemetery, caused in that year several repairs to be made in it, by direction and at the expense of the Tunisian government with the consent of the Government of Malta and under such circumstances it is impossible for His Excellency to accede to your request.

The letter also makes reference to previous discussions held between Duhany and Maltese administrators as to how the eventual transfer of the cemetery to another location would be financed. The presumption that the original cemetery was the property of the Ottoman government had led to the expectation that any expense incurred in transferring the cemetery would be borne by the treasury of the local colonial government. Houlton, however, explicitly stated that in light of the inquiry that had established that it was not the Ottoman Porte but the Maltese government that was the sole legitimate owner of the land, this proposition could no longer be entertained. Furthermore, besides ownership rights held by the Maltese government, it was also stated that the Regency of Tunis could potentially make their own claim, having in the past financed extensive repairs to the existing cemetery.

The official contractual agreement relating to the transfer of land and terms regulating the establishment of a new Muslim cemetery was signed on June 11, 1873. The deed was registered by the notary Francesco Saverio Camilleri and signed by Naoum Duhany as the Ottoman consul in Malta and Giovanni Battista Trapani in his capacity as collector of the Department of Land Revenue and Public Works and representative of the governor of Malta. The transfer of the land necessitated the termination of the existing rental lease, with the lessee being compensated by being given full ownership of an adjoining parcel of land fronting the public road. The agreement made it amply clear that the Maltese government could dispose of the land occupied by the old Muslim cemetery as it deemed fit without any other form of compensation being due.

Details of the deed were published in the form of a legal government notice. Attached to the government notice was a block plan signed by the architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia (d. 1907) and bearing the date September 27, 1871 (fig. 2). The plan provides details as to the location of the site, the boundaries of the proposed cemetery, and the basic dimensions of the land allocated. The site designated for the new cemetery is referred to as “Ta Sammat” in Marsa, on the road leading to Luqa and Qormi. The allocated land had a superficial area of 543 square canes (a local unit of measurement, the square cane or qasba kwadra is equivalent to approximately 5.25 square yards), which was precisely double the area of the old cemetery. The designated land had a rectangular configuration, or, more precisely, a double-square plan specifying a width of 113 feet and a depth of 226 feet. It was stipulated that the cemetery was to be separated from the surrounding fields belonging to third parties by means of a continuous open passage referred to as a strada on the plan. This passage was to have a width of 20 feet on three sides, widening to a 30-foot setback from the main public street. It was also stated that a boundary wall was to be erected around the entire open passage, with all expenses for its construction to be borne by the Ottoman sultanate.

The contractual deed stipulated that all Muslims, irrespective of their nationality, could be buried in the new cemetery. Furthermore, it was decreed that the old cemetery had to be vacated within six months from the date of the contract. The bones of all those interred in the cemetery would be removed under the supervision of the police and the direction of the governor’s principal medical officer. The deed also secured the vested rights of the Regent of Tunis, stipulating that once the
new cemetery was completed a key to the complex had to be submitted to Lorenzo Farrugia in his capacity as the Tunisian consul in Malta. A few months prior to the signing of the agreement, the Tunisian consulate had officially requested that the governor ensure that the past rights enjoyed by Tunisian subjects be safeguarded within the context of the new cemetery.17

The dynamics of patronage and the dissemination of neo-Ottoman architecture

As patron of the new Muslim cemetery, Sultan Abdülaziz committed himself to financing the entire project. The choice of the architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia to undertake the design must have been a natural one given the success of his earlier Addolorata Cemetery, coincidentally situated in relative proximity to the site of the Muslim cemetery (figs. 3 and 4).18 The manner by which Galizia was awarded the commission is not clear, but one can assume that he would have been highly recommended to the sultan by the British colonial administrators. The Maltese architect had already proven himself to be highly capable, having designed and completed two major funerary complexes, at Ta’ Braxia and the Addolorata Cemetery. Even more relevant may have been the fact that Emanuele Luigi’s brother, Joseph Galizia, was then the consul for Malta in Constantinople, and his official position and contacts would have been
The local British colonial authorities had been given prior notice of a short visit by the sultan while he was in transit from Messina on his way to Naples and then the port of Toulon. A few weeks before, Mahmud Nedim Pasha, the governor-general of Tripoli (1860–67), had also visited Malta. Mahmud Nedim was a close confidant of Abdülaziz and his trip could have been related to the sultan’s planned stay on the island later that month. The exact program of the sultan’s visit to Malta remains unclear.

Sultan Abdülaziz continued to actively pursue the reform of conservative Ottoman institutions as he navigated the difficult and, at times, treacherous transition from a militant and expansionist imperial state to a modern sovereign nation that cultivated good relations with Western Europe. However, within this political...
context it is relevant to note that Abdüllaziz was a direct beneficiary of the earlier Tanzimat reforms initiated by his brother and predecessor, Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61). Abdüllaziz’s position within the Tanzimat period is representative of the later period, when “modernizing reforms were reconsidered and revised from within a more conservative perspective—hence the emergence of a reviverist trend in Ottoman art and architecture.”

Within the realm of architecture he promoted the concept of a classical revival of traditional Ottoman architectural forms through the formulation of a code of architectural principles. The propagation and dissemination of a neo-Ottoman architectural language in a symbiotic relation with Western European tradition is clearly manifested in ʿUṣūl-i Miʿmār-i ʿOsmānī (Fundamentals of Ottoman Architecture, henceforth abbreviated as ʿUṣūl), or L’architecture ottomane (Istanbul, 1873), which was published by the Ottoman government on the occasion of the 1873 World Exposition in Vienna. The publication sought to elucidate and articulate the principal rules, geometry, and science of Ottoman architecture, within a comprehensive framework laid out “in accordance with the standards of the Beaux-Arts model.” It was intended as an instrument of architectural discourse that propagated the dissemination of a new Ottoman architectural style on par with other eclectic and revival historical styles on the European continent. According to Ahmet Ersoy, one of the main objectives of the ʿUṣūl was to create “a model for contemporary architects who, inspired by prevailing experiments in European eclecticism, were striving to devise a new synthetic idiom for late Ottoman architecture.”

In Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World’s Fairs, Zeynep Çelik describes how the Ottomans actively participated in a number of world’s fairs in the latter half of the century. This, she says, had a major impact on the course of Ottoman architectural history. Léon Parvillée’s Architecture et décoration turques (Paris, 1874), published following the Parisian Exposition universelle of 1867, sought to disseminate theoretical concepts and principles of Ottoman architecture to a wider European audience. The new era in Ottoman architecture has to be viewed within the context of a dual, symbiotic relationship that developed between Ottoman and Western European architectural schools of thought. Çelik identifies Sultan Abdüllaziz as a leading agent of change and modernity in the search for a “neo-Ottoman” architecture that had the capacity to absorb Western influences and meld them with traditional Ottoman architecture.

Sultan Abdüllaziz’s desire to partake in the cultural life of Europe was reflected in the meticulous attention given to the design and construction of the Ottoman pavilions for the 1867 Universal Exposition in Paris....The 1867 pavilions marked a turning point in Ottoman architectural history as the end products of a theoretical study whose terms were defined in Europe. Although the change appears to have been enforced from the outside, it should be understood within the general framework of Westernizing reforms undertaken by the ruling elite....If they heralded a new theoretical viewpoint from which the Ottoman architectural heritage could be assessed and recycled, they also revised European architects’ and architectural critics’ stereotypes of Islamic architecture as a merely sensuous play of decorative devices.

The Paris Exhibition can be regarded as the international launch of a distinctive new Ottoman Islamic architectural style. This wave of Ottoman revivalism found fertile ground within the nineteenth-century architectural scene and was fuelled by strong sentiments of patriotism. Sibel Bozdoğan argues that “some of the orientalized and pseudo-Islamic styles that had been feeding the European imagination in the public spectacle of the great expositions had also made their way to Istanbul.”

During the reign of Sultan Abdüllaziz, various Italian and French architects were invited and commissioned to conduct both theoretical research and architectural work in Istanbul. A number of projects reflected Abdüllaziz’s ambitions of cultivating a neo-Ottoman architectural style that merged traditional Ottoman forms with classical Western European forms. For example, the new Beylerbeyi Palace, which served as the sultan’s summer residence between 1861 and 1865, reconciled French neo-Baroque architecture with traditional Ottoman elements. Other manifestations of the neo-Ottoman style include the Ministry of Defense gatehouse (1867), by the French architect Marie-Auguste Antoine Bourgeois, and the Malta Kiosk (1870) at Yıldız Park, designed by the architect Sarkis Balyan (d. 1899). Balyan’s
Malta kiosk is of particular interest in this context, as it utilized limestone imported directly from the island for the construction of some of its specific architectural elements.36

The project of the new Muslim cemetery in Malta raises a series of challenging issues that are best addressed through a critical assessment of the dynamics of patronage. Several lines of inquiry arise. What was the political significance of this Orientalist project that was primarily intended as an architectural representation of the Ottoman Empire and conceived within a small British colonial island in the Mediterranean at the southernmost edge of Europe? To what degree was this “blatantly exotic Orientalist building on foreign land” dictated and directed by the Ottoman sultanate? How did the project contribute to the “revised meaning and role of Orientalism in Ottoman hands,” particularly in light of the fact that the architect was Maltese? Beyond purely stylistic considerations, how did the project relate to the “various forms of revivalism at the Ottoman centre”?37 The responses to these multifarious lines of inquiry do not conform to one linear discourse or narrative. The Ottoman sultanate, in the “process of positioning itself in relation to European cultural traditions,” perceived this project of a new Muslim cemetery in Malta on various ideological levels.38 The project represented an ideal opportunity to establish a tangible physical presence of “neo-Ottoman culture” on an island whose inhabitants historically associated the Ottomans with the vanquished invaders of the Great Siege of 1565, when under the rule of the Order of St. John, and against all odds, they had managed to repel Sultan Süleyman’s forces. On a symbolic level, the implementation of a grand architectural statement in Malta can be interpreted as a catharsis of this historical episode. At the same time, it was also a way to project an image of a new “coming of age,” an energized and revived Ottoman state that would be viewed on a cultural par with Western European powers, and specifically, in this case, with the British Empire. The other ideological motive was that the establishment of the new Muslim cemetery was being undertaken under the exclusive patronage of the Ottoman sultanate, hence propagating the notion of the Ottoman state’s benevolence and guardianship of Islam in a foreign land that was overwhelmingly Christian and with no substantial Muslim community residing there. Malta was situated along the main trading routes within the Mediterranean; Muslims traveling in the area might stop briefly in Valletta along the island’s Grand Harbour, on their way to Egypt, Constantinople, and Mecca. The majority of Muslims buried in the cemetery had died in conflicts overseas or on mercantile or military vessels, and very few were permanently based in Malta. Even then, the ethnic roots of several of those buried there originated beyond the strict territorial boundaries of the Ottoman state. Thus, the new Muslim cemetery served to position the Ottoman state in Malta as the sole official representative of Muslims within a British colonial outpost in the Mediterranean.

Sultan Abdülaziz’s willingness to engage a Maltese architect in the production of an overtly exotic and Orientalist building is intriguing, since it seemingly “reverses the power dynamics traditionally associated with Orientalism.”39 Within this context one can argue that there were various interlocutors who participated in the process underpinning the project. The influential role played by Naoum Duhany as an Ottoman diplomat and culture broker was not only pivotal in his dealings with the British colonial government but would possibly have extended to the management and implementation of the project.40 The other seminal interlocutor was the architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia, who ultimately had the onerous task of translating this neo-Ottoman vision into stone. At this point it would be relevant to trace the development of the architect’s career prior to his being entrusted with the project.

Emanuele Luigi Galizia was one of the most prolific architects active in Malta during the second half of the nineteenth century. For most of his architectural career he was employed by the Government Public Works Department, although at a later stage he also accepted private commissions. In 1846, when he was sixteen years old, he embarked upon an apprenticeship under the British civil engineer William Lamb Arrowsmith, who was then superintendent of public works in Malta.
Following his apprenticeship he quickly rose through the ranks in government service, being appointed architect (perito) no. 1 in 1859, chief architect in December 1860, and, in 1880, superintendent of public works, which post he held until 1888.41 Galizia was involved in work that was wide-ranging and diverse in scope, and included the maintenance of roads, bridges, lighthouses, palaces, hospitals, schools, courts of justice, prisons, markets, granaries, cemeteries, and public buildings.42 In 1888, he was admitted as a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He was very influential in local affairs and for a time even had a seat on the Executive and Legislative Council of the government.

Galizia’s architectural magnum opus was undoubt-
edly the planning of the new Addolorata Cemetery, with its church dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, completed in 1867. This was an extensive extra-mural Catholic cemetery built on a hillside, with the church and entrance buildings designed in a neo-Gothic architectural style.43 This choice of style appears to have gone against the grain, since the vast majority of local Catholic churches were built in a Baroque idiom. Galizia’s choice of neo-Gothic could be interpreted as a conscious decision to be au courant with the historic revivalist styles prevailing at the time. Politically, it could also be considered a subtle move to appease the sentiments of the British
Fig. 6. Postcard dating to ca. 1900, entitled "Mohomedans Cemetery, Malta." Adjoining the Muslim cemetery is the smaller Jewish cemetery. (Postcard: private collection of Conrad Thake)

Fig. 7. Photograph postcard, dating to the 1930s, of the Muslim cemetery, Marsa, Malta. (Photo: private collection of Conrad Thake)
colonial government, which had a closer cultural affinity for the neo-Gothic than the Roman Baroque. Throughout his architectural career, even when designing other Catholic churches, Galizia never succumbed to the local pressures of adopting the popular Baroque style but always preferred a neo-Gothic or neoclassical style. In this respect, Galizia’s architectural philosophy appears to have been relatively insulated from the popular trappings of local Baroque architecture in favor of the historical revivalist styles that prevailed on the European continent. His formative years working under the direction of British civil engineers and architects would have nurtured his interest and preference for these contemporary revivalist styles. Furthermore, his close political and cultural ties with officials of the British colonial government ensured that although Galizia was Maltese, the architect was still very much a product of an Anglo-Maltese culture whose allegiance and loyalty were to the British Crown.

In the absence of a formal architectural education, Galizia was given various opportunities to travel extensively on architectural visits. In 1860 and 1862, in preparation for the Addolorata Cemetery project, he embarked upon a grand architectural tour of Italy, France, and England. His visit to the Cimitière du Nord in Paris proved to be particularly useful as it served as the model for the planning of the Addolorata Cemetery in Malta. However, it does not appear that he travelled further afield before undertaking the commission of the new Muslim cemetery. It was only after the completion of the Muslim cemetery that he visited Cyprus, in 1878 and 1879, to report on the state of the island with a view to establishing a Maltese agricultural settlement there. He also toured Syria and Egypt in 1878, Athens and Constantinople in 1879, and Tunis in 1903. The later visits certainly do indicate that Galizia had a strong cultural interest in the Near East, but there is no evidence that he travelled to these lands prior to embarking upon his designs for the new Muslim cemetery.

Galizia did, however, have access to material depicting architectural views and urban scenes from Istanbul, such as Count Amadeo Preziosi’s 1861 album of chromolithographs titled *Stamboul, Souvenir d’Orient*. Galizia’s copy was personally signed by Preziosi and contained a dedication to the architect. The circulation of this album and of similar etchings, lithographs, and prints encouraged a growing appreciation of architecture in distant lands. Through the Office of Public Works, Galizia likely established an extensive network of overseas contacts, with whom he exchanged prints and related material.

In the absence of the direct experience of visiting a building, illustrated books and engravings were an alternative source of influence. As an employee of the Public Works Department, Galizia may very well have consulted Owen Jones’s monumental two-volume work on the Alhambra Palace, published in 1842 and 1845, as well as his other seminal book, *The Grammar of Ornament*, published in 1856, which contains a profusely detailed
selection of illustrations. These works would have offered Galizia much information on the details and designs on Islamic architecture and decoration, with particular reference to Andalusian architecture of the twelfth to fourteenth century. Galizia was an avid admirer of the Alhambra Palace complex at Granada, as later evidenced by the summer residence named after it that he built for himself in Sliema, a town on the north-east coast of Malta. Moreover, in the 1860s and early 1870s, there are several examples of public buildings, particularly synagogues, that were built on the European continent in a Moorish revival style.

The construction of the new Muslim cemetery proved daunting to Galizia. There was no local historical precedent of Muslim architecture to follow. Furthermore, situated as it was, relatively close to the Addolorata Cemetery, the new Muslim cemetery had to reflect its own distinctive image. For Galizia, the cemetery conjured a highly esoteric, magical, and exotic setting that transcended the physical confines of the traditional local landscape.

In his mind’s eye, the new Muslim cemetery would embody a Romantic fantasy of Orientalist imagery (figs. 5–7). He was certainly firmly inclined to seek a stylistic break from the Baroque and neo-Gothic architectural styles so closely associated with Christianity and Western Europe. By resorting to Orientalism, Galizia could create a mystical and fantastical setting that brought together a wide range of architectural forms, such as horseshoe and ogee arches, bulbous onion domes, and
decorative pencil minarets.53 Orientalist European architecture was at times called “Indo-Mughal,” in reference to the architecture of Far Eastern countries and the Indian subcontinent. The term “Moorish” was also very loosely applied, to imply a hybrid style derived from a generic view of Islamic architecture, based primarily on regions of Spain and North Africa under Muslim influence.54 Both terms have their shortcomings as they are not sensitive to the rich cultural diversity manifested in Islamic architecture.

Galizia, although prolific in terms of his architectural output, did not indulge in writing about his design concepts and philosophies. If we keep in mind that he was an anglophile architect in the service of the British colonial government, the most obvious architectural sources of inspiration were likely to be the seventeenth-century Taj Mahal in Agra, India, and John Nash’s design for the Prince Regent’s Royal Pavilion at the seaside resort of Brighton (1815–23).55 The Taj Mahal is widely recognized as the finest embodiment of Indo-Mughal architecture and it was perceived as combining elements from Persian, Turkish, and Indian architectural styles.56 The way in which the complex incorporates a mausoleum within the setting of an Islamic quadripartite garden must have been particularly appealing to him. Furthermore, one can safely assume that Galizia had ready access to visual images of the Taj Mahal, such as etchings, lithographs, and printed media.

On a conceptual level, Galizia was also inspired to pursue the imagery of a walled-in paradisiacal garden. Traditionally, an Islamic garden is a place of rest and meditation, and a reminder of paradise. Furthermore, the giardino segreto or walled-in garden, enclosed and bounded by high masonry walls and set off from the public surroundings, is widely prevalent in the Mediterranean region. With no distracting, external sensory stimuli, it provided an ambience that was conducive to personal introspection and meditation. These qualities are equally appropriate for a cemetery.

**REALIZING THE VISION: THE NEW MUSLIM CEMETERY**

Construction on the new Muslim cemetery project started in earnest in March 1873, a month after the formal transfer of the land. A detailed series of correspondence reveals how the collector of land revenue and public works, G. B. Trapani, and the chief secretary to government, Victor Houlton, agreed upon all the financial aspects related to the land transfer, after which work must have proceeded at a brisk pace: in September 1873, the Ottoman consul Naoum Duhany requested permission from the local authorities to construct an iron railing that would physically separate the cemetery from the public street.57 Permission was granted on condition that all expenses were to be borne by the Ottoman sultanate and that the enclosed open space would remain the property of the local colonial government. A plan
Fig. 12. Upper part of main entrance pavilion of the Muslim cemetery. (Photo: Conrad Thake)

Fig. 13. Details of stonework on the upper part of the main entrance pavilion of the Muslim cemetery. (Photo: Conrad Thake)
was approved showing the precise location and alignment of the aforementioned iron railing (fig. 8). The entire project was completed by 1874, in less than two years.

Galizia’s plan for the Muslim cemetery at Marsa is based on a well-articulated geometrical design in which the two main physical structures are placed along the central axis at the front and back. The main entrance is the dominant architectural element of the front elevation (fig. 9). Access to the cemetery is through a grand horseshoe-arched doorway flanked by columns and surrounded by multiple decorative stone carvings (fig. 10). Centered over the main portal was the ṭughrā (calligraphic monogram) of Sultan Abdülaziz Khan and the date of the cemetery’s construction, 1290 (1874). At each corner of the square-plan kiosk are rounded pilasters that project beyond the decorative stone parapet balcony and emerge as round minaret-like pencil-shaped towers (fig. 11). Unlike the minarets found in mosques, these are solid and purely decorative. Overlying the entrance is a smaller superstructure capped by an onion-shaped dome terminating with the crescent moon as the insignia of the Ottoman sultanate (figs. 12 and 13). At each corner of the rectangular enclosure of the cemetery is an imposing decorative minaret-like tower (figs. 14–16). A combined triple-window screen with intricate arabesque stone relief flanks each side of the entrance kiosk along the front boundary wall (fig. 17). The highly scenographic frontage of the cemetery works its way to a climax at the central entrance, where the crowning bul-
bous dome looms over the four decorative pinnacles. Photographs taken when the cemetery was completed reveal how impressive the overall appearance was. Today, overgrown trees within the complex, along with new building developments in the background, have diminished the dramatic impact of the cemetery’s skyline and detract from the clear articulation of architectural forms as originally expressed. The cemetery fronts a busy thoroughfare and faces the disused Marsa race track, which further diminishes the impression it now makes on an observer.

Once through the entrance, the cemetery is symmetrically divided by a central passageway that leads to the funerary lodge building in the back. The lodge combines two identical rooms at each corner that are connected by a covered arcade (fig. 18). The arcade has a central arched opening, a hybrid of a horseshoe and ogee arch flanked on each side by narrower horseshoe-arched openings (fig. 19). The two identical rooms at opposing ends have rounded corners that project over the roofline, mutating into vertical pinnacles that terminate in the form of a lotus bud. The roofs of both rooms are capped by identical bulbous domes. In addition to the distinctive onion-shaped domes, horseshoe arches, and minaret-like towers, Galizia embellished parts of the wall surface with elaborate stone carvings of geometric forms inspired by nature. The two rooms within the lodge have specific functions: to the east was the preparatory room for burial according to the Muslim rite, and to the west was the prayer room, where prayers were
Fig. 18. Lodge at the rear of the cemetery, ca. 1880. (Photo: courtesy of Francis Galea Naudi)

Fig. 19. The arcade passageway, a central feature of the lodge. (Photo: Conrad Thake)
In addition to the Taj Mahal and Alhambra, another source of inspiration closer to home and in the spirit of British Orientalism is John Nash’s Royal Pavilion at Brighton. However, the eclectic combination of architectural elements and motifs adopted by Galizia is, in effect, a hybrid of Indo-Muslim and Moorish architecture. Architectural features such as the treatment of the main entrance pavilion, with its cusp-rounded arches flanked by columns, recall elements of Muslim architecture identifiable with the Maghreb region, particularly the Great Mosque at Kairouan and, later, the Alhambra palace complex. These were fused with a few select classical Ottoman elements, mainly in the form of pencil-shaped, multi-galleried minarets and bulbous domes crowned with crescents, which give the cemetery complex its variegated skyline. The propagation of a “neo-Ottoman” architectural style that combined “an eclectic array of Ottoman, Orientalist, and Gothic elements” was avidly promoted by Abdülaziz, both on a theoretical level, as in the Uṣûl, and in architectural projects in Istanbul such as the Sultan’s seaside palace at Çırağan.

Fig. 20. Marble plaque with decorative stone surround set within the end wall of the lodge, commemorating the foundation of the Muslim cemetery by the Ottoman sultan Abdülaziz and the Maltese architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia. (Photo: Conrad Thake)
The Çırağan Palace went beyond this combination of Ottoman and Western classical styles, even incorporating an overlay of Moorish elements. The variegated skyline of minaret towers and bulbous domes, together with the intricate jali screens of window openings and arabesque surface decoration, all contributes to the creation of a flamboyant building. The intricate geometric surface of incised stonework has a razor-like precision and, combined with multi-foil horseshoe-arches, muqarnas, and filigree-like arabesques, is very much indebted to the Alhambra Palace at Granada. The bulbous onion domes and slender minarets can be interpreted as an additional architectural overlay that is overtly Ottoman in terms of representation.

The Neapolitan painter Girolamo Gianni (d. 1895) was commissioned to prepare two drawings and an oil painting of the new Muslim cemetery. Gianni had first visited Malta in 1867 to evaluate the local art market. Shortly after his visit, he established a bottega on the island, selling small souvenir paintings to visitors and undertaking commissioned works of art. He mainly produced topographically accurate landscapes, streetscapes, and seascapes. Besides depicting scenic views of his hometown, Naples, and Malta, Gianni occasionally ventured further afield and painted views of cities in the Orient. In Panoramic View of Constantinople, from Beyazit, signed and dated 1868, the artist depicts a spectacular topographical view of most of Constantinople, highlighting its most iconic landmarks—the Süleymaniye Mosque, the Topkapi Palace, and the

Fig. 21. Girolamo Gianni, “Martyrs’ Cemetery in Malta,” 1874. Oil painting. Istanbul, Harbiye Military Museum. (Photo: courtesy of the Harbiye Military Museum)
Figs. 22 and 23. Drawings (22.9 cm × 35.5 cm) of the Muslim cemetery by the Neapolitan artist Girolamo Gianni (1837–95). (Drawings: courtesy of Francis Galea Naudi)
Hagia Sophia. The two drawings of the Muslim cemetery in Malta are signed and dated 1875. Although they depict a high level of architectural detail, they appear to have been preparatory studies for the oil painting titled *Martyrs' Cemetery in Malta*, which now forms part of the fine arts collection of the Harbiye Military Museum in Istanbul (fig. 21).

In the first pencil drawing, an external frontal view of the cemetery (fig. 22), two persons in traditional Arab attire are seen walking towards the entrance along the uneven dirt road leading to the cemetery. To the right one sees a horse-drawn carriage with a seated lady along the graveyard fence. The second drawing highlights the prayer lodge behind the cemetery (fig. 23). The façade of the lodge is recorded in its minutest architectural detail. A man and woman in traditional Middle Eastern attire walk along the central passage way towards the lodge, while another couple is situated at the top right-hand corner, the figure on the left with arm outstretched seemingly extolling the architectural virtues of the building. The foreground depicts a grave in the process of being dug, while other covered graves have low headstones capped by turbans and the fez. Vegetation in the cemetery is sparse except for a row of exotic...
though it has been suggested that the ceremony may have taken place during the sultan’s brief visit to Malta in June 1867. Galizia also visited Tunis, in the summer of 1903, where he was one of the recipients of an honor bestowed probably by the Bey of Tunis. Contemporary photographs show Galizia and others dressed in formal attire, in the presence of the Bey (figs. 25 and 26). It is very unlikely, however, that he received the Mecidiye honor as late as 1903, as more than twenty-five years would have elapsed since the completion of the Muslim cemetery. This scenario is even more improbable when one considers the changing political situation. The Bey of Tunis, who was historically a vassal of the Ottoman Empire, only acted in this capacity until 1881, when the Ottoman era in Tunisia came to an end and the country became a French protectorate. Given the Muslim cemetery’s secondary historic connections with the Re-

Fig. 26. Photograph of dignitaries standing on the external staircase of the residence of the British consul-general at La Marsa, Tunis, July 1903. Galizia is standing halfway up the staircase, wearing a black top hat. (Photo: courtesy of Francis Galea Naudi)

palm trees neatly planted along one of the boundary walls of the cemetery. It appears that these two drawings were commissioned shortly after the cemetery was completed and the viewpoints in both maximize the architectural merits of the complex. It is quite possible that these drawings were commissioned by Galizia himself, to be forwarded as lithographs to the sultan.

The Ottoman sultan bestowed on Galizia the Order of the Mecidiye (Mecidiye Nişanı) (fourth class) (fig. 24). When this honor was conferred is still unclear,
gency of Tunis (mentioned earlier), it could well be that the Bey of Tunis bestowed upon Galizia another honor distinct from that of the Order of Meşidiye. 71

Galizia also acquired an unusual gift, a small wooden box with a glass cover containing the mummified hand of a young female, allegedly that of an ancient Egyptian princess (fig. 27). 72 The donation of such exotic (and morbid) gifts by influential patrons in recognition of services well rendered was popular during the late nineteenth century. Nevertheless, various superstitions and myths alluding to mystical spells emanating from these artifacts are purely the product of nineteenth-century Western literary sources, fuelled by cultural misrepresentations of the Orient. 73

THE OTTOMAN CEMETERY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The cemetery was repaired and restored between March 1919 and October 1920, on the initiative of Kuşcubaşı Eşref Bey, one of the Ottoman officers interned by the British in Malta after the end of the First World War. 74 A monument was erected by him to commemorate all the Ottoman soldiers who had died in Malta as prisoners of war during the First World War and were buried in the cemetery, 75 their names inscribed on the marble plaques of the octagonal base (fig. 28). 76 The restoration was undertaken after the 1918 Armistice of Mudros, at a time when several Turkish nationalists, 77 including five parliamentary deputies, had been exiled by the British authorities to Malta. 78 Most of these were leading political figures, high-ranking soldiers and intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire, such as Ziya Gökalp (d. 1924), an eminent sociologist, writer, poet, and intellectual of the nationalist movement, whose personal memoirs relating to his detention in Malta were recorded in Limni ve Malta Mektupları, published after his death. 79 In the absence of a mosque, the detainees were permitted to attend Friday prayers at the new Muslim cemetery. 80

Following the abolition of the sultanate and his expulsion from Constantinople, the last Ottoman sultan, Mehmed VI (r. 1918–22), briefly stayed in Malta in 1922 before proceeding to Mecca and eventually taking up residence in San Remo. 81 He regularly visited a garden along the fortifications of Valletta that is known to this day as Ġnien is-Sultan (Sultan’s Garden). In March 1928, Chevalier F. K. Gollcher, in his capacity as the Turkish general consul, visited the cemetery and noted that there were 103 unidentified Muslims buried there. He made specific reference to the burial sites of twenty-three Muslims, mainly Moroccans, who had perished in the sinking of the passenger ship SS Sardinia, just off the Grand Harbour, in November 1908. 82 Also buried at the cemetery were at least nine soldiers belonging to the 2nd Regiment of the Algerian Infantry who perished at sea on September 22, 1939, at the onset of the Second World War. The Muslims buried in the cemetery came from Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Somalia, and Turkey, as well as the more distant lands of Burma, India, Indonesia, and French Polynesia. They were mostly members of the military corps and navy personnel, or prisoners of war who died while detained in Malta. The cemetery continued to be used for burials of Muslims until the establishment, in 2007, of a new cemetery, officially designated “The Malta Islamic Cemetery,” on a parcel of land in Corradino, adjoining the modern mosque and Islamic center that were built in the 1970s. Before the mosque was built, the Ottoman cemetery was also used for weekly Friday prayers. 83

Fig. 28. Monument erected in 1919–20 on the initiative of Kuşcubaşı Eşref Bey, Commander of the Muslim Warriors in Malta, to commemorate all those buried in the cemetery who died in World War I. (Photo: Conrad Thake)
ORIENTALIST ARCHITECTURE IN MALTA

Galizia’s Muslim cemetery was the first architectural manifestation in Malta of the exotic Orientalist style. His consummate skill in borrowing and assimilating traditional elements from both Andalusian and Ottoman architecture produced a distinctive representation of Islam and the Orient. To the Maltese, whose collective historical memory was dominated by the Ottomans’ repeated attacks on the island in the name of Islam, the cemetery was a solitary nineteenth-century symbol of neo-Ottoman and Muslim resurgence.

To date, no records have been found that provide us with the names of the masons and stone carvers who worked on the cemetery’s construction. The many decorative carvings in local globigerina stone on the various building components are testimony to the exquisite-ness of local craftsmanship. There is no reason to believe that this could have been the work of foreign builders, as local craftsmanship in stone was of the highest level, and exalted and marketed abroad. A decade later, at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London in 1886, Galizia, in his official capacity as superintendent of public works, was appointed chairman of the Maltese exhibition committee. The entrance to the Maltese Pavilion was specially constructed of local limestone and carved by local artisans working under Galizia’s supervision. The stone blocks of the gateway were individually numbered, crated, and shipped to England. On exhibit in the Maltese Pavilion were the traditional crafts of stoneware, lace, and jewelry, and Galizia arranged a varied display of local craftsmen’s stone carvings, including decorative stone balustrades, capitals, columns, and finials, in order to promote Maltese masonry and increase exports to Britain and the Continent (fig. 29).
A few years after the Muslim cemetery was completed, Galizia constructed a series of three terraced houses in the Orientalist Indo-Mughal style. Built between 1876 and 1878 and named Alcazar, Pax, and Alhambra, they were situated on Rudolph Street in Sliema, in what was then a rural countryside setting commanding scenic views over Marsamxett Harbour (fig. 30). The Alhambra was designed as his own family summer residence, and the ornate decorative treatment of the façade is directly indebted to the Ottoman Muslim cemetery. Oriental-style architecture in Malta never quite established itself. It was perceived as a hybrid and alien style exclusively associated with the British affluent classes and having no affinity with the local artistic milieu, which favored the Baroque and neoclassical styles. Galizia's trio of houses in Sliema would mark the definitive end of the short-lived Oriental style in Malta.

The contemporary writer and artist T. M. P. Duggan has described Galizia's cemetery as “the Ottoman Taj Mahal.” It is “the least known and certainly today the most important surviving nineteenth-century Ottoman building to have been built beyond the borders of the Ottoman Sultanate, in the new Ottoman Islamic style. This building is an architectural statement of great beauty, and also of boldness and authority.” Duggan argues that this new Ottoman style was directly related to the “increasing stress laid by Ottoman rulers in the second half of the nineteenth century on their Caliphal title, stressing their leadership of the Sunni Muslim community worldwide, and thus, through the employment of this architectural style ... their international commitment to the wider Islamic community.” This statement assumes even greater political significance when one considers that Abdülaziz's new Muslim cemetery was built in Malta, a British colony and a bulwark of British imperial power along the main sea trade routes in the Mediterranean. The cemetery represented an alternative set of values and beliefs in sharp contraposition to the architectural imagery associated with the British colonial authorities in Malta. This manifestation of Ottoman revivalism can be interpreted as the fulfillment of “an aspiration to claim a place for Ottoman architecture among the ‘modern styles’ or revivalisms of the nineteenth century.” Galizia’s new Muslim cemetery was intended as an idealized representation of the Orient and Islam in Malta. In the words of Zeynep Çelik, a “generic domed Ottoman mosque with pencil minarets” encompasses a wider vision whereby “indeed the power
of this image is such that it represents not only Turkey but the entire world of Islam. Ultimately, it was an architectural microcosm of the Islamic world as envisioned and perceived by a talented architect working in relative isolation in Malta, a small British colonial island at the southernmost boundary of Western Europe.

This case study highlights the intricate cross-cultural networks and dynamics of patronage that characterize Orientalism in a peripheral location far removed from the traditional center from which it emanated. The narrative of Galizia’s cemetery demonstrates that Orientalism was not a closed and binary system, but rather a permeable and open-ended paradigm of artistic representation.

Department History of Art, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta

NOTES

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2. The academic debate on the local state of affairs in Malta during the Arab period in the late ninth to eleventh century has been highly charged, with two entrenched diametrically-opposed positions being postulated. Academic writings on this controversial debate have intensified during the past decade. Some of the more seminal contributions are: Charles Dalli, “Medieval Island Societies: Reassessing Insulation in a Central Mediterranean Context,” Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean 10 (1998): 73–82; and Godfrey Wettinger, “Malta in the High Middle Ages,” Melita Historica 15, 4 (2011): 367–90.
4. Cardona, “Saracenic Cemetery,” 83–85, as cited in Depasquale and Cardona, Domus Romana, 5. Ornamentation of the corpse in Islamic burial is very rare. During the excavations of the Islamic cemetery, the only significant possession that was discovered was a solid silver ring with the Kufic inscription Rabbi Allāh Wahid (God alone is my Lord), an invocation derived from the Koran. Sir Themistocles Zammit, who directed the excavations in 1920–25, recorded the following entry in his field notes: “a silver ring was found on the second finger of the right hand of the skeleton laid in a well-made grave. The ring is plain with a broad face on which an inscription in Kufic characters is cut.” Zammit’s archaeological field notebook no. 6, 1921/24, 21, National Archives of Malta.
5. Recent roadwork excavations in Marsa have revealed the remains of the Muslim cemetery dating back to 1675, confirming the existence of a Turkish slave cemetery in the area. The human remains are oriented southeastward, facing Mecca. As is customary in a Muslim burial place, those laid to rest appear to have been buried with no accompanying relics or artifacts. An alternative hypothesis has been advanced that the remains could be part of an ad-hoc cemetery established by the Ottomans during the Great Siege of 1565 near their base camp in Marsa. However, archaeologists working on the excavation have deemed this highly unlikely, since the orderly arrangement and careful spacing of the remains were not characteristic of a war camp cemetery. See the report by Bertrand Borg, “Workmen Discover a Muslim Cemetery,” in The Times of Malta, February 11, 2012.
6. Map as per pl. 72, reproduced in Godfrey Wettinger, Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo, ca. 1000–1812 (Malta: Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002), 444. Also, “Petition to the Grand Master of the Cadi and the Chief-roker of the Capitana and All the Slaves of the Order,” and decree of the Grandmaster’s auditor, A.O.M 484, fol. 267v, cited in Wettinger, Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo, 444n19. File 121, “Cemeteries in the Valletta District” (drawing 1b, Chief Draftsman Office [CDO], Public Works Department, Floriana), cited in Mario Borg, “The Addolorata Cemetery: A Study of a Select Number of Funerary Chapels of the Late Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century” (BA [Hons.] thesis, Department of History of Art, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta, 1998). Although slavery in Malta was abolished with Napoleon’s arrival in 1800, the cemetery continued to be used as a Muslim burial place until
The Malta Times and United Service Gazette, July 12, 1873, p. 2.

In the contractual deed for the new Muslim cemetery Antonio Naoum Duhany is referred to as the son of the late Michele Duhany from Constantinople. He was appointed Ottoman consul to Malta in October 1863. For biographical references to some members of the Duhany (contemporary spelling) family, see Suzan Said Naoum Duhany, *Veilles gens, vieilles demeures: Topographie sociale de Beyoğlu au XIXème siècle* (Istanbul: Éditions du Touring et automobile club de Turquié, 1947). The entry for the Ottoman consul for the British colony of Malta is listed as “Malte—Naoum Duhany-effendi,” in *Almanach de Gotha, Annuaire diplomatique et statistique pour l’année 1867*, 595.

CSG 04/37, 1865–66, no. 2206, letter dated August 30, 1865, from Victor Houlton, chief secretary of state, to Naoum Duhany, Ottoman consul. National Archives of Malta, Rabat, Malta. Ibid.

The tripartite arrangement of this diplomatic post could be explained vis-à-vis the limited financial and human resources of a small island state such as Malta. The appointed consul combined diplomatic relations with three Muslim states, two in the Maghreb region and one in the East, that together had extensive commercial links with the British island colony. The Regency of Tunisia was until 1881 an autonomous province under the rule of the Ottomans and hence, on a political level it was naturally coupled with the Ottoman Porte. The Empire of Morocco represented a different scenario since during the nineteenth century, under the rule of the Alaouite dynasty, it remained fully independent, until 1912 when, following the Treaty of Fez, Morocco was effectively divided into a French and Spanish protectorate. See Kenneth Perkins, *A History of Modern Tunisia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); C. R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Susan Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).


A full transcript of the contractual deed in Italian was reproduced in Vincenza Grassi, “The Turkish Cemetery at Marsa on Malta Island: Historical Background, Topography and Tombstones Features,” *Studi Magrebini*, n.s., 2 (2004): attachment no. 1, 88–94.

Ibid.

Report of the Chief Secretary General (CSG) on Legal Government Notice (LGO) no. 11271, dated October 16, 1871, National Archives of Malta. The report includes the memorandum, which provides detailed information pertaining to the transfer of the land, land valuations, and rents for different land leases. This memorandum was preparatory work for the eventual execution of a contract dated June 11, 1873. See Deed 573, registered by Notary F. Camilleri, Notarial Archives, Valletta. Ibid. Letter dated April 30, 1873, from Lorenzo Farrugia, Tunisian consul, to Victor Houlton, chief secretary of state, consular no. 2086, n. 462, in Acts of Notary Francesco Savero Camilleri, file no. 74, p. 582. Transcript of letter cited in Grassi, “Turkish Cemetery at Marsa,” 192.

Besides the Muslim cemetery and the Addolorata Cemetery attached to the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows (1867), Galizia also designed the Protestant cemetery at Ta’ Braxia (1855). Other works include the Carmelite Church, Balluta Bay (1871; later demolished and rebuilt according to a different design); the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Mgarr, Gozo (1888); the Bugeja Technical Institute at Hamrun (1880); the Victoria Gate, Valletta (1884); and the trio of Oriental-style residential houses on Rudolph Street, Sliema. Biographical entry in Leonard Mahoney, *5000 Years of Architecture in Malta* (Malta: Valletta Publishing, 1996), 316–17. See also Conrad Thake, “Emanuele Luigi Galizia (1830–1907), Architect of the Romantic Movement,” *The Treasures of Malta* 6, 3 (Summer 2000): 37–42.

Joseph Galizia was in regular correspondence with his architect brother Emanuele Luigi, and periodically indulged his brother's family with small gifts such as Turkish sweets and other delicacies. Personal email communication, dated August 24, 2013, with Robert Galea.

Following his artistic education in Paris, Amadeo Preziosi (d. 1882) permanently moved to Constantinople around 1840–41, establishing his studio in the Pera district. It soon became a popular site for travelers and dignitaries such as Edward VII (then Prince of Wales). Preziosi became one of the most celebrated watercolorists of the nineteenth century, depicting topographical and street scenes of Constantinople and Cairo. He reproduced several of these in the form of chromolithograph albums titled *Stamboul: Recollections of Eastern Life* (Paris, 1858), reedited and printed as *Stamboul, Souvenir d’Orient* (1861) and *Souvenir de Caire* (1862). The contemporary French art critic Victor Champier praised Preziosi, stating that among the painters of the Bosphorus he was “the only one who gave life to the secrets of colour of the skyline of Istanbul.” Briony Llewellyn and Charles Newton, *The People and Places of Constantinople: Watercolours by Amadeo Count Preziosi, 1846–1882* (London, 1985). This is a catalogue of the Preziosi exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The son of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39), Abdülaziz succeeded his brother Abdülmecid I in 1861. He was born in Constantinople and received an Ottoman education, but was a keen admirer of Western European culture. He was interested in literature and was also a composer of classical music. E. Z. Karal, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (Leiden, 1954–2005), s.v. “Abd al’Aziz.”

The sultan's visit to Europe was widely reported in the Western European print media. The local newspaper *The Malta Times and United Service Gazette*, no. 2065, June 15,
1867, reproduced a report on the sultan’s visit to Europe that appeared in the Levant Herald on May 29, 1867. The report stated that the sultan would be traveling on the imperial yacht Sultanieh, and would be accompanied on his voyage from Constantinople to Toulon by, among others, the ironclad frigate Sultan Mahmoud. However, there was no mention in the local media of the sultan’s brief visit to Malta.

23. Consular no. 159, National Archives of Malta: Sultan – Acknowledgement and receipt of telegram Relative to the departure of British Consulate General Constantinople 28 May 1867

Your telegram of the 24th reached me early on the following morning and I immediately communicated its purpose to Her Majesty’s Ambassador who yesterday replied to me that he would take care to inform the Authorities at Malta of anything relative to the Sultan’s movements which it may concern them to know.—It is as yet uncertain I believe on what date the Sultan will embark from this to Marseilles, although it is rumoured in official quarters that His Imperial Majesty intends to leave on the 27th proximo.

I have the honour to be
Sir, your humble servant
With great respect
[signed] Victor Houlton

24. Consular no. 174, D/C 4/6/67 Consul Tripoli, National Archives of Malta. According to the correspondence, the Ottoman steamer Nautilus el Gharb set sail from the port of Tripoli to Malta on June 1, 1867, with Mahmud Pasha, governor-general of the Regency on board, on his way to Constantinople; it was also stated that the pasha intended to spend a few days in Malta. The letter from the Ottoman consul to the chief secretary of state Victor Houlton refers to how the pasha should be received at Constantinople so as best to consolidate the good diplomatic relations that existed between the Ottoman and British authorities. The Levant Herald of July 3, 1867, reported that “Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, formerly Governor of Tripoli in Barbary had been appointed a member of the Grand Council of Justice.” This announcement was also cited in The Malta Times and United Service Gazette of July 11, 1867.

25. Sultan Abdülaziz established a council of state, as well as a university open to both Muslims and Christians, and published the first installment of a code of civil law. However, these initiatives met strong opposition from conservative Turks. One of his most notable achievements was the modernization of the Ottoman navy: “by 1875, the navy comprised 21 battleships and 173 warships, making it the third largest in the world after the British and French fleets.”; http://www.paralumun.com/ottomanmil.htm. Although he continued with his policies to modernize Turkey, the later years of his reign were marked by political turmoil. The sultan’s unbridled expenditures and considerable debts, together with the crop failure of 1873, generated considerable public dissent. Abdülaziz was deposed on May 30, 1876 in a coup instigated by his ministers. His death a few days later at Feriye palace, Istanbul, was attributed to suicide. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Abdu laziz-Ottoman-sultan, accessed on July, 16, 2016. For an analysis of economic and political developments of the late Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century, see Karen Barkey, Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); M. Sükri Hanoğlu, A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008).

26. The word “Tanzimat” means “reordering.” It relates to the period of intense modernization in the Ottoman Empire that was officially inaugurated by the declaration of the Imperial Rescript in the Rose Chamber in 1839. The period is generally considered to have ended with the enthronement of Abdülhamid II and the adoption of the short-lived Ottoman constitution of 1876.” Ahmet Ersoy, “Architecture and the Search for Ottoman Origins in the Tanzimat Period,” in “Historiography and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the ‘Lands of Rum,’” ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Gülru Necipoğlu, special issue, Muqarnas 24 (2007): 134n1.

For a critical overview and analysis of the text, see Ahmet Ersoy, "On the Sources of the ‘Ottoman Renaissance’: Architectural Revival and Its Discourse during the Abdülaziz Era (1861–76)" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2000).


During his historic tour of France and Britain in 1867, Sultan Abdülaziz visited the Ottoman section of the Parisian Exposition universelle, where ceramics, textiles, and buildings in the new Ottoman Islamic style were attracting crowds. The buildings were designed by Léon Parvillée, who had worked on the restoration of the buildings of Bursa following the earthquake of 1855, and reinterpreted
the Green Mosque of Bursa (built 1415–19) and the Çinili Köşk (Tiled Kiosk) of Istanbul (1472), with additional detailing from other parts of the Islamic world, adding a touch of the Alhambra to the pavilions. See St. Laurent, "Léon Parvillée: His Role as Restorer," 247–82.

32. Sibel Bozdogan, Modernism and Nation Building (Seattle, 2001), 27. The first chapter, titled "The Legacy of the Ottoman Revivalism," highlights various approaches in the architectural production of the time and argues that this movement heralded the advent of modernism.

33. The Italian architect Giovanni Battista Barborini and his French assistant Léon Parvillée were in charge of the Ottoman Pavilion in the Parisian Exposition universelle of 1867. See "The Paris Exhibition of 1867," in The Levant Herald, January 10, 1867; and Victor Marie de Launay, Pietro Montani, et al., Uşūl-i Miʿmār-i ʿOğlānī (İstanbul, 1873).

34. The currents of westernization in Ottoman culture as manifested in architectural developments can be traced to the eighteenth century. For example, the Ottoman Baroque is one aspect of architectural and material culture that demonstrated the Ottoman response to Western Europe. Ali Uzay Peker, "Western Influences on the Ottoman Empire and Occidentalism in the Architecture of Istanbul," Eighteenth-Century Life 26, 3 (Fall 2002): 139–63. See also Ayşe Nasir, "Concept of Westernization and the Role of Foreign Architects in 19th Century Ottoman Architecture": http://www.levantineheritage.com/note68.htm, accessed February 26, 2015. See also Maurizio Boriani, "Between Westernization and Orientalism: Italian Architects and Restorers in Istanbul from the 19th Century to the Beginning of the 20th" in Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki, 57, 3 (2012): 5–35.

35. Çelik, Displaying the Orient, 139–44.

36. Michael Ellul, "Malta Limestone Goes to Europe: Use of Malta Stone outside Malta," in 60th Anniversary of The Malta Historical Society: A Commemoration (Malta: The Malta Historical Society, 2010), 377. Ellul cites personal correspondence with Çelik Gülersoy (d. 2003) stating that "the appendage attached to this pavilion is due to the use of stone from Malta in its entrance lobby and the low parapet wall which surrounds the building at its highest level." See also Çelik Gülersoy, Yıldız Parkı ve Malta Köşkü = Yıldız Parc and Malta Pavilion (İstanbul: TİOK Yayınları, 1983). The history of the construction of the Malta Kiosk requires further investigation and analysis with a view to elucidating the cross-cultural links between Malta under British colonial rule and the Ottoman sultanate during the late nineteenth century.

37. I am indebted to the anonymous reviewer of this paper for posing these important questions.


39. Regarding this cultural reversal in Orientalist discourse, see the introductory essay in ibid., 1–18.

40. Official correspondence in the local archives relates only to Duhany’s role in the transfer of land and the contract for the establishment and ownership of the new cemetery. I have found no local documents that shed light on Duhany’s role, if any, in consultations with the architect or in management of the project. Research in the Ottoman archives could reveal other aspects of Duhany’s involvement, if any, in the project.

41. The main milestones in E. L. Galizia’s architectural career, along with a comprehensive listing of all the projects and buildings he was involved in between 1859 and 1886, are recorded in his own handwritten application to be admitted as a fellow to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The application was signed and submitted by Galizia in June 1887, and approved by the RIBA Council on October 10, 1887; he was formally elected as a fellow on January 23, 1888. See application by E. L. Galizia, in Records of the Royal Institute of British Architects (London, 1888). Ibid.


43. See n. 41 above regarding the RIBA application.


45. The correspondence between Galizia and the London-based architect Arthur S. Flower (d. 1936) is particularly revealing. In a letter dated December 20, 1894, Flower mentions having sent Galizia “a little etching of Old Temple Bar (the last of the London Gates; removed in 1878), as it may interest you...” Galizia, in a letter dated December 28, 1894, reciprocated by sending Flower “a small memento of the gate of Fort Manoel.” I am indebted to Francis Galea Naudi for permitting me to view these letters.

50. Notable examples of mid-nineteenth-century synagogues built in Europe in the Moorish Revival style include: the Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest (1854–59); the Cetate Neologue Synagogue in Timișoara, Romania (1864–65); the Zagreb Synagogue (1867), the Great Synagogue of Stockholm (1867–70); the Spanish Synagogue, Prague (1868); the Rumbach Street Synagogue in Budapest (1872); and the Great Synagogue in Chernivtsi (1873). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moorish_revival_architecture#Europe, accessed on December 26, 2015.
51. Information relating to the architectural history of the Muslim cemetery at Marsa is sparse. See Mahoney, *5000 Years of Architecture in Malta*, 236. More detailed information is available in Emily Magro, “The Muslim and Jewish Cemeteries at Marsa” (BA [Hons.] thesis, Department of History of Art, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta, 2004); Konrad Buhagiar, “Romanticism in the 19th Century: A History of Neo-Gothic in Malta” (BE&À [Hons.] thesis, Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, University of Malta, 1982).
57. Letter from Ottoman consul Naoum Duhany, dated September 16, 1872, requesting permission to construct a wall with an iron railing that would separate the cemetery from the road. Permission was granted two days later in a letter signed by G. B. Trapani, collector of land revenue. The iron railing was to be erected on the line colored red and marked AB on a plan attached to the letter. PW 75, 1872–1873, no. 2968, fol. 197v, 198; Gov 2/1/70, July 19, 1873, National Archives of Malta.
59. A translation of the original French text of the inscription on the plaque:

AS THE SUN WILL SET
AND THE STARS WILL FALL,
TOMBS SEALED BY DEATH
WILL BE DISTURBED
AND FROM THIS BED OF DUST
AWAKENED FROM SLEEP
THEY WILL EMERGE RADIANT
THE CHILDREN OF THE FAITH AND OF PRAYER.

IS NOT GOD MIGHTY ENOUGH TO REVIVE THE DEAD?

__________________________
ERECTED IN THE YEAR 1290 FROM THE HEGIRA
DURING THE REIGN OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY
ABDUL- AZIZ-KHAN
EMPEROR OF THE OTTOMANS
NAOUM DUHANY EEFEENDY [sic]
HIS CONSUL GENERAL TO MALTA

__________________________
E. L. GALIZIA ARCHITECT

64. The two drawings are in a local private collection. I am indebted to the architect Prof. Richard England and Mr. Robert Galea for bringing these drawings to my attention. For further information regarding Girolamo Gianni’s career, see Girolamo Gianni in Malta, ed. Giovanni Bonello, exh. cat. (Malta: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 1994).
65. Girolamo Gianni established his studio at 68D, Strada Reale, a prime location situated along the main street of Valletta. By 1872, just as work was about to commence on the new Muslim cemetery, Galizia had already availed himself of Gianni’s professional services. An invoice on the artist’s letterhead and dated October 28, 1872, was issued to Galizia for two landscape paintings, one depicting San Pawl tat-Targa and the other St. Paul’s Bay, and several frames. I am grateful to Robert Galea for bringing this to my attention and providing me with a digital copy of the invoice.
66. The oil painting, 206 cm × 72 cm, is signed by Girolamo Gianni and dated 1868. Part of an auction at Sotheby’s in London (“19th-Century European Paintings: Including German, Austrian and Central European Paintings, the Orientalist Sale and Spanish Painting,” held on May 18, 2011), it sold for £563,250.

67. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer of this paper for alerting me to the existence of this painting in the collection of the Harbiye Military Museum, Istanbul. The oil painting Turkish Martyrs’ Cemetery in Malta was recently displayed in the exhibition “1001 Faces of Orientalism,” held April 25, 2013, through August 11, 2013, at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul. The oval-shaped painting, signed by Girolamo Gianni and dated 1874, does not depict a fence separating the front garden from the main street. It is possible that the fence had not yet been built in 1874. The fence does, however, appear in a very similar painting, also signed by Gianni and dated 1875, in a local private collection. The 1875 painting is reproduced in Bonello, Girolamo Gianni in Malta, catalogue entry no. 56, p. 66.

68. In Girolamo Gianni’s drawing one notes the absence of the small water fountain in front of the prayer lodge. Most probably the fountain was not part of Galizia’s original project and was only introduced during the renovation works undertaken by Kuşçubaşı Eşref Bey in 1919–20.

69. This military and knightly order of the Ottoman Empire, instituted in 1851, was awarded in five classes, with the first (and highest) through fourth designated as “gold,” and the fifth (and lowest) as “silver.” This honor was often conferred on non-Turkish nationals, usually officers, but also, in a lower class, a few enlisted men. For example, Sultan Abdülmecid I thus recognized members of the British and French armies, and the British navy, for their distinguished service to the empire during the Crimean War; during World War I, the Order of the Mecidiye was awarded to a number of German and Austrian officers.

The design of the order is such that on the obverse of the star is Sultan Abdülmecid’s royal cipher, surrounded by an inscription on a gold-bordered circle of red enamel; this is all on a star of seven triple quills with small crescents and five-pointed stars between them, suspended from a red enameled crescent and star suspender with green enameled edges. Edhem Eldem, Pride and Privilege: A History of Ottoman Orders, Medals and Decorations (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2004). Part of the Ottoman inscription over the marble plaque within the prayer lodge states the following: Eşref Bey tarafından / mescidiñ taʿmīri / 1335 (Restoration of the mosque by Eşref Bey, 1335 [=1919–20].” Ambros, “Selected Inscriptions from the Islamic Cemetery at Marsa, Malta,” 10.

70. In one notorious incident, Major Haj Ali İsa of the Ottoman army, while detained as a prisoner of war at the Corradino military barracks, killed a fellow detainee, Dr. Sadi Necdet Efendi from Istanbul. The murder appears to have been motivated by old animosities arising from their different political affiliations. The victim, Dr. Sadi, belonged to the Young Turk Party, while Major İsa belonged to the more conservative political faction. Major İsa, aged forty, was sentenced to death on April 16, 1917, and executed on April 24, 1917. Both are buried in the Muslim cemetery.

71. The Muslim cemetery is located in an area heavily congested with vehicular traffic, and the resulting pollution, as well as periodic damage caused by the elements (mainly flooding and even once lightning), has adversely affected the cemetery’s physical condition. The cemetery has been restored several times. In 1975, the local architectural firm England & England was commissioned by the Turkish government to oversee restoration work for a total outlay of LM 5,000 (Maltese pounds). See The Times of Malta, April 13, 1975, 9. Between 1995 and 1998, a concrete ramp, designed by the architect Stephen Mangion and financed by Turkey’s Garanti Bank, was built at the entrance to the cemetery, in order to minimize the intrusion of rainwater.

Two commemorative plaques, one in Turkish and the other in English, were recently affixed to one of the side walls of the entrance kiosk. The plaque in English reads as follows:

Turkish Military Cemetery
This cemetery was built in 1874 by the architect E. L. Galizia upon instruction of the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Abdülaziz Khan, in memory of the soldiers who were martyred during the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. The cemetery was repaired in the year 1919–1920 by Esref Bey, Commander of the Muslim Warriors in Malta, and the monument was erected by him in order to keep alive the memory of those who died as prisoners of war in Malta during the First World War. May all martyrs’ souls rest in peace.

The exiled Turkish nationalists, including the five parliamentary deputies, were Rauf Orbaş, Esat Paşa, Cemal Paşa, Yakup Şevki Paşa, Kara Vasif, Süleyman Nazif, Fethi Okyar, Ahmet Emin Yalman, and Ali İhsan Paşa. T. M. P. Duggan, “The Ottoman Taj Mahal—an architectural masterpiece in danger,” Hürriyet Daily News, January 26, 2002.

87. Duggan, “Ottoman Taj Mahal.”

88. Bozdoğan, Modernism and Nation Building, 22.

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Chemical Insights into the Function of Four Sphero-Conical Vessels from Medieval Dvin, Armenia 1
Today one of the most popular and iconic monuments of Istanbul, the Sultan Ahmed Mosque had a famously unpromising start. Its young founder, the Ottoman sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17), embarked on the building in the face of considerable opposition from the empire’s religious authorities, for he had won no major victories in war with which to fund or justify the project. Not only did Ahmed choose to ignore his critics, but he pulled no punches in visually asserting his right to build: implanted into the very heart of the Ottoman capital, the mosque, with its six minarets and cascading tiers of domes, was designed as a transformative landmark, and continues to define modern impressions of the city (fig. 1). Though art historians have tended to view the result as overblown, this unbridled aesthetic magnificence must have played a large and deliberate role in quelling the controversy that surrounded the mosque, whose splendor allowed it to emerge from its inauspicious beginnings as a fitting monument to both Islam and the empire.

But it was not only through physical grandeur that Ahmed sought to win over his subjects. As soon as construction began in 1609, the mosque became the focus of an unusually high level of ceremonial activity, hosting numerous events—some singular, some recurring—that propelled the building into the public consciousness and cemented its status as a fruitful addition to Istanbul’s fabric. Among the most remarkable in this festive roster was a lavish ceremony to celebrate the closing of the central dome in June 1617, only two months before the building would be inaugurated. Marked by a grand procession from the Topkapı Palace and the raising of stately tents in the mosque’s courtyard, this ceremony appears to have been a unique experiment in Ottoman history, specifically intended to boost the profile of Ahmed’s endeavor and reassert its legitimacy in preparation for the official opening.

Basic details of the dome-closing ceremony have long been known from contemporary chronicles, but a far fuller and rarer source of information has hitherto escaped notice: an anonymous manuscript of nearly fifty folios written shortly after the event and devoted to its description. As unusual as the occasion itself, this text—the inspiration for the present article—sheds valuable new light on the ceremonial as well as discursive means by which the sultan and his backers strove to vindicate the new mosque. Of particular note is the account’s portrayal of the festivities as a triumph over the infidel, a characterization that suggests that the ceremony itself—with its prominent inclusion of an encampment—was aimed at glossing over Ahmed’s military deficiencies and presenting him in the guise of a victorious holy warrior. Staged against the symbolically charged act of closing the building’s dome, both the ceremony and its textual commemoration were telling responses to the challenge that the sultan had set himself, encapsulating the concerns that underlay his ultimately successful campaign to preserve his memory in stone.

When Sultan Ahmed, still in his teens, resolved to build a new imperial mosque, he must have anticipated the resistance his plans would meet. It had been many years since a sultan had erected such a monument in the capital: the last had been that of Ahmed’s great-great-grandfather,
the mighty Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66), whose prominent hilltop mosque complex was built by the architect Sinan (d. 1588) between 1550 and 1557 (fig. 2). This, the Süleymaniye Mosque, had been preceded by a number of other grand sultanic foundations, but the second half of the sixteenth century witnessed a lull in imperial construction that reflected growing anxieties about the decorousness of such lavish architecture. In a book of advice written in 1581 for Murad III (r. 1574–95), the historian Mustafa ʿĀli (d. 1600) asserts that sultans should refrain from building even charitable or religious institutions if they “have not enriched themselves with the spoils of Holy War and have not become owners of lands through gains of campaigns of the Faith.” The reason for this objection, ʿĀli explains, is that “the Divine Laws do not permit the building of charitable establishments with the means of the public treasury, neither do they allow the foundations of mosques and medreses that are not needed.” Voiced at a time when the Ottoman Empire was not expanding at the rate it had under earlier sultans, such views were further fueled by the effects of a global inflation. Süleyman had more than fulfilled the conditions set forth by Mustafa ʿĀli, but his less impressive successors duly chose not to follow in his architectural footsteps, with the exception of his son, Selim II (r. 1566–74), who used booty gained from his conquest of Cyprus in 1571 to finance the construction of the Selimiye Mosque, designed by Sinan and completed in 1574. Yet although widely regarded as Sinan’s masterpiece, the Selimiye still stopped short of challenging Süleyman’s legacy: it was built in Edirne, the empire’s second city, rather than the capital, in part because Selim, unlike his father, had not personally led his army.

Such restraint evidently held little sway with Ahmed, who was keen to buck the trend by boldly presenting
himself in Süleyman’s image. The comparison was not well deserved, however: far from expanding the empire, Ahmed lost important territories to the Safavids in 1604–5, and was forced in 1606 to concede parity with the Habsburg emperor, who no longer had to pay the annual tribute that had been instituted in Süleyman’s time. Nevertheless—and apparently driven by his well-known piety—the sultan made known his plans to found a mosque worthy of the empire’s heyday. His advisers, perhaps seeking a middle way, initially recommended that he complete the sizeable mosque that his grandmother Safiye Sultan (d. 1618) had started to build in 1598 on the shore of Eminönü, one of the capital’s busiest districts. But Ahmed, who disliked his grandmother intensely, had personally put a stop to her project upon his accession and had no desire to resume it, especially since its enviably conspicuous site was considered by many as having been illegally expropriated. (It would take many years and another queen mother, Turhan Hâdice Sultan [d. 1683], to finish Safiye’s mosque, which was finally opened in 1665 and is now known as the Yeni Cami.)

Preferring to start afresh rather than associate himself with his grandmother’s failed enterprise, the sultan managed to acquire a site that was as prominent as it was licit, buying and demolishing two large sixteenth-century palaces that occupied a choice area of land next to the Hippodrome and opposite the Hagia Sophia. The legality of the site did not, however, settle the questions raised by the construction itself. The grand mufti pointed out that the mosque would be needless in its intended setting, which lacked a large congregation, and the more serious issue of the sultan’s military shortcomings still loomed. In a report dated 1612, Simone Contarini (d. 1633), who had just completed his tenure as Venetian bailo to Istanbul, noted that the mosque was deeply unpopular among those who would have preferred Ahmed to pour his resources into conquering Christian lands. How this controversy played out is described in an account written later in the seventeenth century by the French traveler Guillaume-Joseph Grelot (d. after 1680):

[Though the Mufti, the Mulla’s, the Cheiks, and other Doctors of the Law, laid before [Ahmed] the sin of undertaking...]

Fig. 2. Süleymaniye Complex, from the southwest. (Photo: Reha Günay)
to erect such a costly fabric, since he had never been in any other Combats, than those which are daily to be seen for the exercise of the pages, and divertisement of the Prince, nevertheless he gave little heed to their admonitions, but carried on the work with a vigour answerable to his resolution; and when he had finish’d the Pile, because he had slighted his Chaplains exhortations, call’d it İmânsız Câmi’si [İmânsız Câmi’si], or the Temple of the Incredulous.16

A more complicated picture is painted by the English ambassador Sir Thomas Glover (d. 1625), who, in a dispatch sent in early 1610, links the mosque to a curious ailment of the throat that was weekly bringing the sultan to the verge of choking on his food. Fearing that the condition “happeneth rather by the permission of the Allmightie, then otherwise,” Ahmed [took] himselfe to an extraordinarie devotion, and whollie to have his conversation amongst Sofies [Sufis], and Dervishes, as much to saye, purtytans . . .; and it is reported that this accident is the onlie cause of the buildinge of the sumptuous Meschit.… thinkinge that therby he shall, not onlie obayne salvation of his soule, but that the Allmightie will withdrawe this dreadfull infirmitie from him, beinge therto counselled and assured, by all his above named Sofies, and his cheefe ministers, and inpticuller his Muftie; whoe sayeth to have scene a vision, or a dreame, that unlesse this be performed wth. a good will and harte, without any sparinge of gould or sylver, or any mans laboure, (allsoe with contynuall prayers to theire divill Mahoma, or Mahemet) the Gran Sig’ is like to incurre a verie speedie danger of his life.17

With its claim that Ahmed was being spurred on rather than discouraged, Glover’s account seems to contradict those of other observers, though even his version of events bespeaks an uneasy genesis for the mosque. The circumstances he describes are hardly flattering to the sultan, who acts not from a position of strength, but out of mortal fear in response to the admonishments of his clerics. Moreover, Glover goes on to say that those advising Ahmed, besides promising an end to his illness, also affirmed that construction of the mosque would bring “greate and incredible victories, againste all the Gran Sig:”9 enemies, whersoever he shall please to wage any warre.” In spite of its otherwise idiosyncratic content, then, the dispatch still ties the mosque to the hawkish rhetoric of conquest, and Glover is in broad agreement with other sources that tell us that the project was encouraged only inasmuch as it would oblige Ahmed to pursue a commensurate martial victory.

Attempts to retroactively legitimize the mosque indeed followed, though they came to nothing. Ahmed declared war against the Safavids in 1609, shortly after the mosque’s foundations were laid, but the conflict, which would end in the Safavids’ favor, was still ongoing when he died.18 The sultan’s clerics, meanwhile, urged him to invade Crete so that he might triumph over a Christian enemy, and while he seemed willing, he never undertook the task.19 One might wonder whether Ahmed’s desire to build was motivated in part because of, and not despite, his lack of military promise;20 perhaps he felt a great mosque gracing the capital would prove a meritorious enough legacy by which to compensate for his failure to win new territories.

Sure enough, the mosque was to emerge from its problematic gestation unscathed. If accounts such as Grelot’s reveal that Ahmed’s obstinacy was not forgotten, the monument itself was soon accepted as an integral and apparently uncontroversial fixture of the city: its usual name in the decades following its completion was Yeñi Câmiʿ, “new mosque,” a neutral label that makes no reference to its founder’s transgression.21 Several factors contributed to the ultimately warm reception with which the finished building was greeted. Notwithstanding the project’s many detractors, the sultan was supported in his actions by various sympathetic voices that helped to balance the discourse in his favor. These individuals included two men who would play instrumental roles in the dome-closing ceremony. One was the highly revered Sufi shaykh Mahmud Hüdayi (d. 1628), who, acting as a spiritual adviser to the sultan, pushed for the Cretan campaign without questioning Ahmed’s overall right to build.22 The second of these important backers was the chief harem eunuch Hacı Mustafa Agha (d. 1624), whom Ahmed appointed as superintendent (nâẓır) over the mosque’s construction,23 and who countered the grand mufti’s objections to the site by proposing that new houses be built to boost the population surrounding the mosque.24

Hacı Mustafa’s suggestion is recorded in a chronicle penned by the royal imam Mustafa Saﬁ (d. 1616), another ally to Ahmed.25 Describing the circumstances in which the mosque was conceived, Saﬁ recasts events to
present Ahmed's 1606 treaty with the Habsburgs, which was largely a stalemate, as an unqualified Ottoman victory, and he also lauds the sultan's suppression in 1608 of the Celalis, rebels in Anatolia who were often viewed as subscribing to a Qizilbash—that is Shi‘i—ideology.26 Safi thus lays a religio-legal groundwork for the mosque, and some, at least, seem to have shared his view, as we learn from another of Glover's dispatches, this time written as the monument's foundations were being dug in late 1609:

[T]he Gran Sig. in respecte of his victorie againststhe [Celalı] Rebells in Asia, or in that he hath, contrarie to all mens expectations, soe suddaynlie subdued and whollie rooted them out, hath commaundde to pull downe many goodlie and sumptuous pallaces, belonginge to some of his vizereis, or vizereis sonnes (payinge them well for it) and instead thereof to be builte a verie sumptuous church or Meskite, which shall be bigger then any as yet in Constant:30e and to be named by his name, Sultan Achomat.27

Given the continuing calls for Ahmed to invade Crete, relatively few can have accepted the defeat of the Celalis as a valid pretext to build (and as we have seen, Glover himself would offer a quite different reason for the undertaking in a dispatch written only a few months later). But Safi's extended defense of the mosque preempts further opposition by noting that the grand mufti, while objecting to certain aspects of the project, could cite nothing in religious law to forbid it.28 As well as defending Ahmed's military record, Safi commends the mosque as evidence of the sultan's atypical piety and fondness for good works,29 and he also reaffirms the suitability of the building's location, declaring the Hippodrome to be "a magnet for the people of the world" that would draw enough worshippers to fill "many mosques like Ayasofya."30

Safi's praise for the chosen site is echoed by the author Cafer Efendi in his Risāle-i mi‘māriyye, an architectural treatise centered on the life and career of the chief imperial architect Sedefkar Mehmed Agha (d. 1617), who designed the Sultan Ahmed.31 Completed in 1614 as the mosque was being built, the Risāle, which devotes a whole chapter to the monument, presents it as a regenerative blessing to "one of the finest locations of the city," for it replaced "aged palaces . . . filled with the nests of owls."32 Cafer Efendi goes on to describe the numerous exemplary elements making up the edifice, claiming that "no other such high and solid building has been erected" before it.33

Hyperbolic as this statement may seem, Cafer Efendi is hardly exaggerating the mosque's sheer visual impact. The advocacy of Ahmed's backers, together with the written records of their support, would have amounted to little had the architecture itself been any less persuasive than it is. Writing at the same time as Cafer Efendi, Contarini reports that the "superbissima" mosque would resemble and compete with the Süleymaniye,34 and he is right on both counts. The mosque, which comprises a domed prayer hall and porticoed courtyard, stands imposingly in an expansive walled precinct, around which are scattered numerous dependencies that make up the remainder of the complex (figs. 3 and 4).35 Modern connoisseurs and art historians have frequently denigrated the building as a pretentious rehashing of Sinan's style, but, as Emine Fetvacı has shown, the Sultan Ahmed Mosque's dramatic design was carefully tailored to, and highly appreciated in, its own seventeenth-century context.36 A student of Sinan, the architect Mehmed Agha judiciously adapted the prestigious mode of his master with the aim of rivaling it. The plan of the prayer hall is thus an aggrandized reworking of that of Sinan's first major work, the Şehzade Mosque (1543–48), which Süleyman the Magnificent had built to commemorate his favorite son, the deceased Mehmed (d. 1543): 37 in this so-called quatrefoil plan, the main dome rests on four piers and is braced by four semi-domes, with cupolas filling the remaining corners (figs. 5 and 6). At the Sultan Ahmed, the scheme is on a much larger scale and further elaborated with the addition of exedrae flowing down from three of the semi-domes (figs. 1, 4, 7, and 8).38 By reviving the Şehzade's plan, which Sinan himself had not returned to, the Sultan Ahmed Mosque posits its founder as a scion of Süleyman and preserver of his legacy. It is notable in this regard that Safiye Sultan's abortive foundation at Eminönü had preceded the Sultan Ahmed in being designed on the Şehzade's model;39 her grandson's halting of that project and cooption of the quatrefoil plan for himself thus stressed his privileged status as Süleyman's rightful heir.

Mehmed Agha's decision not to adopt the vaulting arrangement of the Süleymaniye—which, like the Hagia
Sophia, has only two semi-domes flanking its dome—might be construed as a decorous concession, but it also allowed the patron to distinguish his own monument from his ancestor’s. Comparison between the two buildings is rendered inevitable by their stylistic resemblance and the similarity of their dimensions, and the later mosque’s doubling of semi-domes and emphasis on pyramidal verticality arguably make for a more impressive effect. The same principle is at work in the use of minarets: the Sultan Ahmed replicates the Süleymaniye in placing four minarets of uneven height at the corners of its porticoed courtyard, but it also adds a further two to the qibla side of the prayer hall. The resultant total of six minarets was unprecedented in Ottoman mosque architecture and never to be repeated. Consciously avoiding a direct correspondence with any one model, then, Mehmed Agha opted for an augmented combination of Süleymanic references drawn from both the Şehzade and the Süleymaniye, creating a distinctive synthesis that stands in its own right even as it evokes the past.

This shrewd design also equips the Sultan Ahmed Mosque against its more immediate rival, the Hagia Sophia, which faces it directly across a large open square (fig. 9). The use of four semi-domes serves again—and still more clearly—to differentiate the newer structure, whose rhythmic cascade of domes presents a marked contrast to the rather ungainly exterior of the converted sixth-century church. The earlier Şehzade Mosque had already been credited in one of Sinan’s (auto)biographies with eclipsing the Hagia Sophia’s style, which “did not possess elegance.” Building on this trope, the Sultan Ahmed’s emphatically beautiful exterior is able to challenge the Hagia Sophia despite being smaller in size. Its unyielding visual appeal is once more bolstered by its six minarets, which on the one hand mirror the Hagia Sophia’s placement of four towers at the corners of the prayer hall, but on the other surpass their earlier counterparts in number as well as aesthetic coherence—the minarets of the Hagia Sophia are mismatched accretions of different periods. The overall effect of the Sultan Ahmed’s gracefully deployed mina-
Fig. 4. Plan of the surviving elements of the Sultan Ahmed Complex and the neighboring Hippodrome: 1) Mosque; 2) Madrasa; 3) Mausoleum; 4) Primary school; 5) Royal pavilion; 6) Hippodrome; 7) Garden platform; 8) Marketplace (arasta). (Drawing: Arben N. Arapi. Courtesy of Gülru Necipoğlu)

Fig. 5. Şehzade Mosque, from the southwest. (Photo: Reha Günay)

Fig. 6. Plan of the Şehzade Mosque. (Drawing: Arben N. Arapi. Courtesy of Gülru Necipoğlu)
rets is to conflate the arrangements of both the Hagia Sophia and the Süleymaniye, underscoring the new mosque’s competitive dialogue with these two venerable models.

Inside, too, the Sultan Ahmed sets itself apart from its prototypes. The four piers supporting the dome take the form of gigantic fluted cylinders that art historians have criticized as excessively bulky, though their heft can only have been an intentional departure from the leaner proportions employed in other monuments, as if to bear out Ca’fer Efendi’s assertion that no earlier building was as solid (figs. 10–12). The walls likewise strive for a fresh approach, eschewing the decorative reserve of Istanbul’s existing sultanic mosques in favor of a comprehensive coating of floral İznik tiles, whose rich hue is the reason the building is popularly known as the Blue Mosque (fig. 13).

Observers in the seventeenth century were duly impressed with what they saw. Grelot writes that the mosque “may be said to be the most beautiful in Constantinople, if not in all the East,” a sentiment shared by his Ottoman contemporary, the famous traveler Evliya Čelebi (d. 1682), who calls it “the most beautiful of all sultanic mosques in Istanbul.” Having ignored the dictates of tradition and pushed ahead with his plans, Ahmed had produced an architectural fait accompli, so striking and magnificent that any lingering objections to it were swiftly obviated. The success of this audacious artistic feat was not, however, due to its design alone: the sultan may have raised a splendid new edifice, but
Fig. 8. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, interior view of the domical superstructure. (Photo: iStock.com/wrangel)
only by enlivening it with activity could he prove that it was more than a needless extravagance.

CEREMONIAL AND SOCIABILITY: THE SULTAN AHMED MOSQUE IN THE PUBLIC EYE

Among the more novel elements of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque is an L-shaped structure that is attached to its southern corner and entered by a ramp (figs. 1, 9, 14, and 35). Dwarfed by the adjacent prayer hall and easily missed by modern visitors, this building would not have escaped attention in Ottoman times, when it served as a pavilion to host the sultans during their ceremonial visits to the mosque. The upper story of the structure contained decorated and furnished rooms for the sovereign’s respite, while a corridor on the same floor gave direct access to the royal prayer loge that occupies the neighboring corner of the prayer hall. True to its function, and in order not to detract from the mosque proper, the pavilion follows the stylistic norms of residential building: its walls are of alternating courses of brick and stone, unlike the pure stone of the prayer hall, and its roof is externally hipped rather than domed. This palatial annex was the first structure of its kind in Ottoman mosque architecture, introducing a feature that would become canonical and increasingly prominent in later imperial mosques. The advent and subsequent development of this type of pavilion coincided with a larger shift whereby the sultans—no longer absent on distant campaigns—were becoming ever more visible on home turf. It was already routine for a sultan to ride in dazzling procession to one of the capital’s mosques.
Fig. 10. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, interior toward the west, showing the domical superstructure. (Photo: Ünver Rüstem)
Fig. 11. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, interior toward the qibla (southeast) wall. (Photo: Ünver Rüstem)

Fig. 12. Süleymaniye Mosque, interior toward the qibla (southeast) wall. (Photo: Reha Günay)
Fig. 13. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, Iznik tilework in the upper gallery. (Photo: Ünver Rüstem)

Fig. 14. Sultan Ahmed Complex, royal pavilion viewed from the northwest toward its entrance side, with the attached mosque on the right. (Photo: Güven Erten)

Fig. 15. Sultan Ahmed Complex, royal pavilion viewed from the southeast, with the mosque on the left. (Photo: Güven Erten)
in order to perform the Friday prayer there (fig. 16); the placement of a pavilion at the culmination of this parade would only enhance the ceremony’s splendor and prominence, concretizing the royal visit even after its end.

That this move towards amplified spectacle began with the Sultan Ahmed should not surprise us. Both during and after its construction, the mosque witnessed a level of ceremonial activity that amounted to a relentless public-relations exercise, intended to reiterate the sultan’s devotion to the project while also exciting his subjects’ interest in it. The staging of festivities to mark the establishment of a new imperial mosque was, to be sure, a well-established practice, and two occasions in particular—the foundation-laying and the inauguration—were typically celebrated on a grand scale with processions, prayers, animal sacrifices, and the distribution of gifts. Even so, the ceremonies associated with the Sultan Ahmed Mosque stand out as extraordinary, not only in their elaboration, but also in their number. Ahmed’s supporters had promised a building that would buzz with new life, and it seems the sultan was anxious to deliver on their assurances with a series of events jointly implicating himself and his subjects in the mosque’s formation.

The tone was set from the very beginning. Indeed, the pavilion attached to the prayer hall is the adapted version of a structure that had been erected even before work on the mosque commenced. The purpose of this “exalted pavilion” was, according to Mustafa Safi, for the sultan to “view and observe the construction and investigate the conditions of the poor and weak,” a description that links Ahmed’s care for the mosque with his care for his people, who could in turn look to the structure as a constant symbol of their ruler’s beneficence. It was from this pavilion, Safi states, that Ahmed watched the groundbreaking ceremony, which was held at an auspicious hour on October 7, 1609, and entailed a packed gathering of courtiers, clerics, and officials. Led by the grand mufti and by Mahmud Hüdayi, whom Evliya Çelebi dubs the “shaykh of the foundations” (temel şeyḫi), members of the assembly started to dig the ground. They then stopped and cleared the way for the sultan, who descended from the pavilion and himself began to dig using a silver-decorated mattock with a velvet-lined handle. In a dispatch sent a few weeks later, the English ambassador Glover, whose knowledge of the event may have been secondhand, gives a different order to the day’s proceedings while adding interesting details not found in Safi’s description:

[The Gran Sig⁵ himselfe in persone, with the Muftie, and all his vizeries, and other ministers and officers, went to the [site of the mosque], and there first offered sacrifice (as they doe call it Curban) of 500. sheepe, and 140. oxen, this beinge devided amongste the people, they ioyntlie went to prayers wherin continuéd fower howers by the clocke, which also beinge ended, the Gran Sig⁵ tooke the mat-hoocke or pickaxe, and soo himselfe for halle a quarter of an hower, digged the grounde for to laye the foundation of...]

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Fig. 16. Zacharias Wehme, The Friday Procession of Sultan Selim II to the Süleymaniye Mosque. Detail of a scroll painted after a lost Habsburg album, 1581–82. Dresden, Die Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Mscr.Dresd.J.2.a. (Photo: SLUB/Deutsche Fotothek, Brigitta Paetzold)
As work on the building progressed, the sultan continued to make himself present and visible at the site, which he could survey—and be seen surveying—from his pavilion. Glover, reporting in January 1610, notes that the mosque was “daylie verie dilligentlie solicited, by the vizereis, and often visited (at leaste once a weeke) by the Gran Sig:’ himselfe.” A letter written seven months later by the French ambassador Jean de Gontaut-Biron (d. 1636) stresses Ahmed’s “marvelous diligence” in connection with the project, whose progress he personally urged on by “staying at the scene for seven or eight days”—presumably in the pavilion. Gontaut-Biron adds that many in Istanbul questioned whether the sultan would succeed in his ambitious enterprise, and it was surely in part to counteract these doubts and inspire confidence in the building that Ahmed made such a show of his dedication to it. Another kind of royal appearance during the mosque’s construction is recorded by Evliya Çelebi, who tells us that the sultan one day “pitched his tent on . . . the courtyard of the mosque . . . and gave a feast to all the vezírs and great men of the capital, which surpassed even that which was given at the feast of [his] circumcission.” After most of the assembly dispersed, Ahmed remained in his tent with a select group of men that included Mahmud Hüdayi, who exhorted the sultan to fulfil his plan to invade Crete. The gathered company then prayed, probably aware that the mosque would be completed whether or not the sultan ever delivered a victory against the infidel. Holding this supererogatory ceremonial feast in a tent—a structure as much associated with warfare as with festivities—may well have been an intentionally bold conceit, emblematically lending Ahmed the very martial credibility he lacked in life. A similar banquet, on this occasion hosted by Lala Mustafa Pasha (d. 1580) at an army camp outside Iznik, is depicted in the 1584 copy of Mustafa ‘Alî’s Nusretname, which commemorates the Ottomans’ successful campaign against the Safavids in the Caucasus (fig. 17). The semiotic potential that such military references offered the mosque would, as we shall see, be more overtly realized with the dome-closing ceremony.

Beyond drawing attention to the project’s scale and development, the sultan was keen also to earn his mosque a rightful place in a city already teeming with religious foundations. The proximity of the Hagia
ÜNVER RÜSTEM

had already introduced the ritual at the Hagia Sophia. In 1599, however, the grand mufti put an end to this "ugly innovation," which was criticized for, among other things, its exclusionary nature: those administering the ceremony distributed candies and sherbets to the grandees but not to the poor. By reviving the Mevlûd, Ahmed aimed to distinguish his mosque as the ritual's new permanent venue, where his subjects might experience something that no other site offered. He learned from the mistakes of the ceremony's failed past by stipulating a more lavish and inclusive affair at which the entire congregation, rich and poor alike, would be served food and drink, even coffee. A preliminary Mevlûd had already been held at the Sultan Ahmed's building site in late 1610, not on the Prophet's birthday, but to bring good luck to the fledgling project. Cushioned sofas and other temporary furnishings were installed for the ritual, which was attended by all the notable men of state and religion, including Mahmud Hüdayi, who delivered a sermon. The mosque was still being built when, in 1614, it hosted its first endowed Mevlûd, for which oil lamps were hung from the scaffolding. A contemporary account by the janissary scribe 'Abdülkadir Efendi (d. 1644 [?]) describes a busy gathering of dignitaries and clerics engaged in "sociable conversation" (ṣohbet), evidence of Ahmed's success in establishing a new and lively tradition even before the mosque was finished. The last Mevlûd to be celebrated during construction was in March 1617, when the monument was nearing its final form. Shaykh Mahmud Hüdayi was again prominent among the assembly, which, according to 'Abdülkadir Efendi, was so large on this occasion that the mosque could not contain it. Incense burners wafted the scent of ambergris while the poem was recited, and the overflowing crowds "helped themselves to endless sherbets and candies." The royal account books confirm that these refreshments were plentiful enough to satisfy all, "high and low." Such vibrant scenes offered important proof that the mosque, once opened, would not struggle to attract and engage the public, and they also made a virtue of the mosque's uncrowded setting: the open spaces bordering it rendered the building ideally suited for large-scale festivities that might overspill its walls.

So remarkable was Ahmed's achievement in giving his mosque a unique ritual and social identity that the
practice of celebrating the Mevlûd would continue there under his successors until the empire’s final years, surviving even into our own time (fig. 18). John Murray’s much-used nineteenth-century travel guide to Istanbul gives a vivid account of the mosque’s enduring—and indeed expanded—ceremonial function:

In consequence of the beautiful site of the Atmeidan, and its open and free communication on every side, the mosque of Sultan Ahmed is the theatre of the great ceremonies of religion and court processions. Aja Sofia may be termed, from its vicinity to the palace, the Court church, the Ahmedje, the State church, or cathedral of Constantinople; for it is hither that the Sultan generally repairs, accompanied by his
It is during the "Mevlud," the book adds, that "the Sultan appears in his greatest splendour" at the mosque, "surrounded by all the functionaries of the court and state, to assist in the praises of the prophet, which are sung by the most melodious voices."84

But if the Mevlud is the longest lived of the Sultan Ahmed’s festive innovations, the most striking is surely the dome-closing ceremony, which was held less than three months after the nativity ritual of 1617 and would, by contrast, remain a one-off extravaganza.85 No earlier or later mosque is known to have been the object of such an event, and the closest recorded parallels—other celebrations tied to constructional milestones—were less grand affairs. The completion of the Süleymaniye’s tympanum arches in 1555, for example, was marked with the distribution of sherbet and gifts of money to the workforce. Ottoman sources note the closing of its dome the following year without making reference to any accompanying festivities, though a much later Venetian dispatch, to be discussed below, states that for three days the dome's exterior was draped with fabrics that were then presented as gifts to the workforce and superintendents. Whether the dome was bedecked upon its closing or for the later inauguration is not specified by the dispatch, whose description is in any case uncorroborated. But even if, as seems plausible, the completion of the Süleymaniye’s dome was proclaimed in this colorful manner, we still have nothing to rival the far showier production that attended the same moment at the Sultan Ahmed.86 The 1617 dome-closing ceremony stands, then, as a singular event not only in the life of the mosque, but also in Ottoman history. Already apparent from the known sources, the unusualness of the festival is substantiated by the equally exceptional monograph that is its written outcome, and to which my discussion now turns.

CAPPING IT ALL OFF: THE DOME-CLOSING CEREMONY AND ITS TEXTUAL RECORD

The manuscript describing the Sultan Ahmed Mosque’s dome-closing ceremony appears to be unknown in the scholarship, and I discovered it quite by chance among the digitized holdings of the Süleymaniye Library, where it is listed with the title Tarih-i Bina-yi Cami-i Sultan Ahmed-i Evvel (History of the Construction of the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed I) and the classmark Fotokopi No. 294.87 As this classmark indicates, the library houses only a black-and-white photocopy of the book, whose actual location, as recorded by a modern Arabic slip photocopied together with one of the endpapers, is (or was) the Iraqi Academy of Sciences in Baghdad. This slip gives the simpler title Sulṭān Aḥmed cāmiʿ[i] tārīḫi (History of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque) in the Arabic/Ottoman script, 88 which suggests that the endpaper beneath it bears the same heading written in late Ottoman times; the longer and more typically Ottoman-sounding title found in the Süleymaniye’s records may well be a modern cataloguer’s coinage. In the absence of a more definitive alternative, I shall refer to the work as the Tarih, an abbreviation of both available titles. There is no mark of ownership on the manuscript, at least as revealed by the photocopy; the Arabic slip, which may be obscuring relevant information on the endpaper itself, gives the book’s provenance only as the National Center for the Preservation of Documents, part of the Ministry of Information in Baghdad.

The book comprises forty-nine folios and, according to the Arabic slip, measures 22 by 18 centimeters. The text, which runs from fol. 0b to fol. 45b,89 is written in an elegant and large naskh that is extensively vocalized, punctuated by rosettes and occasional rubrics, and framed by ruled borders (see the reproduction of the manuscript on pp. 300–324). It is apparent even from the photocopy that the borders, rosettes, and rubrics are gilt. There are seven lines of text to the page except for a few easily explained exceptions, including the illuminated opening page, whose five lines start beneath a colored and gilt headpiece that is filled with arabesques and crowned by a lobed arch.90 Distinguished above all by its beautifully inscribed and liberally voweled large-scale text, this fine format is reminiscent of fair-copy imperial waqfiyyas—indeed, the Sultan Ahmed Mosque’s own waqfiyya manuscript is almost identical in arrangement (figs. 19 and 20)—and it therefore seems that we are dealing with a presentation copy made for an elite

reader with close personal interest or involvement in the mosque. A likely candidate is the building superintendent, Hacı Mustafa Agha, whom the text singles out for lavish praise.\(^9^1\) That he was exiled to Cairo in 1620 before being recalled to the capital in 1623 may account for why the book left Istanbul and ended up in the Arab world.\(^9^2\) Even if catering to the agha, however, the text would also have been intended for wider circulation at the court, and, more specifically, to gratify the sultan himself, who is, as we might expect, its overall hero. Whether further copies were ever made or have survived remains to be investigated, but the work must in any case be reckoned an extremely rare product, a point to which I shall return.

Written in a florid courtly register of Ottoman Turkish, the Tarih is made up of a prose account of the ceremony followed by two related qasidas, the first composed for the sultan and the second for Mustafa Agha (see the appendix for a full transliteration and translation of the manuscript). The prose section, which constitutes about three-quarters of the total work, is itself peppered with poetic couplets, some of them drawn from the second qasida. At the end of the manuscript are two additional borderless folios inscribed in a different (and far more workaday) hand with an unrelated tract whose conclusion the photocopy omits.\(^9^3\) As for our text, there is no indication of an author for any of its components, all three of which are probably the work of the same man.\(^9^4\) Neither does the book give any details of its scribe or the circumstances of its copying, though it was very likely produced (and must certainly have been drafted) between August 18, 1617, which is the last date mentioned, and November 22, 1617, the death date of the sultan, who is nowhere referred to as deceased.

The prose account that forms the heart of the text opens with fulsome praise for God, for the Prophet and his family and companions, and for the sultan, who is termed the “protector of Muslims and Monotheists and slayer of pagans and heretics.”\(^9^5\) While eulogistic pref- 
aces are typical of many categories of Ottoman literature, the introduction again exhibits notable similarities to Ahmed’s waqfîyya, particularly in the manuscripts’ shared use of gilding to highlight the first mention of the sultan’s name and titles (fig. 20 and the reproduction of fol. 7a on p. 303). Such typological overlaps, which build on the broader artistic resemblance between the Tarih and the waqfîyya, are partly a reflection of the former’s experimental character—it does not belong to an established genre of its own—but they also confirm the Tarih as part of the officially sanctioned discourse surrounding the mosque. This evocation of the waqfîyya format would, moreover, have been readily appreciated by Mustafa Agha, whose role as chief harem eunuch also entailed overseeing the endowments—and hence endowment deeds—of several major religious sites, including the sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina.

The text itself acknowledges Mustafa Agha’s role as “superintendent of the pious foundations of the Two Holy Places” in the section immediately following the introductory encomia, when the subject turns to the mosque.\(^9^6\) We are told that the sultan, upon embarking on the project, entrusted its superintendence to the agha, who is hailed as, among other things, “the trustee of kings and sultans.”\(^9^7\) The account then fast-forwards to the days leading up to the dome-closing ceremony, which was to be held on Thursday, June 8, 1617 (4 Juma-da II 1026).\(^9^8\) With completion of the dome imminent, His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent—long may he live—was ordered to set up a place for the sultan of the seven climes in the mosque’s honorable courtyard [harem-i muhtereminde], whereupon the faithful superintendent, in accordance with the imperial command, pitched that heavenly tent—whose azure cupola reached the heavens and whose golden finial shone upon the word—in that graceful and noble location, as befitting Ottoman law and imperial custom; and he had curtains of cloth of gold and silver hung all around it, completing the imperial tent as well as one could wish.\(^9^9\)

Whether the location of the tent was the mosque’s porticco forecourt (the inner courtyard) or its surrounding precinct (the outer courtyard) is unclear from the account’s terminology, and the question is not settled by the shorter descriptions of the event found in other seventeenth-century sources, which include the chronicle of Abdüllâh Efendi and the Fežleke of Kâtib Çelebi (d. 1657), whose entry on the ceremony is reproduced almost verbatim in the later official history of Mustafa Na’îma (d. 1716).\(^1^0^0\) These alternative sources do, however, note the presence of additional tents that are not mentioned in the Tarih, and though it would have been possible for several large tents to fit inside the mosque’s spacious inner courtyard (fig. 21), such an assemblage may have been better accommodated—not to mention more publicly visible—in the outer court (fig. 22), which
Fig. 21. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, porticoed inner courtyard and domed ablution fountain. (Photo: Güven Erten)

Fig. 22. Sultan Ahmed Mosque, outer courtyard from the northwest, with the mosque on the right and the royal pavilion in the distance. (Photo: Güven Erten)
bordered the vast open space of the Hippodrome. Either way, these histories make no reference to Mustafa Agha’s role in setting up the encampment, nor indeed in organizing any part of the ceremony. The Tarih in this regard is both a more complete and a more biased record.

Our text continues with the day of the ceremony itself, when the agha spent the morning furnishing “both sides of the sultanic road [from the Topkapi Palace to the mosque]...with variegated cloths of gold and silver and tricolor silk,” held in place by several hundred doorkeepers as the expectant crowds gathered. Such use of precious textiles to form decorative roadside barriers was customary for sultanic processions, and the practice is vividly attested—albeit with the spectators themselves shown holding the lengths of fabric—in a double-page manuscript illustration that depicts the victory parade of Sultan Ahmed’s father, Mehmed III, following his conquest of Eger in 1596 (fig. 23). Having thus prepared the route, Mustafa Agha returned to the palace with a gorgeously caparisoned horse for the sultan, who, meanwhile, sent the grand vizier, Halil Pasha (d. 1629), to the royal tent. There, accompanied by his retinue, the vizier “awaited a propitious hour to invite that cheer-spreading sultan and world-nourishing emperor,” and when the time came, he went back to
the palace to inform the sultan, receiving robes of honor in reward. The sultan then mounted the bejeweled steed prepared for him by Mustafa Agha, whereupon the grand vizier and other court dignitaries (who, Katib Çelebi tells us, were likewise invested with robes) set out from the palace on horseback in solemn procession, with Ahmed and two of his sons— "the apples of his imperial eye and the fruits of his prosperous lineage"— following on as the parade’s climax (figs. 24 and 25). As the cortege made the relatively short passage to the mosque, those lining the route "viewed [the sultan] avidly while praying for the continuance of His Majesty’s rule." It is at this point that the text introduces us to the "ruthless"—that is foreign—ambassadors who are among the
throng of spectators, and whose presence on the day is, as we shall see, pivotal to explaining the event. The parade almost certainly entered the precinct through one of the gates opening onto the Hippodrome, where thousands of onlookers would have been standing. Some sense of the scene is offered by a late eighteenth-century French watercolor of another procession to the mosque, though here, in an example of artistic license, the public is omitted from view and the Hippodrome widened in order to accommodate the sultan and his entourage, who snake their way to the mosque's pavilion through the gate at the northern corner of the precinct (fig. 26). In the case of the dome-closing ceremony, the cortège very likely proceeded in a more straightforward line and, since it was not heading for the pavilion, may well have entered through the more central northwestern gate, which had the advantage of aligning with the mosque's principal axis (fig. 27).

Upon reaching the royal tent, the sultan dismounted and was escorted by Mustafa Agha to "a splendid bejeweled throne—variegated with diverse gemstones—that had been placed inside the portico of the tent." Katib Çelebi's account adds that the two princes stood to their father's right. Ottoman paintings again allow us to visualize the scene with some confidence: a depiction from fifty years earlier of the enthronement of Selim II at Belgrade, for example, shows the newly ascended sultan seated in an encrusted gold throne that is flanked by standing figures and set under a canopy before the open entrance to a grand tent (fig. 28). Cutting the same sort of figure as his ancestor, Ahmed called into his presence Shaykh Mahmud Hüdayi, who was to reprise the privileged role he had played at earlier occasions related to the mosque. The sultan presented Mahmud and a number of other clerics with robes before commanding "that the said saint, together with all the viziers, distinguished ulema, and the building superintendent, should climb and close [bagla—, lit. “tie”] the lofty dome with prayer and eulogy."

Exactly how this part of the ceremony was enacted is not explained, and we have to turn to other sources that are more informative in this regard. Abdülkadir Efendi tells us, somewhat ambiguously, that "the marble in [the dome's] center received a nail," and he also suggests
Fig. 26. Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier, *Procession of the Sultan through the Hippodrome to the Sultan Ahmed Mosque*. Unused watercolor design for d’Ohsson’s *Tableau général de l’empire othoman*, 1770s. (Photo © Christie’s Images/Bridgeman Images)

Fig. 27. Sultan Ahmed Mosque and its precinct wall, from the Hippodrome toward the main entrance axis. (Photo: Guillaume Berggren [1835–1920], 1880. Courtesy of the Ljungström Foundation)
that the dome was already leaded and decorated. A more evocative account is offered by the Venetian bailo Almorò Nani (d. 1633), who, as I shall discuss below, viewed the ceremony firsthand and wrote an extremely valuable description of it in a dispatch dated June 13. Nani reports that after preliminary sacrifices, which are not mentioned in the other sources, “they placed the last stone of the cupola in position, and set a large gilt moon upon it.” This powerful image makes clear that the focus was on the summit of the dome, where a number of workmen must have secured some sort of stone before installing over it the giant crescent that crowns the mosque (fig. 29). Neither ‘Abdülkadir Efendi nor Nani mentions the party of supplicants whom Ahmed sent up the building, and whether all of them made it as high as the dome is doubtful—Shaykh Mahmud was seventy-six at the time. In theory, at least, these men could have climbed through passages and staircases to reach either the catwalk along the dome’s interior base or, for a more eye-catching effect, the dome’s exterior, where some scaffolding must have remained to enable the completion of work. It is likely that the men were spread across various levels and galleries of the mosque, with most perhaps standing on the interior catwalk and a few venturing onto the scaffolding outside the dome. Given that the dome was built of brick and, like the rest of the mosque, essentially complete by this point, the act of closing it as staged for the ceremony was evident-
THE DOME-CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SULTAN AHMED MOSQUE

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ly more emblematic than it was substantive, involving the placement of a symbolic capstone and finial while Shaykh Mahmud and his companions looked on and offered their blessings. They were joined in this chorus by the watching crowds, who stood, according to the Tarihi, both “inside and outside the mosque,” which tells us that the prayer hall too was filled with people. Many, if not most, of the mosque’s interior decorations and furnishings must already have been in place.

After the men descended, the sultan commanded that Shaykh Mahmud preach to those “present at the mosque,” and himself “witness[ed] the faithful words of the reverend saint.” The text is again unclear in locating the action or players, but if, as seems to be case, the sermon was delivered inside the prayer hall, the sultan must have moved from the tent to his private prayer loge within the mosque (figs. 30 and 31). Robes of honor were then distributed (still apparently inside the mosque) to the viziers, ulema, and other men of religion, after which the sultan “ascended the commanding throne that had been placed in the glorious pavilion adjoining his exalted mosque.” This relocation makes it still likelier that Ahmed had spent the preceding part of the ceremony in his prayer loge, which, as discussed, directly communicated with the neighboring royal pavilion. From this second throne, the sultan oversaw the granting of more robes of honor, this time to certain officials involved in building and staffing the mosque, including the chief imperial architect, Mehmed Agha, and the building supervisor (emin), İdris Agha. This is the only reference the text makes to Mehmed Agha, whose role as the building’s designer seems not to have been marked with any special distinction on the day.

The ceremony drew to an end with the sultan’s return to his tent, where he ordered his courtiers and ulema to kiss his hand. He and his retinue then processed back to the Topkapi Palace as they had come, and once there, Ahmed showered still more robes and other gifts on Mustafa Agha and his staff.

With the narrative description of the day over, the text turns to elaborating on the sultan’s munificence, which was such that “the people of the world sweated with embarrassment at the selfless favor that the mighty emperor had shown them.” (Katib Çelebi notes this
generosity in more prosaic terms, telling us that Ahmed conferred a thousand robes in all. Likewise lauded is the uncommon diligence of Mustafa Agha, whose service fully merited the rewards heaped on him. This excursus on the sultan’s largesse also includes an extraordinary subsection about the effect of the ceremony on the foreign ambassadors and other non-Muslim spectators, as further discussed below.

The Tarih ends its prose account with a brief epilogue concerning the mosque’s inauguration a few months later, on August 18, 1617 (16 Sha’ban 1026), when the building was formally opened with the performance of the Friday congregational prayer. Mahmud Hüdayi again had the job of preaching, and the sultan once more distributed gifts and honorific robes.

This conclusion is followed by the two qasidas, which are not known from other sources but are nonetheless fairly typical examples of their genre. Dedicated to the sultan, the first poem extols his virtues and admiringly enumerates the various parts of the mosque, whose “like or counterpart cannot be found,” and whose crowning dome is “unique, engulfed by mother-of-pearl.” The sentence introducing the qasida informs us that it was “composed for the completion of the noble mosque”
before being presented to Ahmed, and the poem itself describes the monument as if it were in its final state. This portrayal is in part imaginary, however, for it extends to ancillaries of the mosque that were a long way off from being finished. It is possible, then, that the qasida was given to the sultan as early as the day of the dome-closing ceremony, when work was far enough advanced that the finalized complex could be convincingly evoked. As with many such compositions, the poem’s final line is a chronogram, which is a feature often accompanied by a reference to the identity of the author, though none is provided here.

The second qasida, which lacks a chronogram, was prepared for Mustafa Agha and, we are told, given to him “upon the completion of the sultan’s mosque.” Because the poem in this case refers back to the events of the dome-closing ceremony, it cannot have been written until after that occasion. Several of its couplets are embedded into the Tarih’s prose narrative, whose arrangement and content are in turn mirrored by the poem. The latter, however, places even more emphasis on the agha’s excellent service, which now constitutes the main subject: “In truth,” one couplet asserts, “no one has trod this gentleman’s path, / He sacrificed his all with heart and soul.” As well as singing Mustafa’s praises, the qasida loudly applauds the sultan, and its final acclamations—spoken by the adulatory crowd—might well be directed at either man. These enthusiastic compliments bring the overall text of the Tarih to a fitting, if predictable, close.

CLOSING THE DOME, WINNING THE DAY: THE SYMBOLISM OF THE CEREMONY

The importance of the Tarih as a descriptive document of an unusual event is obvious enough, but the text’s most distinctive value lies in what it reveals about the motivations behind the ceremony, which are in turn bound up with the conceptualization of the mosque at large. The very existence of the manuscript confirms the exceptional nature of the ceremony and bespeaks the discursive excitement it must have generated. While the Ottomans produced numerous sūrnāmes (festival books) to commemorate royal births, circumcisions, and marriages, and although the state’s protocol registers included brief accounts of a range of official ceremonies, the Tarih appears to be the only example thus far uncovered of an Ottoman monograph that describes a ceremony centered on architecture. It belongs, furthermore, to a select handful of Ottoman texts devoted to particular buildings, among them a late fifteenth-century history of the Hagia Sophia and a mid-eighteenth-century account of the Nuruosmaniye Mosque (built 1748–55). These works are too few and dissimilar to constitute a cohesive category, but all of them concern high-ranking religious monuments that excited particular attention from their observers. Indeed, the Sultan Ahmed had, as noted, already helped to inspire another kind of rare architectural text, the Risāle of Cafer Efendi, whose chapter on the mosque was written even as it was being built, when construction had reached the level of the dome. Picking up where the Risāle left off, then, the Tarih amplifies Cafer Efendi’s verbal celebration of the monument against the background of a ceremony that was itself designed to glorify the building.

But what specific functions was this ceremony intended to perform that the official opening could not? After all, there was much that both events shared, including a grand parade from the palace and the distribution of sultanic gifts, and the two were sufficiently close in date that one might well overshadow the other. Sure enough, the seventeenth-century chronicles record only the dome-closing ceremony without mentioning the later inauguration, an omission that has led modern scholars invariably to misdate the mosque’s opening. That the dome-closing ceremony took place on a Thursday shows that it was never meant to be conflated with the actual inauguration, which coincided, as tradition required, with the Friday prayer. Nevertheless, the shared elements of the two events, together with their chronological proximity, would have made comparison between them unavoidable, with the earlier ceremony emerging as the more memorable of the two. The Tarih reveals as much in its cursory treatment of the opening, which is discussed almost as a muted replay of what had occurred two months previously. What set the precursor event apart—and explains why it was devised in the first place—was that it allowed Ahmed to announce the completion of his mosque in a far more original manner than was possible with the more codified form of an official inauguration. This is not to say that real
inaugurations were lacking in their own flourishes: at the opening of the Süleymaniye, for example, the sultan handed the mosque’s golden key to Sinan, an unusual gesture that reflected the architect’s unparalleled status (Mehmed Agha, as we have seen, would not receive the same honor). But such festive embellishments were eclipsed by the altogether inventive celebration created for the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. Much like the building itself, the dome-closing ceremony was an exercise in circumventing custom, and the sultan took full advantage of the opportunity to trumpet his project with a level of spectacle that would inevitably (and deliberately) outdo the subsequent opening. The desired effect was not mere fanfare, however, nor was the end result to the inauguration’s detriment. On the contrary, the ceremony amounted to a ritual absolution that, by proclaiming the unimpeachable character of the mosque, paved the way for as auspicious an opening as possible. The extravagant theatricality of the event was, in other words, crucial to its efficacy as a legitimizing rite of passage for the monument.

Of the features that distinguished the ceremony, one of the most striking was its ostensible raison d’être: the very act of closing the dome. The choice of this moment for the ceremony’s backdrop brought with it obvious dramatic impact, giving spectators “live” visual access to the capping of Istanbul’s newest public and imperial landmark. As well as emphasizing the scale and beauty of Ahmed’s architectural achievement, the closing of the dome carried multiple layers of symbolism. There was, of course, the age-old trope of the dome as heavenly sphere, and although a commonplace, the idea would have taken on real charge when framed by a ceremony in which a group of supplicants scaled the building to bless the vault as it was being closed. The Tarih gives literary expression to the conceit with a couplet inserted into this point of the narrative: “When devotions were performed in the mosque of the heavens, / The [celestial] lotus tree opened the hand of supplication in prayer.”

But the dome’s symbolic message went much further than a generalized reference to paradise; it also argued for the mosque’s impeccable merit by once again evoking flattering parallels with the great dome of the Hagia Sophia opposite. As admired and influential as it was, the vaulting scheme of the converted church proved famously unstable: the central dome, which was originally built too shallow, had to be reconstructed after collapsing in 558, and its shape was manifestly uneven by the time the Ottomans inherited it. Several Ottoman architects undertook the monument’s repair, including Sinan, one of whose (auto)biographies frankly records that the first “flat” dome had caved in. Other Ottoman texts recast the facts as a fanciful legend about the east semi-dome, which, they claim, fell down on the night of the Prophet’s birth and could not be successfully repaired until the Byzantines sent an embassy to the adult Muhammad many years later. Against this real and mythologized awareness of the Hagia Sophia’s troubled structural history, Ahmed’s new mosque—synecdochically represented by its dome—would appear perfect from the outset, its completion, to quote the Tarih, “facilitated and ensured by the aid of the Lord God Almighty.” Ahmed, who had renovated the Hagia Sophia and releaded its dome almost ten years earlier, was now unveiling its faultless counterpart in a carefully directed ceremony that underscored the mosque’s freedom both from structural defect and from the taint of a Christian past.

Such triumphalism also extended to the dome’s more immediate pendant, the imperial tent. It is this temporary structure rather than the mosque’s actual dome that the Tarih most insistently describes in celestial terms, calling it a “heavenly tent...whose azure cupola reached the heavens and whose golden finial shone upon the word.” Here, as elsewhere in the text, the Ottoman word for tent, oṭaḳ (also oṭaġ), is punningly rendered as ṭāḳ, “vault,” intentionally blurring the distinction between the sultan’s ceremonial stage and the architecture of his mosque. The comparison is not entirely rhetorical: though we lack a detailed verbal description of it, the tent, in keeping with other examples that have survived or are known from paintings, must have been a truly substantial structure, with high walls and a steeply pitched vault-like roof, all made of richly colored and patterned fabric (figs. 32 and 33). As with the neighboring mosque, more was at play than a paradisiacal metaphor. The inclusion of this tent, along with the others that we know surrounded it, arguably constituted the ceremony’s most outstanding feature. To be sure, the use of tents for ceremonial or festive occasions was not especially rare in Ottoman contexts (fig. 34), and,
Fig. 32. Ottoman military tent with a protruding canopy, seventeenth century. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Rüstkammer, inv. no. Y 364. (Photo: Elke Estel/Hans-Peter Klut. Courtesy of Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden)

Fig. 33. Interior of an Ottoman military tent, seventeenth century. Krakow, Wawel Royal Castle, inv. no. 896. (Photo: Stanislaw Michta. Courtesy of Wawel Royal Castle)
as noted above, Ahmed had already pitched a tent on his mosque’s construction site some years earlier when giving a feast. The adjacent Hippodrome hosted tents on numerous occasions throughout the Ottoman period (fig. 35), including the marriage celebrations in 1524 of the grand vizier İbrahim Pasha (d. 1536), whose palace stood opposite where the Sultan Ahmed would be built.\textsuperscript{148} Even in view of this broader tradition, however, the setting up of multiple tents in the courtyard of an essentially complete mosque would have been remarkably novel, unlike anything seen during an inauguration proper. While no doubt augmenting the festive mood of the day, this encampment cannot have been divorced from the tent’s longstanding association with warfare, especially in light of the mosque’s own uneasy relationship with the theme.\textsuperscript{149} Earlier events had already embraced the martial link—the tents erected for İbrahim Pasha boasted examples captured from the Aq Qoyunlu, Mamluks, and Safavids—and Ahmed and his advisers must have planned the dome-closing ceremony with such precedents in mind. What may appear as a risky and potentially counterproductive evocation—one that might remind the public of the sultan’s meagre military record—makes far more sense if understood as a defiant statement by which Ahmed could address his critics head on. Not only did the mosque’s encampment keep alive the promise of a future Cretan campaign, but it also—and more importantly—cast the
sultan as a victor already entitled to memorialize his name. This seemingly farfetched assertion rested on several related ideas that must have been circulating in the courtly and public spheres and that are articulated in the Tarih. Ahmed’s main claim to legitimacy was his well-known piety, a trait that the manuscript hails from the start and reiterates throughout. Conventional as such praise was in the Ottoman panegyric tradition, the portrayal of Ahmed as an unrivaled paragon of religiosity capitalized on specific acts that distinguished him from other sultans. He funded a number of important renovations to the pilgrimage sites of Mecca and Medina, sending the architect Mehmed Agha to oversee the repairs. The Ka’ba in particular was in urgent need of attention when Ahmed restored it in 1611, and it was also during his reign—specifically in 1609, when work commenced on the Sultan Ahmed—that the Ka’ba’s annually renewed fabric covering, the kiswa, began to be produced on special occasions in Istanbul instead of its usual place of manufacture, Cairo. These achievements are cited in the Tarih’s first qasida, which likens Ahmed’s legacy to that of the Prophet himself:

Because, O Large-Hearted Sultan, you have modeled yourself on [Muhammad],
You have truly executed the rule of holy law in the world.

[...]
Above all, the Flourishing House [Ka’ba] and the city of God’s Prophet [Medina]
Have been reanimated in your time, given honor and new life.155

The poem goes on to call the new mosque an “Exalted Ka’ba” for the poor who could not perform the pilgrimage,156 and though this same concept was applied to other mosques over the centuries (among them the Hagia Sophia),157 Ahmed’s patronage of Mecca rendered more convincing the idea of his own foundation as an alternative shrine. Its hosting of the Mevlud ritual must have enhanced the Sultan Ahmed’s cultic significance and strengthened its relationship to the Two Holy Places, and Ahmed cemented these ties by sending hundreds of gifts and honorific robes to the notables of Mecca and Medina upon the mosque’s completion.158 In the late eighteenth century, kiswas were actually being embroidered at the Sultan Ahmed,159 and by the mid-nineteenth, the mosque was the starting point of the annual pilgrimage caravan to Mecca, with the previous year’s kiswa being returned to the building and hung on one of its walls.160

Ahmed’s mosque could thus be vindicated with reference to his exemplary and generous piety, which served the religion of Islam as much as any great conquest. Already invoked at the start of the project as a complement to other—more aspirational—motives, the sultan’s charitable purpose was now in itself an unassailable justification for the monument. Indeed, the impact of such righteous beneficence was not limited to the Muslim community; even the faithless could be moved by it, as explained in what is the most arresting reference to his exemplary and generous piety, which

Furthermore, the sultan was watched that day by the ruthless [foreign] ambassadors who were present at the assembly, and when they—despite having not a trace of faith in their hardened hearts, wherein the devil and rebellion resided—saw the selfless favor that the magnanimous sultan conferred on the people of the world, together with the good works and pious deeds done in the path of God and the effort and labor exerted in the course of the religion of Muhammad, countless infidels could not help but come to Islam, wherewith they were honored with the glory of Islam and decked in royal favor. And even the remaining wicked infidels could not help but say countless prayers for the life and state of the mighty and exalted sultan, that he should remain secure and stable on his throne of glory; and so they confirmed as was right the glory and power pertaining to the religion of Muhammad and to the emperor of Islam, while seeing for certain the ignominy and vengefulness of their [own] false rites; and whether the ambassador of the reprobate Qizilbash or whether Venetian, Fleming, or Frank—they are one scourge alike—all of them were frustrated and confounded, their heads hung in vexation and sadness, and each of them was plunged into utter disgrace.161

Like other passages of the manuscript, the narrative here is tantalizingly incomplete in its details, but the implication is that foreign ambassadors were in some way officially present at the ceremony. This impression is confirmed by the above-mentioned dispatch of Almorò Nani, who considered the event important enough to send a long description of it to the Venetian Senate a few days after it took place. Although long ago published in an abridged English translation, the document seems to have gone unnoticed by subsequent scholars. It is, however, a source of unusual significance, and a rich supplement to the Tarih. The relevant passages are here quoted in full:

Last Tuesday, the 6th inst. [June], the Pasha [Halil, the grand vizier] sent a chiaus [çavuş, messenger] to all the houses of the ambassadors as well as to mine asking us to send our chief dragoman, as he wished to speak to them. He told them that His Majesty was going on the following Thursday to perform the first sacrifices in the new mosque, and he invited the ambassadors and the bailo of Venice to attend the festivities, when a suitable place would be assigned to them to view His Majesty and the concourse of people, which would be great. The dragomans accepted the invitation, adding that we had received a singular honor, and on the dragomans’ return the ambassadors of France, England, and Flanders, and I discussed what we should do, as by the Turkish custom when a building is finished all the neighbors send presents, as a gesture of goodwill and of gladness, and we ought to do something. In the time of Sultan Suliman, the last of the Ottoman Emperors to have built a mosque in Constantinople, the French ambassador and the Venetian bailo at that time made gifts to the mosque, and all the viziers and grandees of the Ottoman Porte also did the same, in competition with one another. And in truth, for three days in succession, the dome of this mosque was seen to be draped on the outside with a great quantity of cloths of various kinds, which were removed each evening and replaced by new ones. Afterwards these
were all distributed by order of the Chilaragasi [ḳızlar ağaşı, the chief harem eunuch] among the head of the mosque and various other superintendents and workmen, who are infinite [in number]. We therefore decided to send to the [current] Chilaragasi [Mustafa Agha] twelve cloths each. These were immediately sent by him to the mosque and placed around its dome along with many others, which made a fine show. The Imperial [Habsburg] ambassador was last to be invited, because of which he thought he might be excluded from this ceremony, and he too sent twelve cloths, all of silk. This expense was necessary and could not be avoided . . . . The Grand Signor’s mosque is built on one side of the square of the Hippodrome, where they usually hold public spectacles for the marriage of the sultan and the circumcision of the princes. Opposite this mosque stood a large covered corridor for the four ambassadors and myself, divided into compartments by flags, leaving a place for each. I laughingly remarked to the ambassador of Flanders that as our rulers were joined in friendly relations it was not proper that we should be separated, and I ordered the cloth to be removed. Soon afterwards England did the same, and then France and the Emperor’s ambassador, so that the five compartments were made one, with all assembling nearer to the Imperial ambassador’s section, which was the one that more directly faced the gate where the sultan entered the mosque’s courtyard. Here they sacrificed a number of sheep in honor of the Prophet. Then, at a certain hour determined by them to be auspicious, they undertook the ceremony to place the last stone in the summit of the mosque’s main cupola, and, in accordance with their custom, set a large gilt moon upon it. After, as it was reported, one of their principal holy men [Mahmud Hüdayi] preached a long sermon, praising the sultan’s goodness and then reproving the general injustice and rapacity of [his] enemies. His Majesty then came out of the mosque into its courtyard and placed himself under a small tent, where not only the viziers, muftis, and cadıleschiers [ḳaḍıʿasker, military judges], but countless other officials went to kiss his hand, wishing him happiness; and most of them were invested with a robe, but the Grand Vizier received three, two of them sable, and he wore all three despite the sea —not only the viziers, muftis, and men of the future Mehmed III in 1582 (fig. 36). Known from pictorial and written sources, this earlier loggia anticipated even the location of its later counterpart: it stood opposite the Sultan Ahmed’s eventual site on the Hippodrome next to the Palace of Ibrahim Pasha, probably on or near the spot where Nani’s “corridor” would be erected. But whereas the structure of 1582 had been integrated into a series of galleries filled mainly with Ottoman viewers, that of 1617 seems to have stood alone, at a suitable distance from the sacred precinct where the Muslim elite were gathered.

While we were waiting for the crush of people to stop, the Imperial ambassador . . . said it was high time that the war [between Venice and the Habsburgs] ceased, because in the end we are all Christians, and there is nothing these Turks enjoy more than to see us bloody our hands among ourselves.

We all subsequently left together, on horseback . . . . As soon as I had reached home the Pasha sent me a most noble golden raiment as a present, and he did the same to all the other ambassadors; in fact, his chief preoccupation is to find some means of showing honor to the ministers of the powers, just as the late Caimecam [ḳaymakam, the grand vizier’s deputy] was never so happy as when he could insult them, but, praise God, everything has turned out to the greater glory of the princes whom we represent.

Fleshing out the sketchy picture provided by the Tarih, this fascinating report reveals the deliberateness with which foreign representatives were made a feature of the ceremony. The bailo and his fellow ambassadors could hardly refuse the grand vizier’s invitation, and their presence on the day itself was closely stage-managed by their hosts. Foreign participation in Ottoman state festivities was, in itself, nothing new, and Nani’s description of a viewing “corridor” erected opposite the mosque recalls the wooden loggia that had accommodated European spectators at the circumcision festival of the future Mehmed III in 1582 (fig. 36). Known from pictorial and written sources, this earlier loggia anticipated even the location of its later counterpart: it stood opposite the Sultan Ahmed’s eventual site on the Hippodrome next to the Palace of Ibrahim Pasha, probably on or near the spot where Nani’s “corridor” would be erected. But whereas the structure of 1582 had been integrated into a series of galleries filled mainly with Ottoman viewers, that of 1617 seems to have stood alone, at a suitable distance from the sacred precinct where the Muslim elite were gathered.

This was not the only way in which the ambassadorial presence at the dome-closing ceremony was distinctive. For while foreign representatives could be found in numerous Ottoman festive contexts, there is very little evidence that the Christians among them attended religious ceremonies centered on mosques. Many Westerners, including diplomats, would have witnessed such events at a remove along with the general crowds, but this is a different matter from being officially invited participants. The case of the Süleymaniye, which Nani’s
there was in the festivities surrounding the Süleymaniye thus appears to have been limited and unorchestrated, quite in contrast to the obligatory arrangement under which all the principal foreign representatives attended the dome-closing ceremony of 1617.

The coordinated gifting of textiles by the ambassadors was a judicious move that capitalized on a shared appreciation among Ottomans and Westerners for luxury fabrics. In a ceremony already richly articulated with textiles, this collection of cloths must have made a powerful impression, particularly if exhibited, as Nani tells us, with a multitude of others around the dome. It is curious that the Ottoman sources do not refer to this festive bedecking, and Nani’s description leaves some
ambiguity as to whether the cloths were draped over the dome’s surface or otherwise hung from its exterior (or even interior) base. Either way, such adornment of the dome would only have emphasized its visual and conceptual relationship to the sultanic tent. The very real meaning with which fabrics were imbued on such occasions is also apparent from the ambassadors’ decision to remove the cloths that divided their viewing compartments. Yet messages were not always understood as intended. Nani’s claim that all turned out to the glory of the European states perhaps belies a certain intimidation felt by the vastly outnumbered Westerners, a reaction that would explain why they were so anxious to present a united front at the ceremony. While the Ottomans may have been suitably impressed with what they were given and returned the favor by sending textile gifts of their own, they surely viewed the ambassadors’ far grander offering as a form of collective tribute. Such an interpretation—unsurprisingly sidestepped by Nani’s account—is very much consistent with the tone of the Tarih, which, though no less subjective than the bailo’s dispatch, is a better indicator of what the ceremony’s organizers intended by inviting the Christian representatives.

There is, however, one particular in which the Tarih certainly misrepresents the ambassadors’ experience, and that is its suggestion that some of them renounced their faith in favor of Islam. No conversion of the sort took place, nor is it likely that the text is referring to members of the ambassadors’ retinues. If the claim has any truth to it, the Tarih appears to be conflating the foreign diplomats with Istanbul’s own communities of non-Muslims, who must have been among the general crowds gathered around the mosque precinct, and whose numbers may have included some on-the-spot converts. A still more interesting conflation in the text is that between the Western representatives and the ambassador of the Qizilbash, by which is meant the Shi’i Safavids, treated as infidels on a par with the Christians. The Safavid ambassador finds no mention in Nani’s dispatch and must have attended the ceremony separately from his Christian peers. For all the Ottomans’ anti-Shi’i bluster, he may even have been allowed to join the other Muslim dignitaries inside the complex, as happened on previous occasions when Safavid ambassadors visited Ottoman mosques. But such ecumenism has no place in the textual record of the Tarih, whose ideological rigor sees the Safavids and Europeans treated with equal disdain. This blanket stigmatization conveniently bolsters Ahmed’s flimsy claims to a ghazi status: his greatest military success had been against the Celali rebels, who were, as noted above, tarred with the brush of Shi’ism, and he was at war with the Safavids at the time of the mosque’s opening.

What makes the Tarih’s triumphal conceit so effective, however, is that it does not ultimately rely on any martial corroborations for its force. The very realization of the mosque is itself presented as an overwhelming blow to the empire’s non-Sunni enemies, who, in spite of themselves, are inwardly won over by the feat. Victory in warfare may yet follow, but whether or not it does, Ahmed has, according to the manuscript, already conquered multitudes of nonbelievers through his pious act of patronage. Far from being a mere literary fancy, this audacious redemption of the sultan is the textual imprint of the ceremony’s own potent imagery, which, as Nani indicates, received its verbal affirmation in Shaykh Mahmud’s sermon. The faithful masses who witnessed the mosque’s spectacular consecration were surely convinced that God was on their sovereign’s side, and the limited contingent of foreign ambassadors must have appeared humbled and subjugated by what was happening around them, particularly if any non-Muslims were indeed inspired to convert. The Westerners themselves evidently picked up on the martial mood: it is no coincidence that Nani and the Habsburg ambassador turned to talk of war and Turkish hostility even as the crowds were dispersing. The ceremony’s charged inclusion of these elite “infidel” spectators again helps to explain why it was staged in the first place: as we have seen, a true inauguration would probably not have afforded the leeway to accommodate non-Muslims in such a prominent and formalized manner. Their presence at the event completed its dramatis personae and fulfilled the symbolism of Ahmed’s splendid encampment, positing him as a Muslim conqueror within his own capital.

But it was not only over the unbelievers that Ahmed triumphed that day. The emblematic battle that played out in the mosque’s courtyard was a defeat also for those
UNVER RÜSTEM

Ahmed died of typhus at the age of twenty-seven on November 22, 1617, barely three months after his mosque was inaugurated. It is tempting to wonder if fears for his health were an additional reason why the monument was unveiled with such pomp before its actual opening. Indeed, most of the mosque's ancillaries—including the madrasa, public kitchen, and marketplace—were as yet unfinished upon the sultan's death, and the complex as a whole would not be completed until 1620. The last element to be built was Ahmed's own tomb, a substantial single-domed structure with a porticoed entrance (figs. 3, 4, and 37). Unlike its counterparts at other sultanic foundations, this tomb is located not in the garden behind the mosque's qibla wall, but in a more visible spot outside the precinct at the northernmost end of the complex, from where it faces—and competes with—the dynastic mausolea of the Hagia Sophia (fig. 9). It is adjacent, moreover, to the Sultan Ahmed's madrasa, identifying the patron in perpetuity as a friend to the ulema. The tomb thus acts as a satellite of the mosque to which it pertains, redoubling in miniaturized form the architectural glorification and legitimation of its founder. In this it recalls another vaulted dependency that had been erected on the grounds of the mosque for much the same purpose: the tent of the dome-closing ceremony. The relationship between the two structures is all the more palpable given that sultanic mausolea were often preceded by tents that served as temporary grave coverings. Although this custom seems not to have been followed in Ahmed's case, his tomb already had its formal and symbolic forerunner in the tent of the 1617 festival.

The later history of the mosque would reiterate how thoroughly its reputation had been consolidated. In June 1826, when the reformist Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) launched his own battle in Istanbul by resolving to extinguish the unruly janissary corps, it was to the Sultan Ahmed Mosque that his supporters were called. They gathered there under the Prophet's Sacred Standard, which had been temporarily brought from the Topkapi Palace and raised inside the prayer hall on the minbar. In a practical replaying of the dome-closing ceremony, tents were pitched in the mosque's outer court, as well as on the Hippodrome, and from this encampment the sultan's loyal officers and subjects mounted their fatal attack against the janissaries, who were branded heretics and crypto-Christians. Though in part determined by the building's advantageous location and open surroundings, the use of the mosque as a loyalist headquarters also reflected the extent to which it had come to embody religio-imperial authority. Those who set up the 1826 encampment are unlikely to have done so with any knowledge of its festive precedent, but their militarization of the site nonetheless instantiated, and thereby endorsed, what the dome-closing ceremony had so impressed visualized over two centuries earlier.

CONCLUSION

Ahmed died of typhus at the age of twenty-seven on November 22, 1617, barely three months after his mosque was inaugurated. It is tempting to wonder if fears for his health were an additional reason why the monument was unveiled with such pomp before its actual opening. Indeed, most of the mosque's ancillaries—including the madrasa, public kitchen, and marketplace—were as yet unfinished upon the sultan's death, and the complex as a whole would not be completed until 1620. The last element to be built was Ahmed's own tomb, a substantial single-domed structure with a porticoed entrance (figs. 3, 4, and 37). Unlike its counterparts at other sultanic foundations, this tomb is located not in the garden behind the mosque's qibla wall, but in a more visible spot outside the precinct at the northernmost end of the complex, from where it faces—and competes with—the dynastic mausolea of the Hagia Sophia (fig. 9). It is adjacent, moreover, to the Sultan Ahmed's madrasa, identifying the patron in perpetuity as a friend to the ulema. The tomb thus acts as a satellite of the mosque to which it pertains, redoubling in miniaturized form the architectural glorification and legitimation of its founder. In this it recalls another vaulted dependency that had been erected on the grounds of the mosque for much the same purpose: the tent of the dome-closing ceremony. The relationship between the two structures is all the more palpable given that sultanic mausolea were often preceded by tents that served as temporary grave coverings. Although this custom seems not to have been followed in Ahmed's case, his tomb already had its formal and symbolic forerunner in the tent of the 1617 festival.

This event was, as I have demonstrated, among the most extraordinary ever held in the Ottoman Empire, and the highpoint of a ceremonial campaign already unparalleled in richness and extent. Ahmed's readiness to lavish such attention on his mosque was an astute and effective strategy by which to stir wider enthusiasm for the building and secure its place in the public eye. No moment in the mosque's festive history could have been more compelling in this regard than when the sultan processed to an encampment in its precinct and sent his clerics to close its dome with their prayers. Against
the odds, and making full use of the power of ceremony, Ahmed succeeded that day in staking his claim to the monument that he was never entitled to build.

_Author’s note:_ In addition to the individuals named in the notes and credited in the captions, I should like to thank Gülru Necipoğlu and Emine Fetvacı for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of this article; Ashley Dimmig for sharing her valuable knowledge of Ottoman tents; Deborah Howard and Vittorio Mandelli for their kind help with a Venetian dispatch; Reha Günay and Bo Ljungström for generously providing me with images; Güven Erten for his excellent photographs and site plan; and Karen Leal for her sensitive and expert editing. I am grateful also to Kate Fleet and Ebru Boyar for inviting me to present a version of this paper at the conference “The Ottomans and Entertainment” (June 29–July 2, 2016, Newnham College, Cambridge), where I received helpful feedback. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own (see the note at the start of the appendix).

2. Typical in this regard is Godfrey Goodwin (History of Ottoman Architecture, 344), who writes, “The mosque is a marriage of other men’s ideas in most but not all particulars, and where it is not inspired by previous masterpieces it is often unguarded or monotonous since the dominant ideas were size and splendour.”


4. Quoted and translated ibid., 60.

5. See Necipoğlu, Ottoman Architecture, 361.

6. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 510.

7. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 256–57.

8. Kaban (Ottoman Architecture, 361) disregards Ottoman codes of decorum and opines that “Mürad III and Mehmed III had undoubtedly failed to honour an old state tradition” by not constructing large complexes.


14. The palaces had been built by Sinan for two princess-vizier couples—Mehrimah Sultan (d. 1578) and Rüstem Pasha (d. 1561), and Ismihan Sultan (d. 1585) and Sokollu Mehmed Pasha (d. 1579)—and were bought from their descendants. For the purchase of this and other land for the complex, see Bilge, “Sultanahmed Cami ve Külliyesi,” 529–41; Fetcavi, “Music, Light and Flowers,” 233–34; and Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 514.


17. Dispatch dated January 27, 1610 (1609 old style), The National Archives, UK (henceforth TNA), SP 97/6, fols. 150a–50b, copied also on fols. 151a–51b.

18. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 514; and Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire, 1:88–89. A qasida written in praise of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque no later than 1614 calls on God to render “the Shah of the [Safavid] Heretics...powerless before” Ahmed, and to let the sultan “be triumphant and victorious, and a vanquisher and a taker of spoils”: see Cafer Efendi, Risâle-i Mi‘mâriyye: An Early Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Treatise on Architecture, trans. and ed. Howard Crane (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987), 75–76.

19. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 514, 516.

20. I am grateful to Fariba Zarinnezhad for discussing this idea with me.


25. For a critical edition of his chronicle, see Muştafa Şafi, Zübdetü’t-Tevarîh.

26. See Muştafa Şafi, Zübdetü’t-Tevarîh, 1:48; and Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire, 1:88. Avcıoğlu (“Ahmed I and the Allegories of Tyranny,” 219) writes that Ahmed used his victory over the Celalis “as an excuse to build a new royal mosque bearing his name.”

27. Dispatch dated October 22, 1609, TNA, SP 97/6, fol. 139a.


29. Ibid., 146–48.

30. Muştafa Şafi, Zübdetü’t-Tevarîh, 151. I owe these translations, and my knowledge of the source, to Fetcavi, “Music, Light and Flowers,” 234; and Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 515.
31. See Ca’fer Efendi, Risâle.
32. Ibid., 66.
33. Ibid., 67.
35. Apart from the royal pavilion to be discussed below, these dependencies originally included a madrasa, Koran school, primary school, marketplace (arasta), bathhouse, public kitchen, hospital, tomb, drinking fountains, and various associated dwellings, shops, and storehouses; see Nayir, Sultan Ahmet Külüyesi, 44–48. Today, only the madrasa, primary school, tomb, bathhouse, and arasta survive: see Kuban, Ottoman Architecture, 369.
36. See Fetvacı, “Music, Light and Flowers.”
37. Fetvacı, “Music, Light and Flowers,” 224; and Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 517. For the Şehzade Mosque, see Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 191–207.
38. See Fetvacı, “Music, Light and Flowers,” 226; and Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 517.
39. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 512.
40. This is the view held by Necipoğlu (Age of Sinan, 517), who writes that “[t]he decision to reinterpret the scheme of the Şehzade mosque, rather than of the Süleymaniye or Selimiye, tactily admits the forbidding perfections of the chief architect’s two supreme masterpieces.”
41. Though the Süleymaniye is higher than the Sultan Ahmed (their domes reach 53 and 43 meters respectively), the two mosques are of comparable width and length, both covering an area of about 114 by 65 meters.
42. Suitably struck by this distinction, Grelot (Late Voyage to Constantinoople, 210) describes the Sultan Ahmed Mosque as “being the only Temple of all that ever [he] saw in the East, which has six Towers, whereas the rest have not above Two or Four at most.” The still widespread belief that the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca had only six minarets when the Sultan Ahmed was built and that the sultan—criticized for rivaling this number—was compelled to add a seventh is apocryphal: see Goodwin, History of Ottoman Architecture, 343.
45. See Fetvacı, “Music, Light and Flowers,” 235; and Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 517–18.
47. Goodwin (History of Ottoman Architecture, 346), for example, calls them “oppressively big” and “damaging to the proportions of the dome.”
48. Though somewhat ambivalent in its appraisal, a well-known nineteenth-century travel guide describes these “enormous columns, whose thickness bears no proportion to their height,” as the Sultan Ahmed Mosque’s “most remarkable feature.” See A Hand-Book for Travellers in the Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Constantinople: Being a Guide to the Principal Routes in those Countries, Including a Description of Malta, with Maxims and Hints for Travellers in the East (London: John Murray, 1840), 177.
49. So many tiles were needed that some had to be reused from earlier buildings. See Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby, İznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey, ed. Yanni Petsopoulos (London: Alexandria Press, 1989), 274, 278; Goodwin, History of Ottoman Architecture, 349; and Öz, “Sultan Ahmed Camii,” 26–27.
50. Grelot, Late Voyage to Constantinoople, 211–12. Similarly, the French diplomat Louis Deshayes (d. 1632) considered it “[t]he most beautiful of all the mosques that the Ottoman Princes have had built”: see Deshayes, Voyage de Levant, 104, as translated into English in Avcıoğlu, “Ahmed I and the Allegories of Tyranny,” 220.
52. For this pavilion, see Kuban, Ottoman Architecture, 365–69; and Nayir, Sultan Ahmet Külüyesi, 78–79.
53. See Atpullah Kuran, “The Evolution of the Sultan’s Pavilion in Ottoman Imperial Mosques,” Islamic Art 4 (1990–91): 281–301; and Ünver Rüstem, “Architecture for a New Age: Imperial Ottoman Mosques in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013), 176–202, 329–50. Citing the association between elite Ottoman women and waterside kiosks, Lucienne This-Şenocak proposes that the idea of the mosque pavilion may have originated with the Yeni Cami, whose own pavilion was, she argues, probably being built when Ahmed halted the project. There is, however, no evidence to substantiate this hypothesis, which is based on This-Şenocak’s assertion that the early seventeenth century witnessed no significant ceremonial changes to bring about such a pavilion type. On the contrary—and as I argue in this article—the Sultan Ahmed Mosque was from the outset associated with highly augmented ceremonial practices, and this alone would convincingly account for why its pavilion stands as the earliest example of its kind. See Lucienne This-Şenocak, “The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü, Istanbul (1597–1665): Gender and Vision in Ottoman Architecture,” in Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 69–89, esp. 74–77.

12. Jean de Gontaut-Biron, baron de Salignac, Weisser Pas (trans. Helen Hardman, 2 vols. [London: T. Egerton, 1617]), vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 84. The translation is Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall’s; for the original Ottoman, see the following note.

13. See the translation in Narrative of Travels, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 84–85, paraphrased into English in Narrative of Travels, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 84–85. The feast is conflated with the earlier foundation ceremony in Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 516.

14. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 516, from where the translated quotation is taken.


16. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 516, where the inclusion of coffee at the ritual is linked to “the expansion of the public sphere during the seventeenth century, an epoch of urban ‘mass’ culture.” It is notable in this regard—and further proof of the drive to turn the mosque into a locus of sociability—that the complex originally included a coffeehouse: see Bilge, “Sultanahmet Cami ve Külliyesi,” 525.


18. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 516, from where the translated quotation is taken.
81. As noted by Fetvacı ("Music, Light and Flowers," 239), who refers to the same observation made by Ignatius Mourad-gea d’Ohsson, for whose descriptions of the mosque’s ceremonial functions see the following two notes.


83. Hand-Book for Travellers, 177. The edition cited here (see n. 48 above for the full reference) was published in 1840; later versions of the book, published until the end of the nineteenth century, give the same information. The two Eids were being celebrated at the Sultan Ahmed Mosque already by the late eighteenth century: see d’Ohsson, Tableau général, 2358 and 451, rendered into English in d’Ohsson, Oriental Antiquities, 478, 530.


85. See n. 78 above.

86. See Barkan, Suleymaniye Cami ve İmaretı, 161–62, where additional celebrations marking other stages of the mosque’s construction are also discussed. A much later example of such an event is the ceremony held at the Nurs-ereiye Mosque in 1825 to signal the start of the raising of its dome, the supporting piers of which were festively decked with rich textile hangings: see Es’ad Efendi, Vak’a-nüvîs Es’ad Efendî Tarihî (Bâhir Efendi’nin Zeyl ve İlâveleriyle), 1237–1241/1821–1826, ed. Ziya Yılmazer (Istanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2000), 460–61. Es’ad describes the event as following "ancient exalted royal custom [a’det-i dirîn-i salṭanat-i seniyye]," though I have not found any comparable instances other than the festivities related to the Suleymaniye. Regardless of its pedigree, the ceremony was nowhere near as elaborate as what took place at the Sultan Ahmed: for one thing, it was presided over by the grand vizier rather than the mosque’s founder, the great reformist sultan Mahmud II. Mahmud was nevertheless deeply invested in the Nusretiye and wished, like Ahmed before him, to create a monument redolent of triumph and suitable as a venue for royal ceremonial: see Rüstem, "Victory in the Making," 92–115.

87. With Ottoman diacritics, this title would be written Târîh-i binâ-yî cāmi’î-i Sultan Ahmed-i evvel, though, as I shall presently discuss, it is far from certain that this name was historically valid for the book. I am extremely grateful to Samet Budak for checking the Süleymaniye Library’s cata-logue to confirm the details of its entry for the work. He also inquired into how and when the photocopy of the manuscript was acquired; neither the library’s staff nor its paper records could offer any answers.

88. The omission of the Turkish possessive suffix from the word cāmi’ suggests that the title was copied by a speaker of Arabic unfamiliar with Turkish grammar.

89. The first folio is not numbered and so is here reckoned as o. The foliation for the rest of the manuscript often appears extremely indistinct in the photocopy, though there seem to be two folios counted as 28, the second of which I have called 28.1 (see n. 55 of the appendix). The book must have been rebound at some point, as the folios now numbered 2–4 have erroneously been moved out of sequence, exchanging their place with for what are now fols. 5–7.

90. The other exceptions are the final folio, which has only three lines, and fol. 39a, which has an additional line to correct a scribal oversight (see n. 73 of the appendix).

91. As suggested to me by Tim Stanley, it is also possible that Mustafa Agha himself commissioned the work for presentation to the sultan. The text’s unabated flattery of the agha is, however, more appropriate to the recipient of such a gift rather than its originator.

92. See Şüreyya, Sicill-i Osmani, 4136; and Uluçay, Harem, 122.

93. See n. 82 of the appendix.

94. The three parts of the text are closely related: the second qasida is liberally quoted in the prose narrative, while the latter shares with the first qasida an apparent indebtedness to the work of the sixteenth-century soldier and poet Taşlıcalı Yahya (d. ca. 1582): see nn. 14 and 65 of the appendix. The Süleymaniye Library’s catalogue misleadingly identifies Mustafa Agha as the Tarih’s author.

95. Tarih, fols. 0b–1b, 5a–7b, 2a. All references to the manu-script refer to the images reproduced on pp. 300–324 and to my transliteration and translation in the appendix. See also n. 89 above.

96. Tarih, fols. 2a–3b.

97. Ibid., fol. 3a.

98. Ibid., fol. 4a.

99. Ibid., fols. 4b, 8a–8b.

100. Abdü’l-Kadir Efendi, Topçular Kâtibi Tarihî, 651–52; Kâtib Çelebi, Fezelek, 1383; and Na’imâ, Tarih, 2:378. Like the Tarih, the first source uses the term harem, while the second and third use sâha. Both terms are ambiguous and could denote either the mosque’s porticoed forecourt or its outer precinct.

101. Tarih, fols. 8b–9b.


103. Tarih, fols. 10a–12b.


105. Tarih, fols. 13a–14b.

106. Ibid., fol. 14a.

107. Ibid., fols. 16a–17a.


109. See Emine Fetvacı, Picturing History at the Ottoman Court (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press,


112. i bid., 651.

113. See n. 162 below.


115. i bid., fols. 19b–21a.

116. i bid., fols. 21a–22b.

117. i bid., fols. 22b–23b. İdris Agha was the third project head; his predecessors were Kalender Agha (later Kalender Pasha), who died in 1616, and Hüseyin Agha. See ‘Abdü’l-Kâdir Efendi, *Topçular Kâtihi Tarihi*, 647–48; and Bilge, *Sultanahmed Cami ve Külliyesi*, 541–42.


119. i bid., fols. 25b–27a.

120. i bid., fols. 27b, 29a–30r.

121. Kâtib Çelebi, *Topçular Kâtihi Tarihi*, fols. 27b, 29a–30r.

122. i bid., fols. 32b–34b.

123. i bid., fols. 32b–34b.

124. Indeed, the first qasida seems to have been composed with reference to Taşlıcalı Yahya’s sixteenth-century encomium on the Hagia Sophia: see n. 65 of the appendix. It is interesting to note that this qasida has far less in common with its counterpart by Cafer Efendi, for which see n. 127 below.

125. *Tarih*, fols. 30a and 37a.

126. i bid., fol. 34b.

127. Similarly, a qasida written by Cafer Efendi no later than 1614 describes the mosque as if it were complete. The author in this case had seen the architect’s designs, which no doubt proved helpful in envisaging the final work. See Cafer Efendi, *Risâle*, 65, 73–76.


129. i bid., fol. 41b.

130. i bid., fols. 45a–45b.


135. Most scholars give the date of the mosque’s inauguration as (or close to) June 8, 1617, and several treat the dome-closing ceremony itself as the official opening; see, for example, Bilge, “Sultanahmed Cami ve Külliyesi,” 542; Nayır, *Sultan Ahmet Külliyesi*, 46; and Öz, “Sultan Ahmed Camii,” 26. Other than the *Tarih*, the only source, historical or otherwise, that I have encountered with the correct month for the mosque’s opening (no day is specified) is a description of Istanbul written by the Ottoman-Armenian historian and teacher Sargs Hovhannisian (d. 1805), who was a native of the city: see Sargs Hovhannisian [Sarkis Sarraf Hovhannesyan], *Payitaht İstanbul’un Tarihçesi*, trans. Elmon Hanger (Istanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996). 3. A similar confusion once pertained to the Süleymaniye, for the chronicler Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi (d. 1567), in his description of the mosque, gives the date on which its dome was closed—August 16, 1556—but not that of its inauguration, which took place over a year later in October 1557. Until the chronology was settled by Barkan, many historians mistook the date provided by Celalzade as referring to the mosque’s completion or opening. Celalzade’s celebratory reference to the closing of the Süleymaniye’s dome shows that the Sultan Ahmed was not the first mosque to have this milestone recognized. As discussed above in the main text, however, there is no definitive evidence that the Süleymaniye’s dome-closing occasioned any festivities, and certainly nothing on the scale of the 1617 ceremony. See Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi, *Geschichte Sultan Süleymâns Kânûnîs von 1520 bis 1557, oder, Tabakât il-Memâlik ve Derecat il-Mesâlik*, ed. Petra Kappert (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1981), fol. 52a of the facsimile, rendered into modern Turkish in Celâlzâde [Celâloğlu Mustafa], *Tabakatul Memalik ve Derecatul Mesalik: Osmanlı İmparatoluğunun Yükselme Devrinde Türk Ordusunun Savaslar ve Devletin Kurumu*, 13 ve 18 Sivasası, trans. Sadettin Tokdemir (Istanbul: Askerî Matbaa, 1937), 254; and Barkan, *Süleymaniye Cami ve İmaret*, 154–64.

136. See *Tarih*, fols. 32b–34b.


138. *Tarih*, fols. 18b–19a. For the celestial lotus tree, see n. 104 of the appendix.


143. For Ahmed’s extensive renovation, which took place between 1607 and 1609, see Necipoğlu, “Life of an Imperial Monument,” 211–219. It seems that some of the figural
mosaics that had been left unobscured until the seventeenth century, including the image of Christ Pantokrator in the dome, were painted over during this campaign.

144. Fetcı (*Music, Light and Flowers*, 235) also argues that the Hagia Sophia’s Christian past may have acted as a foil to the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. It is interesting to note that the Sultan Ahmed Mosque’s other great forerunner—the Suleymaniye—had been the subject of malicious rumors questioning the stability of its dome during construction. Sinan would, of course, prove the skeptics wrong, but the questioning the stability of its dome during construction.

145. For illustrations and descriptions of such tents, see Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun*, fols. 4b, 8a.


148. For Ottoman tents in martial contexts, see Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun*, esp. 64–67. It is an interesting coincidence that the corps of imperial tentmakers had its headquarters close to the Sultan Ahmed Mosque in the sixteenth-century Palace of Ibrahim Pasha: ibid., 23–30.

149. The subject is expounded at length in Muṣṭafā Ṣāfī, *Tarih*, fols. 4b, 8a.


154. The sultan is recorded as having worn a representation of the Prophet’s footprint on the aigrette of his turban: see Bilge, “Sultanahmet Cami ve Külliyesi,” 525, 526.

155. **Tarih**, fols. 35a–35b. Cafer Efendi (*Risâle*, 75), in his gasida on the mosque, likewise praises the sultan’s patronage of the Ka’ba.


157. See n. 68 of the appendix, and Necipoğlu, “Life of an Imperial Monument,” 201. Eighteenth-century sources compare several imperial mosques of the period—including the Nuruosmaniye, Ayazma (1755–60), and Laleli (1760–63)—to the Ka’ba or its heavenly prototype, though they do not explicitly discuss these mosques as substitute pilgrimage sites: see Rüstem, “Architecture for a New Age,” 226, 259, 278.


159. See Ahmed Efendi, *III. Selim’in Sırkâti* Ahmed Efendi Tarihinden Tutulan Rûznâme, ed. V. Sema Arık (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basmevi, 1993), 294; and *Başlangıçandan Günümüze Kadar Büyük Türk Klâskâleri: Tarih, Antoloji, Ansklopedi*, vol. 6 (İstanbul: Ötüken; Ankara: Söğüt, 1987), 145, where the location specified is the mosque’s portico (*revâk*).

159. See *Hand-Book for Travellers*, 177.


161. [21b] Martedì passato, 6, del presente il Bassà mandò à tutte le case degli ambasciatori, et à me ancora con un chiaus à far avisato, che dovessimo mandar og’n’uno di noi il dragoman grande perché voleva parlarle, il che fu esequito. Andati dunque il Bassà disse, che dovendo Sua Maestà per il giovedì seguente far li primi sacrifici nella sua nova moschea invitava li signori Ambasciatori et Bailo di Venetia à honorar la festività di quel giorno, et che si sarebbe assegnato luoco commodo per veder Sua Maestà et il concorso del populo, che sarebbe grandissimo. Fu accettato dalli dragomani l’invito soggiogendo, che haveressimo ricevuto in favor singolare, et ritornati che furono li dragomani passò parola fra gli Ambasciatori di Francia, Inghilterra, Fiandra, et me di ciò, che si doveva fare in questa occasione poiché secondo il costume de Turchi se un fabbrica una casa quando è ridotta a perfezione tutti quelli del vicinato le mandano a donar chi una cosa chi un’altra in segno di benivolenza, et di allegrezza. Questa è stata una spesa altrettanto necessaria quanto seta. Questa è stata una spesa altrettanto necessaria quanto
che ne anco si può schiﬀare di presentare questi nuovi mini-
stri, et massime a tempi presenti, ne quali ricerca il servizio pubblico, che non si habbia a restrin gere la mano; mi duole in estremo queste frequenti mutationi de Bassà et altri del governo di questa Porta, conoscendo l’interesse, che da ciò ne riceve la Serenità vostra per rispetto della spesa. Ma dove vi concorre la necessità il dispiacer non serve di rimedio. La moschea del Gran Signore è fabricata da un lato della piazza dell’ipodromo, nella quale si sogliono fare li spettacoli pubblici in tempo di noce [sic, nozze] del Sultan de retaglia de Principi. In questa all’incontro di detta moschea fu un largo corridore coperto alli, 4. Ambasciati, et a me, assegnato un luogo a ciascheduno diviso in forme di stanza con le ale de padiglioni, onde io dissi all’Ambasciatore di Flandra sorridendo, che non havesse pur bene, che essendo noi uniti insieme con li nostri Principi di animo, et di volontà, questi ci volessero dividere, però comandassimo, che fusse levata la tela, che ci separava, et il medesimo poco appresso fece Inghilterra, et di mano in mano Franza, et l’Ambasciatore dell’Imperatore di modo che di cinque stanche [sic, stanze] ne fu fatta una sola, riducendosi tutti verso il [213a] luogo dell’Ambasciatore Cesareo, come quello, che era più a fronte della Porta per dove entrava il Rè nel cortile della moschea. In questa sacrificarono diversi castrati in honor del Profeta, poi ad una certa ora osservata da loro in quel giorno per felice, fecero la cirimonia di metter l’ultima pietra nella sommità della pupola maggiore di detta moschea, sopra la quale conforme al loro uso vi piantano una gran Luna tutta dorata. Dopo per quanto ci fu riferito predicò lungamente uno di questi loro principali santoni, lodando la bontà del Rè con biasimar poi in generale l’ingiustizia et la capacità de nemici. Usci poi Sua Maestà dalla moschea nel cortile di essa, et si pose sotto un picciol padiglione, ove non solo li visiri, musti, caddischiier, ma inﬁniti principali ancora andarono a baciare la mano augurandole felicità, et la maggior parte de essi furono vestiti di una veste; ma il Primo Visir ne ebbe tre, due de quali erano di zebellini, et tutte tre le ha portate indosso non ostante la staggione [sic, stagione] senza sentirme alcun travaglio. Finita questa cirimonia usci il Rè sopra un cavallo di singolar bellezza guarinato tutto di gioie, per quanto dicono di valorù di 30 mila cechin, che le ha donato in quel giorno il Chislarasi. Ad esso precedevano pur a cavallo li due Principi et tutti li visiri, et altri grandi della Porta, oltra la guardia de’ gianizzeri, et spahi, ma in poco numero, supplica nondimeno il concorso grandissimo del popolo, che era fermato sopra la piazza [213b] per vederlo, et che pasando ad alta voce lo salutava.

L’Ambasciatore Cesareo mentre stissantio aspettando che cessasse la calca del popolo mi dimandò che buone noie io havessi intorno alla pace. Io risposi, che di ciò ne haverei dimandato a sua eccellenza, et che non poteva dir altro, se non che la Serenissima Repubblica non si allontanerebbe mai dal giusto, et ragionevo ne, che le cose anderanno inanzi la colpa sarà de ministri di quelli Principi, che non consigliano il ben commune. Rispose l’Ambasciatore sarebbe ormai tempo, che cessassero queste armi, perché in ﬁne siamo tutti cristiani, et questi turchi di altro non godono, che di vederci insanguinar le mani tra di noi.

Partimmo poi tutti insieme a cavallo, et dopo caminato un pezzo di strada l’Ambasciatore Cesareo si licentì per andar al suo alloggiamento, et noi altri tutti insieme andammo [sic] alla marina per passar il canale; non si tosto io giunsi à casa, il Bassà mi mandò a presentar una nobilissima veste d’oro, et il simile ha fatto con tutti li altri ambasciatori; in somma questo Primo Visir non studia altro, che in trovar modo et maniera [?] di honorar li ministri di Principi, come all’incontro il Caimecan passato non haveva [213a] altra mira, che di farci alcun opprobio [sic], ma lodato il Signor Dio, ch’il tutto è riuscito à maggior gloria di quelli Principi, che noi rappresentamo.

Dispatch dated June 13, 1617, State Archives of Venice, Senato, Distaccati Costantinopolì, filza 83, 15/II, fols. 211a–221b. I discovered this document through a partial English translation published in Allen B. Hinds, ed., Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy, vol. 14, 1615–1617 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Oﬃce, 1908), 523–24 (alternatively under “795. Almoro Nani, Venetian Ambassador in Constantinople, to the Doge and Senate,” http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol14/pp513-525). Deborah Howard kindly located the original Italian document, which contains much information omitted from the State Papers translation, and Vittorio Mandelli very generously provided the meticulous transcription given above. My English rendering adapts where possible the existing State Papers version, and the remaining passages have been translated with the help and advice of Deborah Howard, Thomas Newbold, Lavinia Puccetti, and Andrew Halladay, to all of whom I am extremely grateful. It is interesting to note that the dispatch as sent from Istanbul was largely written in cypher.
The Dome-Closing Ceremony of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque

165. Shah Tahmasp's sending of gifts and letters is well attested, but a sixteenth-century Ottoman chronicle now in Vienna (cited below) indicates that these were presented in June 1557, some months before the Süleymaniye was opened. Whether the Safavid envoy stayed on for the inauguration is unclear; he is not mentioned in the known accounts of the event. Matrika Naṣīḥ (?), formerly misattributed to Rüstem Pasha, Tarih-i āl-i ʿOsmanān, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Mxt. 339, fol. 282a (available at http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AL00465234), summarized in Ludwig Forrer, trans., Die osmanische Chronik des Rustem Pascha (Leipzig: Mayer & Müller, 1923), 89–90; Feridun Beg, Meemāʿuʾa-i mjâneʿâtīs-šelâtîn, 2 vols. (İstanbul, 1264–65 [1848–49]), 1:124–29, summarized and partially translated in Hammer-Purgstall, Geschichte, 3345–48; Bates, “Patronage of Süleyman,” 70; Eyice, “Avrupa’l bir Ressamin Gözü ile Kanuni Sultan Süleyman,” 159–67; and M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, “Süleyman I,” in İslâm Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul, 1940–88), 139. I am grateful to Sinem Casale for sharing references with me on this topic.

166. To be sure, certain members of the Safavid delegation present at the 1582 circumcision festival are recorded as having converted to Sunnism, but this was only after the ambassador was expelled or imprisoned when news reached Istanbul that the Safavids had broken their truce with the Ottomans: see Terzioğlu, “Imperial Circumcision Festival,” 85–87. The Safavid ambassador was separately accommodated at other festivals also: see the preceding note.

167. It was not unusual for non-Muslims to convert to Islam during princely circumcision festivals, including the famous celebrations of 1582. The English chaplain Dr. John Covel (d. 1722) witnessed such an event in Edirne in 1675, noting in his travel account that at least two hundred non-Muslims, “many of riper yeares,” spontaneously indicated their desire to convert during the thirteen-day festivities and were led away to a tent to be circumcised. The magnificence of the ceremony itself must have played an important role in wooing people to the faith; as Covel observes, “the Turkes would be so farre from hindering your seeing, as they would make way for you.” Outside such festive contexts, other would-be converts announced their intentions at the imperial council, where they were richly rewarded in a ceremony that became increasingly codified in the seventeenth century: the first recorded instance of new Muslims being gifted clothes occurred in 1609, the year that work began on the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. See Terzioğlu, “Imperial Circumcision Festival,” 85; J. Theodore Bent, ed., Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant (London: Hakluyt Society, 1893), 209–10; Finkel, Osman’s Dream, 276–77; Marc David Baer, Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 179–203, 293n39; and Tijana Krstić, “Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 51, no. 1 (January 2009): 35–63, esp. 58. For the staging of the 1675 festival, see Atasoy, Otaq-i Hümayun, 68–69.

168. Such denigration of the Safavids was not new. At the circumcision festival of 1582, the Habsburg ambassador is supposed to have complained at having to be seated with his Safavid counterpart, whom he considered inferior. He cited as proof the grand mufti’s fatwa that it was better to kill one Qizilbash than seventy infidels (i.e., Christians). Regardless of the truth of this story, the Western diplomats were indeed provided with their own tribune. The Safavids, though seated with other foreign Muslim dignitaries, were taunted throughout the festival, and more bitingly than the Christians. See Terzioğlu, “Imperial Circumcision Festival,” 85–87.

169. The Safavid ambassador was separately accommodated at other festivals also: see the preceding note.


171. Tarih, fol. 28a.

172. Ibid., fols. 34a–34b.


174. Tellingly, perhaps, a dispatch from the English ambassador reporting the sultan’s death states that “it had beene falslie rumored he was dead 40. dais before.” Dispatch dated November 28, 1617, TNA, SP 97/7, fol. 174a.

175. See Kuban, Ottoman Architecture, 369; and Nayır, Sultan Ahmet Külliyesi, 46.


177. See Necipoğlu, Age of Sinan, 517.


179. See Yazar, “Osmanlı Dinişin Merasimlerinde Otaq Kurma Gelenekleri,” 115. A report from the English ambassador states that the sultan’s coffin was “laid in his tombe, nott yett fullie finished in his new Moscckca” (dispatch dated November 28, 1617, TNA, SP 97/7, fol. 174b), which strongly suggests that the building was far enough along not to require a tent.
REPRODUCTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fotokopi No. 294 (facsimile of a manuscript in Baghdad, Iraqi Academy of Sciences).
(Photos: courtesy of the Süleymaniye Library)
ÜNVER RÜSTEM

3b–4a.

4b–5a.
27b–28a.

THE DOME-CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SULTAN AHMED MOSQUE

28.1b–29a.

29b–30a.
42b–43a.

43b–44a.
UNVER RÜSTEM

46b–47a.
Author's note: I have followed the archaizing "pre-1700" system of Ottoman transliteration, which faithfully reflects Turkish orthography. The Tarih contains numerous misspellings: those that are (or appear to be) merely accidental are corrected in the transliteration and indicated in the footnotes; those that are recurrent or constitute non-standard variants are transliterated as written. Words and sentences inscribed in gold appear throughout the manuscript, and I have represented them using italics in both the transliteration and the translation. All other typographical features, including capitalization and punctuation, are my own, as is the paragraphing. Compound words that are formed of separately written elements in the manuscript are hyphenated as necessary in the transliteration, while those that have been written as single words are transliterated as such if the closed form is attested in the modern Redhouse dictionary, and hyphenated if not. Folio numbers are set in bold-face and indicated in square brackets, and though these numbers are inserted into the translation as well, grammatical differences mean that it is not always possible to map the Ottoman foliation neatly onto the English text. I am grateful to Edhem Eldem, Gülru Necipoğlu, and András Riedlmayer for their help with a number of linguistic queries. All errors are my own.

Tarih-i binâ-yı cāmi‘-i Sulṭān Aḥmed-i evvel / Sulṭān Aḥmed cāmi‘i tārīḥi


Ve şalavât-ı bi-pâyân ve taḥiyyât-ı bi-kerânic ol Rûstûl-i şakalıyeve ve ol râhmet-i [5b] ‘âlemine ve ol kân-ı şidık u şâfâyâ ve ol ‘umân-ı cûd-ı vefâyâ, a‘nî Ḥażret-i

APPENDIX


1. For details of the manuscript, including its speculative title, see pp. 270–72 of the main article.
2. Because it precedes the folio numbered 1, this page is here counted as fol. ob.
3. Erroneous for fâ’îk. Arabic words of this form are frequently spelled with a ye rather than the requisite hemze in Ottoman, as is the case throughout the manuscript. Subsequent instances of this error will be indicated only by their transliteration.
4. Erroneous for meşîçet.
5. Unattested in the dictionaries, mekâşiﬁf is apparently a nonce form coined on analogy with mevâkîf and related in meaning to mûkäşiﬁye, defined in Redhouse’s Lexicon as “God’s openly manifesting himself to a saint; spiritual communion with God.”
6. The manuscript has evidently been rebound at some point in its history, as the folios now numbered 2–4 have mistakenly been placed where those numbered 5–7 belong, and vice versa. My transliteration and translation restore the correct order while retaining the modern foliation.
7. Spelled rather than the correct ; the scribe has erroneously written for  and vice versa. See also the preceding note.
14. the hippodrome is termed
13. these couplets, for which I have found no source, may

Sübhānehü ve teʿālā ḥażretleri anuñ şān-ı şerīfinde ʿlev-
ʿālem ve sebeb-i ẓuhūr-ı evlād-ı Benī Ādem'dür ki Ḥaḳḳ
has accidentally been omitted.

11. the dot of the ḫı
lāke, ʿev lāke, lemmā ḫalaḳtü'l-eflāk

10. 袐
12. üzre var eyle.13

Eyle // Ki bundan yeğ duʿā olmaz İlāhī / ʿ adālet taḥtı
salṭanatda neslin aṣlın /
bağında berḫ vordār eyle // Bahrde berrde sen İlyās u
aʿnī 

ע
ד
ב
א
נ
י
ת
ן

Sulṭān Aḥmed Ḫān—han],[n. 10 below.]

Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

The word has been superscribed.

Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

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kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

The word has been superscribed.

Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müṣrīkīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

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Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

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Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

The word has been superscribed.

Ba deʿzān:10 Ol sulṭān-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve kāhir-i
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣur-ı mümnün-i muvaḥḥidin ve
kaṭīl-i müşrikīn ve mülḥidīn ve dārende-i vüzerāʾ-ı
kahramān-i cihāniyān ve nāṣır-ı müʾminīn ve muvaḥḥidīn
sün / ol raḥīm ol Kerīm ol Ġafūr-ī kirdigār.9

The word has been superscribed.

27. The dot of the f is accidentally been omitted.

28. The word tulâq (Arabic tulaq) is not attested in the Turkish dictionaries, and its normal Arabic senses (which include "race" and "shot") do not fit the context. Steingass, however, records the compound tulaq’l-vajh, "of an open countenance; cheerful, smiling," and this overlaps with the Ottoman usage of the related word tulaqat, defined in Redhouse’s Lexicon as "a day’s being mild and bright" and "a countenance’s being cheerful." Such a meaning is clearly intended by the questionably formed tulaq, which the Tarih’s author may have coined by confusing tulaqat with tulaqât and replacing the Arabic plural suffix with its Turkish equivalent.

29. İcâbet is erroneously marked with a sükün.

30. The two couplets are taken from the second qasida (fols. 42b–43a), where, however, they are not contiguous.

31. Devâ‘îm appears to be a spurious pluralization of dâ‘îm, formed on analogy with the preceding word. The seat bearing the hemze has needlessly been provided with the dots of a ye. See n. 99 below.

32. While the intended meaning is clear, it is curious that this couplet is formed on analogy with the preceding word. The seat bearing the hemze has needlessly been provided with the dots of a ye. See n. 99 below.

33. See n. 101 below. The full rhyme in its usual form is: Çağır Zerzır Koşu, Çağır Zerzır Koşu

34. The word appears to be a misspelling of zorkâr.


43. I have found no source for this couplet.
44. The hemze has not been inscribed.
45. The couplet is taken from the second qasida (fol. 44b), where it is used in relation to Mustafa Ağa rather than Halil Pasha. The spelling of vaʾllāhī with a final ye is an error that does not occur in the qasida version.
46. Sādāt is erroneously marked with a sīkūn.
47. Meʾnūs has been written without its hemze, a mistake that occurs again on fol. 25a but not on fol. 24a.
48. Besides the scribe’s customary misspelling of taḥt (see n. 12 above), neither the يء nor the te of baʿdehu is dotted.
49. The word is barely visible and seems merged with a gold rosette.
50. Unlike the others in the list, this bauda is not written in gold.
51. Although the usual transliteration is müteferrika, the spelling of the suffix with a kef indicates a thinning of all the preceding vowels.
olundukdan-şöra kimine müteferrikelik ve kimine ça-
vuşluk ve kimine bevvaiblik\footnote{The initial be is not dotted.} ihsan-u şadağa olumüş-
dur. Han'kubühanehü ve te'alâ haçretleri padişâh-1
kâmûr haçretlerinin vucûd-ı 'izzet-âlûdların ātâ-2
vu haçartlardan maşun u mahfûz eyleye, āmin yâ Mu'in.2

Günden aşzahr u enver belki bu mertebeye ihsânuñ
'üşr-1 'âşirî olmâdugü emr-i muhâkkaq u muhkarr
olduğundan m'açda kalem-i şikeste-zebân ve terkim ü
tahir belki lisân-1 fasûhûl-beyân ile takrîr ü ta'bir emr-i
muhâl olub gûnden 'ayân u beyân iddî-1 ʿukûl u
fuğûle nûmâyûndur.\footnote{The sentence as written is incomplete and requires a word such as olummasıdür, which, curiously, occurs in the corresponding position of the next folio, where it sits rather uncomfortably in the text (see n. 56 below). This apparent omission or transposition is probably the result of scribal error, though it is also possible that there is a lacuna of two facing pages in the photocopy following fol. 28a. None of the folio numbers between 28 and 32 can be clearly read, and so the manuscripts fall out of sequence (see n. 53 above). Indeed, later folios with legible numbers prove that a leaf between folios 28 and 32 has accidentally been passed over in the sequence, and so the present folio is here reckoned as 28.1. See also n. 53 above.} efendisine itmedüği ma'luem-ı cumhûr idüği beyne'n-
ʿâlîşân haçretlerinüñ daḫi nâzîr-ı mûmâ ili uyeh
u meşâ "54 mażmûni üzre haḳḳâ ki nâzîr-ı müşârün
ileyh husreti's-seyyidi'l-mûrselîn
maṣârif-i câmî-ı şerîfe ḫarc u ṣarf 
[. . . ?]53

...
Padişah-ı 'ālempenâh ḥażretlerinüñ cāmiʿ-i şerīfleri tamāmına dinilüb virilen ḳaṣīde maʿaʿt-tārīḫdür:

65. The qasida overlaps in multiple ways with an encomium on the Hagia Sophia that forms part of Taşlıcalı Yahiya's sixteenth-century poem Şāh ü gedā (see Levend, Türk Edebiyatında Şehr-engizler, 102–4; and nn. 14, 68, and 70 of the present appendix), and it was almost certainly composed with reference to this earlier work.

66. The dot of the ḫı has accidentally been omitted.

67. The vocalization indicates the irregular (though more modern) pronunciation sālimiñ.

68. The same claim is made for the Hagia Sophia in Taşlıcalı Yahiya's description of that building: see n. 65 above and Levend, Türk Edebiyatında Şehr-engizler, 103.

69. While perfectly legible, this (compound) word, which is written without vocalization, corresponds to nothing I have found in the dictionaries. Edhem Eldem suggested to me that it is a misspelling of pür-gītī, with the meaning of "full of fortune," though it would be unusual for gītī to form the first element of a compound. Regardless of how the word should be read, its intended meaning is surely close to that proposed by Professor Eldem.

65. The re appears mistakenly dotted.

66. The word was originally (and unnecessarily) suffixed with a –de, which has been scraped away to a faint vestige.

67. Unusually spelled ُو َة َلة د.

68. The words Maḥmūd Efendi appear latterly added by the scribe, who has here written them in miniscule superscript.

69. As pointed out to me by Edhem Eldem, the word was probably supposed to be olıaca, equivalent to modern olaçca.

70. The words Muḥmūd Efendi appear latterly added by the scribe, who has here written them in miniscule superscript.

59. The re appears mistakenly dotted.

60. The word was originally (and unnecessarily) suffixed with a –de, which has been scraped away to a faint vestige.

61. As pointed out to me by Edhem Eldem, the word was probably supposed to be olıaca, equivalent to modern olaçca.
Letâfedde hemân bir serv-i sim-endâma dönmişdir
[36b] Der ü divân zeyn olmuş mücellâ mermer-i zibâ
Olubdur gülşen-i cennet yeşil mermer direklerle
Kim anuñ her sütûn oldı şanasın bir serv-i bâla
İçinde var sütûn ağır altun diğer [sic]70 anuñ
Toludur iç ve taş summâkı mermer-i ra’nâ
Veli mir’ât-1 İskender olubdur câm-1 billûrû
Yanan kandillerin yer yer gören direnir kes şehlâ
[37a] Gelûb ol hâtêt-i vecde kemerler eyledi secde
Müdevver kubbe-i a’zam şedef içredür yektâ
İder mihrâbına ‘alem ‘ibâdet Ka’be-veş anuñ
Teveccüih itmeyince aña şahîh olmasz şalât âslâ
‘Aceb bir serv-i ra’nâdûr çeküb kadîn cenâr-âsâ
Mûnağâş minberin güyâ şanursun sidre-i ‘âlâ
Mağâmûn câmî’ içre sülêyle ‘âli ma’bed olmuş kim
[37b] Hemân bir kaşar-i zibâdûr içinde cennetti güyâ
Muraşsa’ tob u kandiller konulmuş anda yer yer kim
Kamaş gözleri âlkûn bağlamaza fitâb-âsâ
Mu’allah mahfilin gör kim okûyan hüb71 hâfiçlar
Veli dûrr-i yetimlerdür içine almû şedef-âsâ
‘Aceb ol kubbe-i beyzâ musâbih dûrr-i yektâyâ
Dimişler aña “Şâdîrvan72 revân ol selsebil-âsâ”

70. The only standard word to which this corresponds is
diker, but this is clearly not the intended reading. We are
dealing instead with a variant or erroneous spelling of
değer (ديه), as proved by the occurrence of the expression
ağrî altun değer in other poetic works: see Cemîl Kurnaz,
Divan Edebiyatı Yazâlari (Ankara: Akçaç, 1997), 215; and
Vildan Serdaroğlu, Sosyal Hayat İşgînda Zâtî Divanî (Istan-
bül: İSAM Yaymlar, 2006), 146. The couplet as a whole is
very similar to one describing the hagia sophia by taşlıcalı
yahya (see n. 65 above): Vârdur anda nice summâkı sütûn
/ Qıymeti oldı ağrî altun (Levend, Türk Edebiyatında Şehr-
engizler, 103).
71. The dot of the hû has accidentally been omitted.
72. There appears to be a fetha over the dâl, but this is proba-
bly a slip of the pen, as I have not found the form şâdîrvân
attested elsewhere.
[38a] Şanasın ravza-1 cennet içinde ol säkî-i Kevser
İder âb-1 zülalinden kamû ‘aṭşami ol iskâ
Akan âb-1 zülâli şan nesim-i ‘ı’tr-1 pâki hem
Şafa-yi çeşme-i Kevser havâ-yi Cenneti’l-Me’vâ
Du’a eyler el açub şeş menâre devlet-i şâha
Daḥî beş vak’t içün eyler kamû mû’minlere inbâ
Okunsun dâr-ı Ḫurrajda niçe yıl âyet-i raḥmân
[38b] Odur ta’lim-i Ḫurraj’a cihânda mevţi’-i Ḫarrâ
Daḥî ûdür-1 hadis-1 aḥâdîs nakl olundukca
nicarından olur ol rûh-ı pâk-i muṣṭafâ iḥyâ
Dinüldi medresesi içre ʿulûm-ı ‘âlîye dersi
muḥaṣṣal eyledüñ ḥaḳḳâ ṭarîḳ-i ʿilmi sen iḥyâ
hezârân mûrâdet dârü’ş-ṣifâda tâze cân buldî
çihânda eyledüñ āb-ı ḥayât aḥkâmını icrâ
Tamâm-ı cāmi’i gördüm çü sulṭân aḥmed’üñ oldum
Didüm târîḫ teʿâla’llâh zehî bir cāmi’-i aʿlâ
73. It seems the scribe initially omitted this line in error, as it
is written in the lower margin, giving the page eight lines
instead of the usual seven.
Evvela hamd ü şenâ Ḥalîk-ı biçûna sezâ
Olıdur cûmêmûze eyleyen eltâf u ʿaṭâ
Şaniyâ ola şalât Ahmed-ı Muḥtâr-â kim ol
Cûmle ʿaşîye şefî olişa gerek rûz-ı cezâ
Shaşi ola selâm âline aşhabuna kim

[40a] Nâzîr-ı câmi-ı şerîf Dârı-ʾs-Sâʿâdetüʾş-şerîfe ağa ḥażretlerine câmi-ı sulṭân itmâmında virûn kaşîdêdûr:

Evelâ hamd ü şenâ Ḥalîk-ı biçûna sezâ
Oldurur cûmêmûze eyleyen eltâf u ʿaṭâ
Şaniyâ ola şalât Ahmed-ı Muḥtâr-â kim ol
Cûmle ʿaşîye şefî olsa gerek rûz-ı cezâ
Shaşi ola selâm âline aşhabuna kim

[40b] Gitdîler emr-ı şerîf üzeü tüțîb râh-ı hûdâ
Baʿdeʾzân Haẓret-ı Sulṭâni-1 Cûhn Aḥmed Ḥân
Yaʾni kim tü tüdî şerîʾıt yolünü buldu bekâ
Diseler lâyik aña câmî-ı ḥayrât-ı ʿâlem
Ki-eyledi rûy-ı zemîn-ı niçe ḥayrât ibyâ
Cûmleden eyledi bir câmî-ı lâmî ḥâkka
Vaşf u taşvirin anuñ itmedi kimse peydâ

[41a] Şol-ḳadar zînet ü fer virdi nukûş-ı ezhâr
Oldî her bir ṭarafı guše-i cennet-âsâ
Haḳḳ budur böylece bir rûy-ı muḥtâr-ı laṭîf
Gûrmedî vákrʾasında ne Cêm ü ne Dârâ
Ger anuñ ḥâlk-ı cûhn olça eger vaşâfi
Diyeler kâbil-ı taʾbir değil ḥâk-k-ı edâ
Niçün olmaya muşannaʾ daḥi mevzûn câmîʾ?
[41b] Aña nâzîr ola ol şâhib-i tedbîr ağa
Eyleledî ḥasbî nezâret idûben saʾ-ı cemîl
İstîkâmetle işîn başa çikardi ḥâkka
Saʾy ʿû küşîşler idûb pâdişehûn câmîʾîne
Cûn u başîyla çalîşdi dimedî şubh u mesâ
Niyyet-ı ḥâşşma şâhid-ı ʿâdîdûr kim
Cûmle müşküllelerini eyleledî ḫâl Bâr-Ḥûdâ

[42a] Dünyevî vii ʿuhrevî ol şâhib-i lütf u kerêmü
Eyleledî Ḥaẓret-ı Ḥâkḳ cûmle murâdînî edâ
Lütf idûb Haẓret-ı Ḥâkḳ kûldî tamâmîn tevfîk
Bâglâdi ʿûbbe-i ʿulyâsînî şikrên saʾyaʾ74
Çûn tamâm eyleli ol pâdişehûn câmîʾîni
Eyleledî daʾvet idûb daʾvetinî kûldî revâ
Didić-kim ʿPâdişehûm ʿizzet ü ikrâmla buyur
[42b] İdiñiz farz u nevâfilî [sic]75 be-gün anda edâ
Çûn tamâm eyleli ol pâdişehûn câmîʾîni
Eyleledî daʾvet idûb daʾvetinî kûldî revâ
Didić-kim ʿPâdişehûm ʿizzet ü ikrâmla buyur

[43a] Şol-ḳadar cevhere ʿârık olmuşdu saʾaʾa asî
Gûn gibi berk urub ol ʿâleme virmişdi şiyâ
Haḳḳ budur böylece bir râḥt-ı murâşṣaʿ el-ʾân
İtmedi kimse cûhn içre amîti itdi ağa
Çûn sûvâr oldî o dem76 devletle şâḥ-ı cûhn
Ônine düşî anuñ cûmle vezîr ü ʿûmerâ
Hařer-ı muhtereminden o şehûn câmîʾe dek
[43b] Dâşändî77 yolârını cûmle serâser dibâ
Eyleledî şim ü zeri yollarına daḥî niṣār
Bûy-ı luṭîfîn anuñ buldî ganâ cûmle gedâ
Geldi devletle o şeh câmîʾîne vâkt-i şehêr
Cûmle kullari o dem alkiş idûb itdi duʾâ

74. Though the final word is provided with nunation, which would ordinarily give the pronunciation saʾyen, the rhyme dictates the pausal reading. The subject of the couplet shifts from God to Mustafa Agha.
75. Nevâfiî is a misspelling of nevâfî.
76. The phrase o dem has been added in small script over oldi.
77. See n. 21 above.
Boundless high praise and endless best thanks to the court of that Knower of secrets and mysteries and commender of saints and good men, the omnipotent creator and beneficent nourisher [God], may His glory be exalted and His favor spread!

It is deserving and the final folios of the manuscript are inscribed with a religious tract that is unrelated to (and written in a far rougher hand than) the Tarih. Its subject is the sinfulness of working on Fridays, a topic perhaps inspired by the Tarih’s pietistic eulogizing of the mosque. The language used is archaic, which suggests that the tract was written not long after the manuscript’s original date of production. What follows is a transliteration of this text, the remainder of which is cut off in the photocopy but presumably ends on fol. 47b. Because of the tract’s tangential nature, I have not provided a translation of it.

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78. The word has been superscribed.
79. It is not entirely clear when the voice switches from that of the petitioning public to that of the poet; I have taken the end of this couplet as a likely juncture.
80. The nunated pronunciation would be ḥasenen; see n. 74 above.
81. Though unnecessary (the usual compound is Bār-Ḫūdā), the iżāfet is indicated with a kesre.
82. The nunated pronunciation would be ebeden; see n. 74 above. As mentioned in the main text of the present article, the final folios of the manuscript are inscribed with a religious tract that is unrelated to (and written in a far rougher hand than) the Tarih. Its subject is the sinfulness of working on Fridays, a topic perhaps inspired by the Tarih’s pietistic eulogizing of the mosque. The language used is archaic, which suggests that the tract was written not long after the manuscript’s original date of production. What follows is a transliteration of this text, the remainder of which is cut off in the photocopy but presumably ends on fol. 47b. Because of the tract’s tangential nature, I have not provided a translation of it. [46a] Râvâyetdür: Peygamberde [sic]—ṣalla’llāhü ʿaleyhi ve sellem—ṣordılar cemʿ güni iş işleyenüñ ʿaẕābı nār didiler. Resūl ḥażret buyurdı-kim Allāhü teʿālā vaʿde eyledi cemʿ güni iş eyleyen—de on-iki dürlü ʿaẕābı vārid. Üci dünyāda ve āẖretde ve āẖretde ve üci āẖretde ve üci ḳabrinde ve üci ḳıyāmetde. Evvel üc-kim dünyādadur evveli gibidür. Yaʿnī ḳaẕanduġı ḥarāmdur murdārdur olmuş gibidür. İkinci ol ḳaẕanduġı aḳçeden yirse Allāhü teʿālā namāzın ḳabūl eylemez mādāmki ol ṭaʿām ṭaṁıında. Ücinci Peygamber— ʿaleyhi’s-selām—ḥadīs̱ine buyurdı: İẕā lebise s̱evben min kesbi yevmi'l-Cumʿa lā yaḳbelu'llāhü minhü ve lāʿadlā/ʿadülā; yaʿnī cemʿ gün ḳaẕansa ol aḳçeʾi ḳaftana virse daḫi ol ḳaftanı giyse cemʿiye varsa Allahü teʿālā hīç bir vechile ḳabūl eylemez. Ammā ol üc-kim ölüm vaḳtindedür evvel āẖrete īmānsız gide ölümi sarḫoşluġıla şeyṭān üzerine ġālib ola ikinci ʿAzrāʾīl cānını almaḳda ṣaḳmaġıla ala ve ol üc-kim ʿālemedür evveli oldur kim gūrında ḳopduġı vaḳtin ṭoñuz ṣūretine ḳopa ikinci ḥesāb olmadın Cehenneme gide. Ücinci Allāhü teʿālā ḥışmına uġraya Ḥażret-i ʿAlī—raḍiya’llāhü ʿanh—rivāyet ider her kim cemʿ Güni iş işleye münāfıḳdur melʿūndur. Ol Tangrı ḥaḳḳiyçün kim benüm nefsüm anuñ ḳudret elindedür cemʿ Güni iş işlene ḳıyāmet güninde benüm şefāʿatüm bulmaya ben aña şefāʿat itmeyem ve daḫi buyurdı her kim cemʿ Güni iş işleye ol kişi-kim benüm ümmetüm değüldür zīrā ki cemʿ Güni şerīf gündür. Dünyā ʿamelini terk itmek gerekdür ve daḫi şol Ādem oġlını ki cemʿ Güni bir şeḳāvet iş işlese ol beni evde yıḳmış gibidür her kim beni evde yıḳsa cehennem [...]

See n. 1 above.

See n. 2 above.
worthy of mention that He created the whole cosmos—wondrous of composition—and all the universe—marvelous of disposition—by His favorable and perfect command and His influential and complete might, and—without break or defect—by His matchless and peerless sublime dictate. Above all, He engendered the Sons of Adam by His pleasant will [ib] and consummate wisdom, in a manner most beautiful, and He rendered the bestowing of foundations and alms by the pious rich upon the poor and destitute a means by which to enter the highest heavens, wherein, at the stations of His dominion, the otherworldly minds of those excellent in life came to halt and be dazzled, and where, among the manifestations of His heavenly kingdom, those who became cognizant of even one modicum of [5a]85 His mysteries were left bewildered and amazed. We praise Him for the abundance of His pure favor, admitting [our] weakness and shortcoming, and we thank Him for the amplitude of His excellent kindnesses, scooping them up from the ocean of His glorious world.

And limitless prayers and endless salutations be upon that Messenger of the two races [humankind and the jinn], that mercy of the two races [humankind and the jinn], that mercy of the Prophet, that ocean of constant munificence, by which I mean His Majesty [the Prophet] Muhammad Mustafa, who is the cause of the creation of both worlds and the reason for the advent of the Sons of Adam, and in whose noble honor the Lord—may He be glorified and exalted—said, “But for you, but for you, I would not have created the cosmos.”

[6a] And countless blessings be upon the souls of those Four Illustrious Companions, who are the eminent disciples of Ahmad86 the Chosen One [Muhammad Mustafa], and the noble saints of God the Protector, may God Almighty be pleased with them all.

Stanza: The four walls of the palace of the Religion of Ahmad, the Four Companions, / [6b] To wit those named Abu Bakr, Omar, Uthman, and Ali; / May He render their souls happy in Heaven. / He Who is the Merciful, the Munificent, the Omnipotent and All-Forgiving.87

Next: [Blessings be upon] that king of the kings of the world, that heroic vanquisher of mortals, that protector of Muslims and Monotheists and slayer of pagans and heretics, that possessor of wise viziers [7a] and benefactor of army-holding commanders, that patron of scholars and luminaries and succor of the righteous and the needy, that favorer of the most blessed lords of mankind [the descendants of the Prophet], the Shadow of God and the caliph of the world and of the age, by which I mean Sultan Ahmed Khan, son of Sultan Mehmed Khan, may God Almighty [7b] eternize his rule and perpetuate his sultanate till the revolutions [of the ages] cease and time ends, if God the All-Merciful thus wills. Couplets: O God, make this young emperor / Happy in the garden of life. // Make Khidr and Elijah on sea and land / Time and again his companions.88 // Make his progeny on kingship's throne / [2a] Firm till the Day of Judgment. // Make his army ever victorious / And his enemy abject and low. // And no prayer can be better than this, O God: / Make him ever-present on the throne of justice.89

Next: On the face of the earth and in the highest heaven,90 in the exalted and well-protected capital Constantinople—may it never cease to be filled with the favors of the Lord of Creation—did His Majesty Sultan Ahmed Khan—may God perpetuate his reign till Judgment Day—[2b] initiate the building [of a mosque]91 in a gladdening and heartening place known as the pleasure-rich Hippodrome on the eighth day of the noble month of Shawwal of [the year] 1018 [January 3, 1610];92 [3a] and he appointed as superintendent [nāẓir] over the building of this aforesaid mosque the then and present honorable and prosperous chief eunuch of the es-

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85. See n. 6 above.
86. It was fortunate for Sultan Ahmed that he shared one of the Prophet's names, an overlap that adds to the resonance of the text.
87. See n. 9 above.
89. See n. 13 above.
90. It is unclear whether this evocation of a heavenly status refers to Istanbul in general or Ahmed's mosque in particular. Either reading seems plausible, and I have kept my translation suitably open-ended.
91. See n. 18 above.
92. This is the date on which the first stones of the qibla wall were laid, as discussed in the main text of this article.
teemed imperial harem and graceful royal palace, the toast of possessors of honor and dignity, the trustee of kings and sultans, friend [3b] to exalted imperial majesty and companion to highest eternal prosperity, superintendent of the pious foundations of the Two Holy Places [Mecca and Medina], that is to say, him who is elevated among the two races, His Excellency Hajji Mustafa Agha, may the Lord God preserve him. [4a] Thereafter, on the fourth day of Jumada II of the year 1026 [June 8, 1617]—which was a Thursday—the completion of the light-filled mosque was facilitated and ensured by the aid of the Lord God Almighty, in keeping with the trustworthy hadith “God gives His blessings on Saturday of the Light-Filled Mosque, which was by Thursday.”93 And several days before it came time to close the exalted dome, [4b] His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent—long may he live—was ordered to set up a place for the sultan of the seven climes in the mosque’s honorable courtyard, whereupon the faithful superintendent, in accordance with the imperial command, pitched that heavenly tent [8a]—whose azure cupola reached the sky and whose golden finial shone upon the world—in that graceful and noble location, as befitting Ottoman law and imperial custom; and he had curtains of cloth of gold and silver hung all around it, completing the imperial tent as well as one could wish. [8b] Thereafter, in fulfilment of the sultan’s decree and because of his selfless supervision, the aforesaid superintendent—long may he live—from dawn to late morning lined both sides of the sultanic road—[9a] from the gate of the privy chamber of the imperial palace to the exalted tent that had been erected at the noble mosque—with variegated cloths of gold and silver and tricolor silk, with diverse fabrics and brocades of iridescent beauty, in keeping with the couplet “From his honored harem to that emperor’s mosque / Did he line all his path with brocades gold and silver”;94 [9b] and, in accordance with custom and decorum, [these cloths] were held by several hundred [palace] doorkeepers. And as the people of the world awaited the noble arrival of the illustrious sultan—may the All-Bounteous King [God] preserve him—[10a] His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent—long may he live—equipped a horse with bejeweled trappings and an encrusted saddle, a gilt brassard and bridle, an unmatched horsecloth, a crystal mace, and bejeweled stirrups to host the feet; in short, he saddled a most noble steed—fast as the wind and dripping with gold and ornament—[10b] at the imperial tent and, preceded by all his servants, brought it with full honor to the Gate of Felicity, where he handed it to the chief equerry. Couples: It was, to be sure, outwardly a horse, but in essence / Formed of pearls, rubies, and diamonds. // [11a] So decked was it in jewels that its glitter / Flashing like day and illuminated the world. // No one on earth had in truth ever fashioned / Such jeweled trappings as these, until the agha did so.95

Thereafter, to prepare for his invitation to the noble mosque, His Majesty the Sultan of the World graciously appointed as his representative the then and present [11b] grand vizier and illustrious field marshal, His Excellency Halil Pasha, possessor of exalted might, trailer of the skirts of unattainable dignity, font of good works and kindnesses, mine of virtues, and recipient of glorious favors; and [the sultan] bade him return to the imperial tent with his honorable servants. [12a] His Enlightened Excellency the Vizier then awaited a propitious hour to invite that cheer-spreading sultan and world-nourishing emperor, watching the ascent of the beautiful sun as it illumined the world of the magnanimous emperor; [12b] and when it reached the propitious hour, he invited His Blessed Majesty the Sultan to grace the noble mosque with his presence, whereupon the emperor graciously presented His Honorable Excellency the Vizier with sumptuous robes of honor, one sable-lined and one plain. After he had worn them, [13a]

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93. The hadith as written is far from trustworthy: I have not found it in the usual compendia, and its use appears to have been overwhelmingly limited to the Ottoman sphere. For other instances of it, see Belkıs Altunış-Gürsoy, “Amedi Galib Efendi Sefaretnamesi,” Erdem 9, no. 27 (1997): 930; Evliyâ Çelebi, Seyahatname, 4162, translated into English in Evliyâ Çelebi, Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis: The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname, trans. and ed. Robert Dankoff (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 329; and Hazim Šabanović, “Hasan Kafi Pruščak,” Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju = Revue de philologie oriental 50 (2002): 67-147, whose translation I have adapted. That Thursday is esteemed in God’s eyes is, however, an established tradition: see G. H. A. Juynboll, Encyclopedia of Canonical Hadith (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 628.

94. See n. 21 above.

95. See n. 26 above.
at the happy and glad hour, His Most Mighty Majesty the Emperor—accompanied by his worthy and fortunate sons, two flourishing princes who were the apples of his imperial eye and the fruits of his prosperous lineage—emerged from the glorious imperial palace, his countenance appearing from the lofty and exalted vault like the luminous sun as it rises in exaltation; [13b] and in acceptance of the invitation, the sultan drew towards his noble mosque in state and glory. And in accordance with the couplets "Whenas the sultan turned to his mosque, / The agha that moment brought that Duldul-like horse," the glorious and prosperous emperor mounted the wind-swift horse and, with the two flourishing princes, saluted the soldiers of Islam; and as he came [to the mosque], the populace, the cavalry and janissaries, and all the ruthless [foreign] ambassadors were prepared and ready to view the sultan, [14b] and they viewed him avidly while praying for the long reign of His Exalted Majesty the Sultan, who went with pomp and glory towards the heaven-high tent. Verily was it a wind-swift steed whose legs were monuments to glory and prosperity, and whose giraffe-like hooves were shod [15a] with the crescent of the Eid of Conquest and Victory. And even the bankers and jewelers of the age were astounded, confounded, and dumbfounded in estimating the value of its encrusted trappings. And if one had to place a value, it is clearer than day that they could not be acquired for fewer than 70,000 gold coins. [15b] And in keeping with the hemistich: The goldsmith knows the worth of gold, the jeweler the worth of jewels, it is a matter certain and true, agreed by all everywhere, that a knowledgeable appraiser would equate the value of the bejeweled and encrusted trappings—the like of which no sultan past had attained—with the taxes of Rum. [16a] Indeed, such is the case that mystics would consider it impossible for the winds of fortune to bring [again] the like or equal [of the trappings], even were the firmament to rotate a hundred times.

Thereafter, His Majesty the Sultan of the World and his two flourishing princes reached the august imperial tent [16b] and wished to enter, whereat the flourishing princes dismounted first; and the auspicious emperor was escorted by His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent to a splendid bejeweled throne—variegated with diverse gemstones—that had been placed inside the portico of the tent, [17a] and he sat upon it. Couplets: That emperor came in state to the mosque in early morn, / As all his slaves applauded and prayed. // They said, “Blessed be the mosque, my Emperor, / May you perform your devotions therein for a thousand years!” [102]

Then, in preparation for the saying of prayers at the closing of the noble mosque’s exalted dome, [17b] the august emperor called His Excellency Mahmud [Hüdayi] Efendi, saint of the age and dweller in holiness, conduct of the Lord God’s kindness; and when he came, [the sultan] granted the said saint a sumptuous sable-lined robe of honor, after which [the sultan] favored other mendicants and dervishes—the saint’s followers—[18a] with sumptuous robes befitting their condition. Then, the sultan commanded that the said saint, together with all the viziers, distinguished ulema, and the building superintendent, should climb and close the dome.
lofty dome with prayer and eulogy. And in compliance with the illustrious command, they—His Excellency Mahmud Efendi, all the viziers, the grand [18b] mufti, the two chief military judges, the chief eunuch, and the chief treasurer—ascended that exalted dome while, inside and outside the mosque, all the rest of the ulema and the righteous and the sayyids and the mendicants103 opened their hands in prayers with a thousand supplications and entreaties, in keeping with the couplet: When devotions were performed in the mosque of the heavens / [19a] The [celestial] lotus tree opened the hand of supplication in prayer104 and they all prayed and eulogized until the lofty dome was closed and completed, some of them reciting the Holy Koran, others saying gracious prayers for the blessed Muhammad Mustafa [19b]—the best of prayers be upon him—and still others glorifying God and professing His oneness.

After those aforementioned had closed the dome and descended, the sultan decreed that the aforesaid saint—in accordance with the couplet: Come, O Preacher, and give us counsel and advice, / And guide us to the path of righteousness105—should embark on a sermon [vaʿẓ] to advise the faithful Muslims present at the mosque; [20a] and upon the issuance of that sultanic command, the aforesaid saint readied himself to preach and counsel in a pleasing manner. The august emperor, meanwhile, [20b] prepared with humility and reverence for the preacher’s assembly, and with insightful vision did he witness the faithful words of the reverend saint, who conveyed and explicated the noble divine scripture and the pleasing traditions of God’s beloved [the Prophet Muhammad], as commanded by God, the All-Knowing Helper. When the sermon ended, the illustrious emperor, whom it pleased to the highest degree, [21a] requested the good prayers of the aforementioned saint, whereupon the said saint raised his hands in prayer with a thousand supplications and devotions, and all the Muslims said amen; and with the aid of God, the Lord and Helper, their prayers were favorably accepted. Then, the sultan commanded [21b] that precious robes of honor be conferred on all the viziers, the ulema and righteous, and the dignitaries and mendicants—high and low—who were present in that mosque, and in accordance with the glorious order, His Excellency the Grand Vizier Halil Pasha was at that moment granted a splendid sable-lined robe, in keeping with the couplet: [22a] May the emperor of the world favor and honor that slave of his, / Would that he show him such grace and favor as he deserves.106 And the other great viziers, honorable ulema, members of the council, dignitaries, imams, preachers, [22b] righteous individuals, and most blessed sayyids107 were in due order likewise granted their share of sultanic robes, gratifying their wishes.

When the most dignified emperor ascended the commanding throne that had been placed in the glorious pavilion adjoining his exalted mosque, splendid robes of honor were given even to all the following: first, the inspector of pious foundations, who is most favored among the state ulema; [23a] and second, the chief architect [reʾisū l-miʿmārin], the building supervisor [emin], others servants and trustees of the construction, emirite shaykhs, and the two congregational imams. They then had the honor of kissing the auspicious sultanic hand, [23b] and they said prayers for the continuation of the emperor’s reign and for the increase of his life and glory.

After this, the glorious emperor sat on the variously jeweled and colorfully encrusted [24a] throne of exalted fortune that had been placed inside the illustrious imperial tent, and his compelling decree was as follows: “Let all the viziers, ulema, commanders, members of the council, and men of rank kiss my auspicious hand as their honorable predecessors have on the Noble Eids,” [24b] whereupon first the chief of the Prophet’s descendants and second the tutor of the flourishing princes kissed [his] hand and prayed for the imperial state, after whom followed members of the council, namely all the

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103. The word fuṣarā can also be understood to mean the poor more generally, but the text goes on to say that these individuals were given robes of honor, which suggests that we are dealing with dervishes.

104. See n. 39 above. The lotus (or lote) tree in question is the Sidrat al-Muntahā, which marks the boundary of the seventh heaven: see A. Rippin, “Sidrat al-Muntahā,” in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1954–2002).

105. See n. 43 above.

106. See n. 45 above.

107. Sādāt can also mean “dignitaries,” and it is in this general sense that I have usually translated it. Here, however, the qualification kesirettül-berekāt (most blessed) suggests that the text is referring specifically to the Prophet’s descendants.
chief doorkeepers, the tasters, and the officers; then His Excellency the Grand Vizier [25a] and other great viziers; then the minister of finance; then the jurist of mankind, His Eminence the Grand Mufti; then other honorable ulama; and they performed the ancient custom and great rite of humbly kissing the auspicious hand [of the sultan], at the same time praying for the continuance of the emperor’s life and state and appealing for the perpetuity of his power and prosperity. [25b]

Then, when the gracious sultan returned in state with the flourishing princes to his glorious palace, the viziers, ministers, and dignitaries of the council set out, as earlier, before him; and once they had reached and entered his sacrosanct palace, [26a] a bejeweled dagger, a bejeweled khanjar, two sable-lined robes of honor, three sumptuous plain robes of honor, a purse of gold coins of full carat, five purses of piasters, and limitless shiny aspers were granted by royal decree to His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent—long may he live—on account of his selfless superintendence and in reward for the service he had given the noble mosque. [26b] After he had received boundless and innumerable royal favors, fifteen of his slaves were [also] rewarded, some with the rank of halberdier, others with that of officer, and others still with that of cavalryman or doorkeeper. Then, each of those who had served [in creating] the aforesaid mosque [27a] was granted a sumptuous robe of honor, with some being honored with the rank of officer, some that of halberdier, and others that of doorkeeper. May God Almighty—Glory be to Him—preserve and protect from sin and danger the glorious person of His Most Mighty Majesty the Emperor! Amen, O Helper! [27b]

It is clearer and brighter than day—and a matter of doubtless certainty—that not a tenth of a tenth of such generosity had been seen before. Moreover, neither a faltering pen nor indeed an eloquent tongue are capable of describing it, as is clearer than day to men of intelligence and excellence. [28a] And the aspers spent on the expenses of the noble mosque were all those that his excellency the aforesaid superintendent had acquired by the noble command of the sublime sultan on account of his exalted superintendence, and [not] a penny from the imperial [public] treasury was thereafter spent on the expenses of the noble mosque. [...?][28b] By the honor of the Lord of Prophets [Muhammad], and in keeping with the couplet “He exerted himself with zeal for the emperor’s mosque, / Working with heart and soul, whether morning or evening,” verify the service that His Excellency the aforesaid superintendent rendered at the noble mosque had never been given by any slave to his master, as is general and widespread knowledge among the people. [28.1a] But [likewise] none of the earlier sultans had shown a slave of his such abundant favor and limitless grace as his illustrious majesty the sultan [Ahmed] ordered to be shown to his excellency the aforesaid superintendent on account of his exalted superintendence and in reward for the service he gave to the aforementioned mosque. [28.1b] Truly were [his] service and integrity such that it is fitting that he should receive [so many] favors from the mighty emperor in reward for his service, and likewise apt if the service he diligently rendered at the noble mosque and the abundant good prayers he said for the world-sheltering emperor should earn the bountiful reward of God the illustrious King [29a] and secure his place in paradise. And may God the All-Powerful King, Who facilitates and predestines, daily increase and make more abundant the life and state of his majesty the emperor, refuge of the world! Amen, O Helper!

Furthermore, the sultan was watched that day by the ruthless [foreign] ambassadors who were present at the assembly, and when they—despite having not a trace of faith in their hardened hearts, wherein the devil and rebellion resided—saw the selfless favor that the magnanimous sultan conferred on the people of the world, together with the good works and pious deeds

109. See n. 53 above.
110. See n. 54 above.
111. See n. 55 above.
done in the path of God and the effort and labor exerted in the course of the religion of Muhammad, countless infidels could not help but come to Islam, wherewith they were honored with the glory of Islam \[31a\] and decked in royal favor. And even the remaining wicked infidels could not help but say countless prayers for the life and state of the mighty and exalted sultan, that he should remain secure and stable on his throne of glory; and so they confirmed as was right the glory and power pertaining to the religion of Muhammad and to the emperor of Islam, \[31b\] while seeing for certain the ignominy and vengefulness of their \[own\] false rites; and whether the ambassador of the reprobate Qizilbash [Savafid] or whether Venetian, Fleming, or Frank—they are one scourge alike—all of them were frustrated and confounded, their heads hung in vexation and sadness, and each of them was plunged into utter disgrace. \[32a\]

And so the people of the world—seeing the favor that the illustrious emperor showed that day to the viziers and commanders, his perfect affection for the ulema and the righteous, his inclination for good works and pious deeds, and his kindness to and compassion for all his subjects—could not help but pray for the preservation of the emperor’s state \[32b\] and for the continuance of his glory and happiness. To the Muslims’ prayer did all the angels enthroned in the highest heavens say amen, and—God Almighty willing—their glorious prayers have been answered.

Thereafter, \[33a\] on Friday, the sixteenth day of the month of Sha’ban in the aforementioned year [August 18, 1617], His Majesty the Emperor, refuge of the world, wished for the noble mosque to be opened and for the Friday prayer to be performed [therein], whereupon that chief saint of the age, his Excellency Mahmud Efendi—paradigm among mystics, pillar of learned men, and holy saint of the age—again served as preacher in the aforementioned mosque; \[33b\] and upon the [sultan’s] command that he first deliver the noble khutba [Friday sermon], His Excellency Mahmud Efendi, in accordance with the exalted order, first gave the noble khutba, and thereafter preached and exhorted in the said mosque.\[112\]

After this, His Majesty the Emperor, refuge of the world, \[34a\], having already bestowed gifts and favors on the distinguished ulema when the dome was closed, \[now\] wished to grant charity and favors to those ulema of lesser rank also, and when the order was given at the imperial festival, their auspicious \[?\] turn was called by royal command on the day when the aforementioned mosque was first opened and the Friday prayer performed [therein];\[113\] \[34b\] and in this manner, he likewise rendered joyous the desolate hearts of all the lesser ulema, granting them their share and satisfying their desires.

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This is the chronogrammed qasida composed for the completion of the noble mosque and given to His Majesty the Emperor, refuge of the world:\[114\]

\[35a\] O Shah! Praise and glory be to Him who is the Lord [God],

To Him belong kindness and benevolence, to Him belong favor and generosity.

To the resplendent pure soul of the Sultan of Creation [Muhammad],

As also to his companions and kinsmen, offer [you all] prayers and salutations.

Because, O Large-Hearted Sultan, you have modeled yourself on him,

You have truly executed the rule of holy law in the world.

Remain firm on the throne of kingship in glory and majesty,

\[35b\] May the Lord Almighty facilitate your heart’s pleasures.

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\[112\] A distinction is being drawn here between the ordinary sermon (vaʿẓ, from Arabic waʿẓ) and the khutba, which is reserved for Fridays and holidays.

\[113\] While the overall meaning is clear enough, the passage is rather convoluted and difficult to parse. Moreover, it contains a word that I have not been able to identify and have tentatively translated as “auspicious” (see n. 64 above). I am extremely grateful to Edhem Eldem for helping me navigate the text, though we differ in our interpretation of certain details.

\[114\] See n. 65 above.
Since it is you, O Shah, who in this age encompasses all good deeds,\textsuperscript{115}
Truly have you built a mosque adorned and beautiful.

Above all, the Flourishing House [Ka‘ba] and the city of God’s Prophet [Medina]
Have been reanimated in your time, given honor and new life.

May your good works find favor in the eyes of God Almighty,
For your exquisite mosque has become a Paradise of Refuge in the world.

[36a] What a sublime temple! Its like or counterpart cannot be found,
For it is a pure spring of piety for the people of faith.

This mosque is a Masjid al-Aqsa for the sake of the healthy,
And for the poor it is an Exalted Ka’ba.\textsuperscript{116}

With its bejeweled glass, it is a mosque magnificent and wondrous,
No [other] king has been favored with an exquisite mosque of this kind.

In elegance it transformed at once into a silvery cypress,
[36b] Its doors and walls are ornamented [with] beautiful sparkling marble.

With its green marble pillars, it is a heavenly rose garden
Whose every column you would think a high cypress.

Within it are columns worth their weight in gold,
Its inside and outside abound in exquisite porphyry.

Its crystal glass, moreover, is as Alexander’s mirror,
Whoever sees its lamps lit round about stops and squints amazed.

[37a] The arches reached ecstasy and prostrated themselves,
The exalted round dome is unique, engulfed by mother-of-pearl.\textsuperscript{117}

The world worships before its mihrab as if at the Ka’ba,
Prayer can never be true without turning toward it.

It is a wondrous elegant cypress, soaring like a plane tree,
You would think its ornamented minbar a high lotus tree.

So exalted a temple did your [imperial] loge inside the mosque become
[37b] That it is exactly like a beautiful pavilion in heaven.

It is dotted with jeweled chandeliers and lamps that,
Sun-like, cannot be looked upon by the people’s dazzled eyes.

See its exalted gallery where the fine memorizers who recite [the Koran]
Are like singular pearls in a mother-of-pearl shell.

That wondrous white dome is akin to a unique pearl,
They said to it, “O Ablutions Fountain! Flow like a heavenly spring.”

[38a] It is as if that conduit of [the heavenly spring]
Kawthar were in the garden of paradise;
It quenches the thirst of all with its delicious water.

You would think its delicious water and its pure perfumed breeze
The pureness of the spring of Kawthar and the air of the Paradise of Refuge.

\textsuperscript{115} Cāmi‘ü’l-ḫayrāt. The original Ottoman plays richly on the multiple senses of these words. As well as meaning “that which collects/unites,” cāmi‘ denotes a congregational mosque, and the word recurs in this capacity in the following hemistich. Ḫayrāt likewise ranges in meaning from generic “good things” to “charitable works” and even “pious foundation.”

\textsuperscript{116} See n. 68 above.

\textsuperscript{117} As well as positing the dome as a pearl, this image may refer to the effect of the lead cladding on the dome’s exterior.
The six minarets open their hands in prayer for the sultan's state,
And they call all the faithful to the five times [of daily prayer].

Let holy scripture be read for countless years at the house of [Koran] readers;
[38b] For the study of the Koran, it is the world's locus of recitation.

And whenever the traditions [of the Prophet] are related at your college of hadith,
That pure soul of the Chosen One [Muhammad] is revivified from its source.

Lessons of the exalted [theological] sciences are taught in your madrasa,
In short, you have truly revived the path of learning.

Thousands of dead have found new life at the hospital,
You have made the water of life flow in the world.

[39a] May all of it [the complex] be always blessed by the Lord for Ahmed Khan,
May many like houses be built during his just reign.

In short, Ahmed Khan has placed such a work on the earth
That should the heavens rotate a thousand times, its like would not appear.

Our plea to the Lord is this: May that world-ruling sultan's
Good works all be preserved till Doomsday.

As for the agha who supervised it upon sultanic command,
Truly did he superintend with devotion and fidelity.

[39b] Come, inspector, tarry not—start praying for the sultan,
As long as you have life, pray for his prosperity.

God increase his life that it may be preserved and protected,
May he grow daily more exalted on his throne of power and glory.

When I saw the completion of his mosque, I belonged to Sultan Ahmed;
I stated the date, God Almighty—what a sublime mosque!

Anno 1026

[40a] This is the qasida given to the superintendent of the noble mosque, the agha of the Noble Abode of Felicity
[chief eunuch of the imperial harem], His Excellency Hajji Mustafa Agha, upon the completion of the sultan's mosque:

First, praise and glory to the Divine Creator are merited; He it is who bestows favor and munificence on us all.

Second, let there be prayers for the Chosen Ahmad [Muhammad],
Who will surely intercede for all sinners on Judgment Day.

Third, salutations be upon his kinsmen and companions,
[40b] Who, upon [his] noble command, followed the righteous path.

Then, [on] His Majesty the Sultan of the World, Ahmed Khan,
Who took the road of sacred law, achieving immortality.

Let them say he is worthy of all the good works on earth, For he has created so many good works in the world.

Above all, he has built a mosque truly resplendent,
The description or image of which no one has produced.

[41a] Designs of flowers give [it] so much beauty and luster
That every part of it is as a corner of heaven.
Indeed, neither Jamshid nor Darius ever dreamt
Of a mosque of such graceful elegance.

Should the people of the world attempt to describe it,
They would say it is impossible to do it justice.

Why should there not be such a well-proportioned,
artful mosque?
[41b] May that diligent agha oversee it.

Admirably did he exert himself, supervising without
thought of gain,
Truly with integrity did he take the job in hand.

He exerted himself with zeal for the emperor’s mosque,
Working with heart and soul, whether morning or
evening.

The just witness to his pure intentions was He
Who resolved all his difficulties, the Lord God.

[42a] On earth and in heaven, God Almighty has granted
Every wish of that kind and generous man.

Graciously did God Almighty facilitate its completion,
He [the agha] closed its high dome with thanks and hard
work.

Whenas he completed that emperor’s mosque,
He invited [the sultan] with a fitting invitation.

He said, “My Emperor, come in glory and honor,
[42b] Perform there daily the obligatory and
supererogatory [prayers].”

The world’s emperor then emerged in state from his
palace,
Rising like the sun and illuminating the world.

Whenas the sultan turned to his mosque,
The agha that moment brought that Duldul-like horse.

It was, to be sure, outwardly a horse, but in essence
Formed of pearls, rubies, and diamonds.

[43a] So decked was it in jewels that its glitter
Flashed like day and illuminated the world.

No one on earth had in truth ever fashioned
Such jeweled trappings as these, until the agha did so.

When the world’s emperor then mounted [his horse] in
state,
All his viziers and commanders set out before him.

From his honored harem to that emperor’s mosque
[43b] Was his path all lined with brocades gold and
silver.\(^{119}\)

And he scattered gold and silver along his path,
Every pauper found wealth in his generous spirit.

That emperor came in state to the mosque in early
morn,
As all his slaves applauded and prayed.

They said, “Blessed be the mosque, my Emperor,
May you perform your devotions therein for a thousand
years.

[44a] “May the Lord Almighty grant your every desire,
May you create many glorious buildings like this.

“May your good work please God’s court,
May you be rewarded, O Emperor, in both worlds.”

They said, “Of that kind and generous superintendent,
Let us sing his praises; whatever we say will not be
enough.

“Let us extol him loud and clear at the very least,
[44b] Such a munificent, generous man the world has
never seen.

“In truth, no one has trod this gentleman’s path,
He sacrificed his all with heart and soul.

“May the emperor of the world favor and honor that
slave of his,

\(^{119}\) See n. 21 above.
Would that he show him such grace and favor as he deserves.”

Seeing his deeds, that emperor of the world
Gave him robes of honor and prayed for him.

[45a] On seeing his laudable efforts, he graciously said,
“Be prosperous; may you be the object of God’s favor.

“Through your efforts have you rendered service to my mosque,
May the Lord grant your wishes in the world and the hereafter.”

The ulema and the pious lifted their hands and prayed,
“May a happy reward be inscribed in the book of your deeds.

“May the Lord God grant your every desire,
[45b] Always sparing your gracious person from sin.

“And so may your noble person be in good health,
And forever fixed in the seat of felicity.”120

120. The words spoken in the final three couplets seem to be meant for Mustafa Agha, though they would apply equally well to the sultan. This ambiguity works to the qasida’s advantage and is perhaps deliberate.
Dated 21 Muharram 837 (September 6, 1433), the pilgrimage scroll in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, was made on behalf of Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din Ma Wara’ al-Nahri—a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad whose family origins were in Transoxiana—to record a lesser pilgrimage (ʿumra) and non-obligatory visits to other holy sites. At 615 centimeters long and 35 centimeters wide, the mammoth scroll features representations of the major Muslim holy sites and objects including: the Kaʿba and Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Ḥarām) in Mecca, with the adjacent “trotting space” (masʿā) extending between Mounts Safa and Marwa; the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina, which housed his tomb and those of the first two caliphs, Abu Bakr and ʿUmar; the Prophet’s sandal; Jerusalem, featuring the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, built atop the Noble Sanctuary (al-Haram al-Sharif); the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, where Abraham and his family were buried; the tomb of the first Shiʿi imam, ʿAli b. Abi Talib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, in Najaf; and the tomb of the third Shiʿi imam, Husayn, in Karbala (figs. 1a and 1b).

Integrated with representations of the pilgrim’s itinerary of holy sites is a textual program that exploits variations in the type, size, and color of the script—as well as the eclectic relations between writing and ground—imbuing the scroll with added visual potency, meaning, and urgency. The texts comprise carefully chosen inscriptions from the Koran, proclamatory and benedictory texts in Arabic, and a narrative of visitation (ziyārātnāma, lit. “book of visitation”) composed in Arabic and Persian. From the ziyārātnāma we learn that the scroll—presumably the document as a whole—was meant to record the pilgrim’s journey to Najaf and other sacred places and shrines, after which he would receive a title and gifts. The scroll was produced at the conclusion of his travels to present to people across a broad swath of medieval society, including sultans, viziers, sayyids, judges, dervishes, and custodians of religious endowments. It concludes with the signatures of six witnesses who collectively verified the rites of pilgrimage and visitation.

As a whole, the Doha scroll depicts a group of religious sites that were laden with potent historical significance and religious meaning. The architecture of these sites—especially Mecca and Jerusalem—commemorated historical events and significant individuals through signs and markers in urban and extra-urban landscapes spanning the time of creation and the line of prophecy stretching from Adam to Muhammad. Pre-Islamic history was emphasized through the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, where Abraham and his family were buried. Events from Islam’s early history were also stressed through the burial sites of the Prophet Muhammad’s Companions and of the first caliphs, Abu Bakr and ʿUmar, as well those of the Prophet’s cousin and son-in-law ʿAli b. Abi Talib and grandson Husayn. The language of the scroll styles these sites as “precincts” (sing. ḥaram), “places of witnessing” (sing. mashhad), and “sacred thresholds” (sing. ataba-yi sharif). Mashhads were mostly tombs that marked, in perpetuity, physical presence, through the bodily remains of a revered person or persons. Some mashhads commemorated the transitory presence of historical figures and important events, and were sometimes built based on visions (mashhad al-ruʿyā). Scrolls served as proofs—mute witnesses—of obligatory acts of pilgrimage (both the ḥajj [greater pilgrimage] and ʿumra [lesser pilgrimage]) and, frequently,
voluntary, recommended visitations (sing. *ziyāra*). The visual forms these scrolls took also suggested a spiritual choreography enacted in a space and time past that could be recalled in the present by their owners, as well as by those persons who were allowed to view them. This transcendent aspect was a perennial attribute of the pilgrimage scroll, as it was for other kinds of objects that simultaneously activate and construct memory.⁴

Although pilgrimage scrolls were commemorative and personal in nature, they also held evidentiary status akin to verified legal documents. They were acquired by the pilgrim at the conclusion of a pilgrimage to Mecca—whether the *ḥajj* or the *ʿumra*—or in other places encompassed by the journey. It was common for the pilgrim to make voluntary visits to the other major holy sites of Islam—Medina and Jerusalem—either before or after the journey to Mecca, and to travel to additional places of spiritual importance that were selected based on a variety of factors including individual belief, personal choice, financial means, and political realities: in

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Fig. 1a. Sections 1–29 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll (annotated with fig. nos. 2–12). Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS.267.1998. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 1b. Sections 30–40 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll (annotated with fig. nos. 13–22). Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS.267.1998. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
the example of the Doha scroll, the pilgrim also visited Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala.

This type of document was produced for the pilgrim as a personal and official record of having accomplished a pilgrimage. A large number of certificates were made to authenticate pilgrimages by proxy. Proxy pilgrimages were generally commissioned by the family of a deceased relative or for relatives who were physically unable to make the journey. The preferred format for such certificates, whether by proxy or not, was the scroll (Ar. *darj*, pl. *durūj*)—making them analogous to other sorts of authorized, official documents—presumably because of its convenient portability and ease of display. While the scope of content in a pilgrimage certificate was too little to make much practical sense as a codex, the indisputable physical advantage of the scroll was that, when unrolled, it could reveal sequential segments of the journey, or even the complete itinerary from beginning to end. The extended temporality of the pilgrim’s journey could be collapsed into an instantaneous viewing
experience if the scroll were opened in its entirety. In the current absence of records describing specific usage and viewing practices, we can only propose a range of possible uses: perhaps portions of the scroll were made visible through stages of unrolling and rolling; alternatively, a scroll might have been completely unrolled, and thus rendered visible from beginning to end. There are no specific physical features indicating the most common display techniques for these scrolls.

The layout, content, and conventions of the Doha pilgrimage scroll, a matrix of painted and written forms arranged to be seen in vertical orientation, continues in most of its aspects a long-standing artistic practice of representing Muslim "sacred geography." The best and earliest known examples are found in a corpus of some 150 scrolls dated between 1084 and 1310, which was discovered in 1893 at the Umayyad Great Mosque in Damascus. An examination of these documents revealed an intensified period of production when the Seljuqs (1078–1117) and Ayyubids (1186–1260) ruled Damascus, as well as a steady increase in the practice of embedding images of holy places amid the text, especially from the late 1100s onward. Such scrolls continued to be made throughout the Islamic lands, with two especially well-known examples made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: the earlier one is dated 836 (1432–33), in the name of Maymuna bint Muhammad b. ʿabd allah al-Zardali, while the later one, dated 951 (1544–45), records a proxy pilgrimage made by Piri b. Sayyid Ahmad for the late Şehzade Mehmed (d. 1543), one of the sons of the Ottoman sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520–66). Proxy pilgrims were required to have already performed a ḥajj for themselves. These latter specimens are more comparable to the Doha scroll than those making up the Damascus corpus, which spans the late eleventh to early fourteenth centuries, because they were patently special commissions, distinguished by their physical monumentality and highly ambitious and detailed visual programs.

Although earlier scrolls of the Seljuq, Ayyubid, and Mamluk periods were personalized, this was mainly achieved through variations in the textual apparatus—sometimes simply by the addition of the pilgrim’s name—with images of the holy places supplied more and more frequently through block printing, a modest technology of image making but one scalable to mass production. Also noteworthy is that while the visual content of the earlier Damascus corpus of scrolls usually seems to be describing the ḥajj, a greater number of them actually record ʿumras. By contrast, the extant scrolls from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—an admittedly small and restricted set—depict ad hoc, individualized pilgrimages. These later scrolls thus reflect a distinct social class of patron/pilgrim who was able to commemorate the realization of a religious obligation through unique, fully handmade objects.

In light of the Doha scroll’s status as an exceptionally rare surviving document of the fifteenth century, this essay offers a detailed analysis of its materials, production, form, and content; the history of the scroll as an artefact is also discussed. Close physical study of the document revealed many and diverse kinds of intervention, some of them repairs, in the post-production contexts of the circulation and use of the scroll. These aspects of study are offered here as preliminaries to the interpretation of the scroll vis-à-vis salient comparative objects, and in relation to its historical context, as far as it can be determined from the available evidence.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCROLL: THE VISUAL PROGRAM

The topographic imagery and Arabic and Persian calligraphy found on the scroll are executed in watercolor, ink, and gold on a cream-toned paper. Detailed observations about materials and evidence of post-production interventions—including modern conservation treatments—are provided in the next section, which presents a technical and scientific examination of the scroll. Here, the scroll is described in terms of its content, which consists of an alternating sequence of inscriptions—texts written in square Kufic script, the "six cursive scripts" (al-aqlām al-sitta), and nastaʿlīq—and graphic images, representations of the holy sites visited by the pilgrim (Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala), as well as of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal. The inscriptions vary not only in the type of script in which they are written but also in the color
of the ink and watercolors used, as well as in their textual subject matter, tone, and voice. We first find pious formulas in a monumental square Kufic script arranged into squares (some rotated) and rectangles, as well as the borders of the scroll: these proclaim God’s glory and command His praise, and also name (and sometimes bless) the Prophet Muhammad, the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (al-khulafā’ al-rāshidūn), and the Twelve Imams; a verse from the Koran is also included. Selections of verses from the Koran are written in a monumental cursive script in gold or black ink. The long prose text added to the end of the scroll is written in riqāʾ script in black ink and provides information about the pilgrim, his itinerary, and the intended purpose of the scroll. The nastaʿlīq inscriptions, also written in black ink, are composed in the Persian language—though some are in Arabic—and identify the elements of each location.

What follows is a description of the separate sections making up the scroll, each section numbered for the sake of clarity. Photographs of the full scroll, divided into two halves, are annotated with the section numbers along the top (figs. 1a and 1b). Close-up photographs showing sections of the scroll accompany the descriptions. The appendix contains a complete transcription of the Arabic and Persian texts as well as an English translation.

Section 1: The scroll opens with an inscription written in black thuluth that directly introduces the viewer/reader to the nature of the pilgrimage by mentioning places in Mecca where the rituals of the ‘umra are performed. The sites mentioned include: the Kaʿba (“The Venerable House” [al-Bayt al-Mukarram]), the Station of Abraham (al-Maqâm [Ibrâhîm]), and the Well of Zamzam (al-Zamzam) (fig. 2, showing sections 1–3).

Sections 2 and 3: The next elements of the scroll are arranged in a square enclosed by a decorative border.
composed of cartouches: lobed biomorphic motifs appear in the cartouches and the triangular interstices left-over between them. Inside the border there is a central, rotated square and four smaller squares in the corners, each one containing a square Kufic text. The smaller squares contain formulas glorifying God, executed in black outlined in gold over a red ground (“Glory be to God” [subḥān Allāh] / “and Praise be to God” [wa al-ḥamdu li-llāh] / [square damaged and lost] / “and God is Great” [wa Allāhu akbar]). The text of the rotated square, painted in white outlined in black over a green ground, is from the second half of verse 33 in Sura 33 (al-Ahzāb [The Clans]) of the Koran: “God desires to remove impurities from you, O inmates of this house, and to cleanse and bring out the best in you.”12 Beginning at the corner of the rotated square to the right, the text runs clockwise from exterior to interior. Koran 33:33, quite commonly applied in architectural and numismatic contexts, is susceptible to a Shi’i interpretation through its use of the word “house.”13

Section 4: Verse 196 of Sura 2 (al-Baqara [The Cow]) of the Koran appears in a single line of text written in black thuluth. This chapter refers to the ḥajj, and specifically to the time when the pilgrims sacrifice an animal (in commemoration of God’s request that Abraham sacrifice Isma’il [Ishmael]), and also partially cut or shave their hair (fig. 3, showing sections 4–9).14

Section 5: A square Kufic inscription in red outlined in a lighter color (ochre or gold) on a black ground repeats the phrase “I put my trust in God” (wa tawwakaltu ‘alā Allāh) twice and ends with the single word “God” (Ilāh).
Section 6: The text is a portion of verse 2 of Sura 48 (al-Fath [The Victory]) of the Koran: “[save] you from earlier.” It is copied in gold and outlined in black in a variant of the thuluth script. The full verse is divided into four parts—which maintain their sequential order—dispersed throughout the scroll (see sections 6, 13, 19, and 28). While this Koranic verse is not strictly related to either the greater or lesser pilgrimages, it is a propos because it glorifies God as the supreme guide and enjoins worshippers to follow the “straight path” (ṣīraṭ al-mustaqīm). The monumental script is set inside a cloud of reserved paper surrounded by a ground of red cross-hatching.

Section 7: The text, written in thuluth script in black ink, refers to the importance of completing the ḥajj and again exalts God and His religion. This line continues the theme expressed in the first section of the scroll.

Section 8: The text, written in riqāʾ script in red, proclaims: “God the Blessed and Sublime said.”

Section 9: Verses 96 and 97 of Sura 3 (Āl ʿImrān [The Family of ʿImran]) of the Koran are here presented in two lines written in riqāʾ in black ink. These verses mention the Kaʿba, its establishment in Bakka—the other Arabic name for Mecca—and the duty of performing the pilgrimage. The text reads: “The first House of God to be set up for men was at Bakkah the blessed, a guidance for the people of the world. It contains clear signs, and the spot where Abraham had stood. And anyone who enters it will find security. And whosoever can afford should visit the House on a pilgrimage.” The two Koranic verses are well placed, for they immediately precede, and hence introduce, the image representing the Masjid al-Haram of Mecca with the kaʿba.

Section 10: The Masjid al-Haram of Mecca is depicted as a rectangle with the separate sites of importance clearly depicted as discrete entities (fig. 4). The entire site is bounded by an arcade composed of slightly pointed arches set over columns with a lamp hanging inside each bay. Minarets project diagonally from the four corners of the Masjid al-Haram toward the center, in effect pointing toward the Kaʿba as the sacred pole (qibla) (fig. 4[a]). Each one of the four arcades, depicted as if it were perpendicular to a viewer, is annotated with a nastaʿlīq caption enumerating the precise number of columns making up that side (fig. 4[b]). Other enumerations list the number of columns of circumambulation, and the width and height of the Kaʿba measured in the unit of the gaz (fig. 4[c]). To emphasize orientation—and define the Kaʿba’s relationship to the world beyond it—annotations also identify the cardinal directions (fig. 4[d]).

Increasing the emphasis on orientation are the stations of the four schools of Islamic law (Hanafi, Shafiʿi, Hanbali, and Maliki), represented as square and rectangular shapes (fig. 4[e]). We also find the written names of the corners of the Kaʿba according to the location of the cardinal points (rukn ‘Irāqī, “the ‘Iraqi corner,” to the northeast; rukn Yamani, “the Yemeni corner,” to the southeast; and rukn Shāmī, “the Syrian corner,” to the west) (fig. 4[f]). The presence of the Hanafi station indicates that this portion of the scroll could not have been made before 801 (1398–99), the year in which the Mamluks built the Hanafi station for the first time.

The Kaʿba is depicted as a black rectangle, dressed in the kiswa and punctuated by a golden band at its top, symbolizing the embroidered or woven textile band (hizam) containing the shahāda (“There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God” [lā ilāh īlā Allāh wa Muḥammad rasūl Allāh], the Muslim confession of faith and first pillar of Islam) (fig. 4[g]), as well as by a double-panelled door with prominent knockers. Facing the northwestern wall of the Kaʿba is the ḥijr of Ismaʿil, a space delineated by a semi-circular wall (ḥaṭīm), painted in gold on the scroll, which pilgrims were not allowed to enter during circumambulation (tawāf) (fig. 4[h]). On the scroll, as in other images of the Masjid al-Haram, the ḥaṭīm resembles a nimbus enclosing the rectangular Kaʿba. Traditions record that the ḥijr is the place where Ismaʿil and Hagar were buried.

Several features of the Kaʿba are represented and captioned in nastaʿlīq script. The golden mīzāb (fig. 4[i]), used to collect rainwater from the roof of the Kaʿba, is represented next to the ḥijr. The Black Stone (al-ḥajar al-aswad) is on the eastern corner (fig. 4[j]). In other depictions of the Kaʿba it is usually identified as the “Black Corner” (al-rukn al-aswad). Featured below this is the multazam, which corresponds to the two-meter interval between the Black Stone and the door of the Kaʿba (fig. 4[k]). It marks the beginning point of one circuit of rotation around the Kaʿba. Pilgrims hope to touch
the multazam or to pronounce salutations at this place during circumambulation. To the right of the multazam is the “Station of Gabriel” (maqâm al-Jibrîl) (fig. 4[l]).

In the lower area of the image depicting the Masjid al-Haram four structures can be identified from left to right: the “Watering Place of ‘Abbas” (siqâya-yi ʿ Abbās), which provided water for pilgrims (fig. 4[m]); the “Mountain of Light” (jabal al-nūr), depicted as a domed structure (fig. 4[n]); the “Dome of Zamzam” (qubba-yi Zamzam) (fig. 4[o]); and the “Station of Abraham” (maqâm-i Ibrâhîm), which generally refers to the rock where Abraham stood with his son Isma’il when they rebuilt the Ka’ba after its destruction in the flood of Noah’s time (fig. 4[p]). Abraham and Isma’il also restored primordial monotheism to the site. Below these four toponyms, each marked by a type of tall domed structure subtly distinguished by alterations in color and pattern, is an inscription referring to the “staircase of the Ka’ba” (daraja al-Ka’ba […] (fig. 4[q])). A little further to the right—beyond the Shafi’i station (fig. 4[e])—we find

Fig. 4. Mecca. Section 10 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
the “Minbar of the Friday Sermon” (minbar al-khutba), used after prayer (fig. 4[r]). A little further away there is yet another domed structure, the “Dome of the Hours” (qubba al-sāʿāt) (fig. 4[s]), perhaps a repository for time-measuring devices.

Adjacent to the Masjid al-Haram, the open-air sanctuary with the Ka’ba at its center, we find the representation of the “trotting space” (masʿā) between Mounts Safa and Marwa, which commemorates the site where Hagar and her son wandered in the desert looking for water. The space is represented as a long rectangle lined with arcades, with other toponyms identified through nastaʿlīq captions as the “Red Mountain” (jabal al-aḥmar) and the “Perfume Market” (sūq al-ʿaṭṭār) (fig. 4[u, v, w]). Mounts Safa and Marwa (fig. 4[t, x]) are labelled in a script quite unlike the nastaʿlīq captions, and could have been original to the production of the scroll. The two mountains are both represented as craggy outcrops of stone rendered in wash and lines of gray paint with a triple-bayed arcade in the background. Mounts Safa and Marwa are shown as if the pilgrim were standing inside the trotting space perpendicular to them.

Section 11: Koran 2:158 completes the representation of the masʿā and Mounts Safa and Marwa by highlighting that entering the masʿā is permissible whether this is done on pilgrimage (ḥajj) or during a voluntary visit to the holy site (fig. 5, showing sections 11–14). The text, written in thuluth in black ink, reads: “Truly Safa and Marwa are the symbols of God. Whoever goes on pilgrimage to the House of God, or on a Holy Visit, is not guilty of wrong if he walks around them.”

Section 12: So much of the square Kufic inscription is missing and/or damaged that it is impossible to read. Red was used for the background color.

Section 13: As mentioned earlier, Koran 48:2 is divided into four segments across the scroll. The continuation of section 6 here reads: “and subsequent [blames], and complete His favors.” The text is written in a monumental thuluth variant script in gold and outlined in black. Once again, the paper is reserved as a
cloud-shaped form on which the calligraphy is lofted, with the background—as in section 12—executed in red cross-hatching.

**Section 14:** Here the text offers another glorification of God, and includes some of “the beautiful names” (al-asmāʾ al-ḥusna) of God: “most Generous” (al-akram); “the Clement” (al-ra’ūf); and “most Merciful” (al-ḥarām). The line is written in a thuluth variant script in black ink.

**Section 15:** The second diagram depicts Medina and the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad.30 We find the same concept used to represent the Meccan Masjid al-Haram applied to Medina, especially in the treatment of the four minarets at the corners and the arcades with hanging lamps viewed as if seen from inside (fig. 6[a]). Four doors provide access to the mosque: the “Gate of Mercy” (bāb al-raḥma), the “Gate of Peace” (bāb al-salām), “Gabriel’s Gate” (bāb Jibrīl), and the “Women’s Gate” (bāb al-nisāʾ) (fig. 6[b]).31 These are identified by captions but are not further distinguished from the other bays making up each of the four perimeter arcades. Below the mosque are the “palm trees of the sanctuary” (nakhlhā-yi ḥaram). As a unique feature of Medina, the palms secured its identification (fig. 6[c]).32 The shahāda is enclosed in a rectangular panel along the top edge of the mosque (fig. 6[d]).

The mosque structure is shown as a rectangle divided into two parts. To the left is the “Dome of the Messenger of God” (qubba-yi rasūl Allāh) (fig. 6[e]), which contains three rectangles representing the cenotaphs (qabr) of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr, and ‘Umar, respectively (fig. 6[f, g, h]), with Muhammad’s larger than the other two and placed above them. Abu Bakr and ‘Umar are further identified by their epithets, “the truthful” (al-siddiq) and “the just” (al-fārūq). To the right of the dome, in the other half of the rectangle, we see depictions of the Prophet Muhammad’s mihrab, given an elaborate cusped form and a hanging lamp, and portrayed as if seen when facing it full on. His pulpit (minbar al-khuṭba) is depicted as if seen from the side and with a checkerboard pattern (fig. 6[i, j]).33 A standard with banner viewed in profile is painted on the right side of the minbar. This might be one of the famous relics of the Prophet Muhammad; known as the ‘uqāb, it was used as a curtain by his wife ‘A’isha and carried into battle by ‘Ali during the conquest of Mecca and in subsequent battles.34 On the opposite side of the covered mosque space are two domed buildings identified as the “furnishings depot” (farrāskhāna), which presumably contained soft furnishings such as carpets and textiles, and the “dome of the oil house” (qubba-yi zaytkhāna), which stored oil and wax to be used for lighting (fig. 6[k, l]).

**Section 16:** Koran 3:144—written in black muhaqqaq over a cloud of reserved paper enclosed by a red cross-hatched ground—completes the section on Medina by glorifying the Prophet Muhammad (fig. 7, showing sections 16 and 17). An apt transition to the next section of the scroll, the verse reads: “Muhammad is only a messenger, and many a messenger has gone before him.”

**Section 17:** The Prophet Muhammad’s sandal is enclosed in a rectangle, the interstices decorated with floral and circular motifs adorned with fluttering cloths that resemble tassels (fig. 7). The interlaced motifs are later additions. Inscriptions run around the outer edge of the sandal and also appear in a panel in the middle, around which a large area of the support has been lost. Together, the inscriptions identify the sacred object as the “noble sandals” (naʿāl al-sharīfa) and mention their talismanic use, i.e., their significant apotropaic and, presumably, therapeutic powers. The inscriptions making up the “image/likeness” (mithāl) of the sandal are written in riqāʾ script in black ink.

The sandal held a variety of meanings as a marker distinguishing Muslims from boot-wearing Christians. In addition to the tradition that God ordered the Prophet Muhammad to wear sandals, there was the opinion that they were the best footwear for pilgrimage, as well as the belief that the Prophet Muhammad’s sandals had been close to the throne of God during the Ascension (miʿrāj).35 Written sources devoted to the subject of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal specify how it was made and aspects of its form in considerable detail.

**Section 18:** A thin strip of text designed in square Kufic has been severely damaged due to the corrosive effect of the pigment on the paper (fig. 8, showing sections 18 and 19). What little remains is illegible. The calligraphy was executed in black and outlined with a light color on a green background.

**Section 19:** Another part of Koran 48:2—“on you, and guide you”—continuing on from sections 6 and 13. The text is written in a monumental thuluth variant script, in
Fig. 6. Medina. Section 15 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 7. The Prophet Muhammad’s sandal. Sections 16–17 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Section 20: This single line of text, written in a thuluth variant script in black ink, extols the Prophet Muhammad as the “best of the Arabs and the Persians and the illuminator of iniquity” (khayr al-ʿarab wa al-ʿajam wa sarāj al-ẓulm); it continues seamlessly into the next section (fig. 9, showing sections 20 and 21).

Section 21: Written in a smaller-sized naskh script in black ink, the text continues with a blessing upon God, the Prophet Muhammad, and all of “the prophets and messengers” (al-anbīyāʾ wa al-mursilīn). It then transitions to the main part of the text with the conventional phrase “now then” (ammā baʿd), highlighted in gold ink (fig. 9). God’s support is requested for Sayyid b. Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana. (His name replaces that of the original pilgrim; this redaction is discussed below). The text offers details about the pilgrim’s journey and informs us that he undertook, in this case, an ʿumra. The text describes the different rituals performed over the course of one week by Sayyid Yusuf. These included circumambulating (ṭawāf) the Ka’ba, kissing the Black Stone, pronouncing invocations and prayers (duʿā), and making supplications (taḍarruʿ) below the mizāb; he also offered two sequences of prayer (rak’a) following the accepted tradition (sunna), and made a circuit (ṭawāf) around the Station of Abraham.36

The text is flanked on either side by illegible square Kufic inscriptions set in rectangles (the corrosive damage of the pigment has caused significant losses). The script is composed of small squares of pink set over a green ground and inside borders of red and gold rulings.

Section 22: The text continues from the previous section but is now written in a larger thuluth script to highlight the Prophet Muhammad, who is here blessed (fig. 10, showing sections 22–25).

Section 23: This is a continuation of the text from the previous section, written now in a smaller-sized naskh script flanked by borders of square Kufic inscriptions as in section 21. The naskh text here mentions the continued observance of practices required by the pilgrim in the Meccan Haram—drinking water from the Well of Zamzam, pressing against the multazam—and quickly transitions to Medina, where the pilgrim visited various sites, though they are not identified. The remainder of the text stresses the Prophet Muhammad’s support and intercession on behalf of the pilgrim, who had dreamed all his life of accomplishing this ʿumra. The support of the pilgrim’s friends in realizing this goal is also acknowledged. The last line offers a blessing on the Prophet Muhammad and introduces a saying that continues into section 24.

The square Kufic inscriptions flanking the main text in naskh are so damaged as to be rendered illegible. Section 24: This is a continuation of the text from the previous section, written in a larger thuluth script to emphasize the content. According to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad that appears in this section, God’s servants should assist each other so that God will be prompted to help them in return. God will show mercy to those who themselves have been merciful to others.

Section 25: The concluding lines of text from the previous section are here written in a smaller-sized naskh script. The end of the saying reiterates God’s mercy for Muslims who show mercy to each other and the final line states that God will help whoever helps the aforementioned supplicant.

Square Kufic appears in boxes at either side of the text in naskh script—continuing the practice seen in earlier sections; though damaged, it can be read as “God” (Allāh). The Kufic is executed in red pigment, outlined with a lighter color, and set on a black ground.

Section 26: This inscription names and blesses Sayyid Baraka b. Hasan b. ‘Ajami b. Ramīthā b. Muhammad al-Husayni al-Makki following the phrase “the situation as mentioned in that” (al-ḥāl ka-mā dhukira fī dhālika) (fig. 11, showing sections 26, 27, and 28). The phrase
Fig. 9. Sections 20–21 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 10. Sections 22–25 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
“the situation as mentioned in that” refers to the scroll, which records an ‘umra verified by Sayyid Baraka.

Section 27: The marginal notation nearly repeats the text in section 26 (fig. 11). Here the name of the person, Husayn b. Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Malik b. Hasan al-Husayni al-Makki, is preceded by the phrase “the situation as mentioned in that, verified by our master, the poor one [before] God the Sublime” (الحالة كما ذكرنا في ذاك الحسن يربك الله تعالى).

Section 28: This is the conclusion of Koran 48:2, the earlier parts of which were spread out over sections 6, 13, and 19 (fig. 11). The text is written in a monumental thuluth variant script in black, set inside a cloud border with red cross-hatching indicating the ground. In a dogmatic tone reinforced by the sheer monumentality of the script, the text proclaims, “on the straight path” (ṣirāṭān mustaqīman).

Section 29: The next topographic image, depicting Jerusalem and the site of the “Noble Sanctuary” (الحرم الالام) (fig. 12), features two green-domed structures centered amid an overall square composition, the one on the left symbolizing the Aqsa Mosque (Masjid al-Aqṣā), and the one on the right the Dome of the Rock (Gunbad-i Ṣakhra). The composition suggests to the viewer that the outer arcades correspond to the perimeter walls of the Noble Sanctuary, the temple platform. As seen in the representations of Mecca and Medina, the four minarets at the corners are labelled in association with their most proximate buildings (fig. 12[a] for the Aqsa Mosque, and [b] for the Dome of the Rock). Two doors lead to the mosque and bear names similar to those of the Meccan sanctuary: “Ali’s Gate” (باب الإله), and “Gate of Peace” (باب السلام) (fig. 12[c, left side]). A third door, named “Gate of Hell” (باب جهنم), referring to the Jahannam Valley (وادي جهنم) to the east of the Haram, is on the right side, adjacent to the Dome of the Rock (fig. 12[c, right side]).

The Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are both depicted with domes set over tall chambers whose interiors feature an arch with hanging lamps and other elements. The Aqsa Mosque (fig. 12[d]) houses a form identified as the “Station of Abraham” (ماطーム عبد الرحمن) and a pulpit (منبر) (fig. 12[e and f]). According to tradition, the principal “Station of Abraham” is in Mecca (and is represented on the scroll), though another example was identified on the Nablus road at the village of Lajjun near Jerusalem. Other key sites of the Aqsa Mosque seen in early pilgrimage manuals are not found here, chiefly the mihrabs of Mu‘awiya and ‘Umar b. al-Khattab. Yet other mihrabs, such as those of Zakariyya and David, are only described as being inside the Aqsa Mosque in fifteenth-century written sources.

The Dome of the Rock (fig. 12[g]) contains “Moses’s rod” (المسية’s rod), “Isa’s knife” (العذراء’s knife), recalling Abraham’s sacrifice, and “Hamza’s shield” (sipah-i Hamza) (fig. 12[h, i, j]). These relics reflect longstanding literary traditions that the Dome of the Rock housed a collection of valuable artefacts, some of
them related to the prophets whose line ended with the Prophet Muhammad. Moses’s rod does not seem to have been commonly identified with Jerusalem, but one tradition locates it in Lake Tiberias, in Palestine (where it is joined by the Ark of the Covenant).

The presence of Moses’s rod might be a vague allusion to earlier traditions recording the belief that God ordered Moses to make the direction of prayer from a rock on the site that the Aqsa Mosque would later occupy. The knife used by Abraham to make the sacrifice is not mentioned in any known source. The shield of Hamza (b. ‘Abd al-Muttalib), the Prophet Muhammad’s paternal uncle, symbolized Hamza’s strident support of Islam in battle (after his somewhat late conversion to the new faith).

An inscription immediately below the image of the Dome of the Rock describes it as the “stone of the rock and impression of the footprint of his holiness, the chosen” (sang-i sakhra va nishâni-yi qadam-i ḥaẓrat mustafâ) (fig. 12[k]). This commemorates the Prophet Muhammad’s Ascension (mîrâj) from Jerusalem to the seven heavens, paradise, and hell. Other sites marked on the image include “Adam’s Cave” (tughâr-i Adam) and the “Cradle of Jesus” (kahvâra-i ʿĪsā) (fig. 12[l, m]). The Biblical tradition records Adam’s burial in Jerusalem—but only after his initial burial in a cave at Mount Abu Qubays in Mecca—as well as in Hebron, and other sites. According to Shi’i tradition, Noah transported Adam’s body for burial in Najaf. Since Hebron is represented on the scroll in section 31, the identification of Adam’s Cave is difficult to explain (the only proximate “caves” are beneath the Dome of the Rock and the substructures of the Haram al-Sharif). While the Cradle of Jesus (Ar. mahd ʿĪsā) is not mentioned in written sources before the tenth century, eighth-century traditions are attested about Jesus speaking from the cradle in Jerusalem and were reiterated in later times. The Cradle of Jesus has long since become a site of visitation on the Haram al-Sharif.

Section 30: A portion of verse 163 of Sura 4 (al-Nisā’ [The Women]) of the Koran introduces the next topographic image, which depicts the Cave of the Patriarchs...
in Hebron (fig. 13, showing sections 30 and 31). The Koranic verse states that God inspired the prophets Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, and Jacob: “And We sent revelations to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob.” The line is written in a modestly sized thuluth script in black ink.

Section 31: The Cave of the Patriarchs, in Hebron, is depicted as an arcaded court with hanging lamps suspended from the arches and four minarets (fig. 13). The minarets are identified as being of the “sacred precinct of God’s friend [viz. Abraham]” (manār-i haram-i Khalīl Allāh) (fig. 13[a]). A circle identifies the position of “Abraham’s Cave” (maghāra-yi ibrāhīm) along the lower center (fig. 13[b]), with the minbar—composed of a checkerboard pattern—of the mosque of “God’s friend” at the lower right (fig. 13[c]). The occupants of the four domed burial sites (qabr), whose interiors show cenotaphs, are, from left to right: Joseph (fig. 13[d]) (his alone has a single cenotaph); Jacob and Mu‘mina Khattun (lit. “the faithful lady”), that is, either Leah or Rachel (fig. 13[e, f]); Abraham and his wife Sarah (lit. “Lady Sarah” [Sārah Khātūn]) (fig. 13[g, h]); and Isaac, with a grave below designated as “the tomb of Isaac’s wife” (qabr-i haram-i Isḥāq) (fig. 13[i, j]), though Rebecca is not named. Only one entrance to the sanctuary is identified, namely, the “Gate of Peace” (bāb al-salām).

The image of Hebron depicts the four burial sites near one another. The pilgrimage narratives of Nasir-i Khusraw (1047) and ‘Ali b. Abi Bakr al-Harawi (d. 1215) emphasize that “Abraham’s Cave,” or grotto, housed the bodies of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Abraham’s wife Sarah, with Joseph’s tomb—a domed building—at some distance from it and to the southwest. When the Mamluk governor Sanjar al-Jawli refurbished the site in 1318–20—building over the mosque completed by Salah al-Din in 1188—a cenotaph for Joseph was added to the interior. Its presence is recorded in the later pilgrimage narrative of Ibn Battuta in 1326. The four tombs visualize the line of prophetic descent from Abraham to Isaac.

Fig. 13. Hebron. Sections 30–31 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
to Jacob and Joseph, while also giving prominence to the matriarchs.

Section 32: A series of square Kufic inscriptions follows the representation of Hebron, beginning with five square compositions in which the palette shifts from red on green to black on pink, pink on green, black on pink, and red on green (fig. 14, showing sections 32 and 33). The inked grid that was used as a guide to construct the square Kufic text remains visible. The outer squares at left and right make use of red letters on a green ground to present the names of Muhammad and ‘Ali, which are rotated four times and connected at the center to form a swastika. The adjacent squares—painted in black and pink—feature the name of Muhammad in the middle, surrounded by the names of Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali, the four Rightly Guided Caliphs. In the center square composition, the name Muhammad appears in pink Kufic letters, rotated four times on a green ground.

Section 33: A large square composition is made up of a border of square Kufic with the text in black and the ground in pink, and a square in the middle that also contains a square Kufic inscription, this time painted in green on a pink ground (fig. 14). The square is separated from the epigraphic border by thick lines painted in black, green, and red. The text in the border announces the names and conventional titles, or honorifics (laqab), of the Prophet Muhammad and the Twelve Imams. There is an opening invocation and a concluding blessing: “O God! [Pray] for Muhammad the elect, and ‘Ali the beloved, and Hasan the chosen, and Husayn the martyr of Karbala, and ‘Ali the ornament of the worshippers, and Muhammad the revealer, and Ja’far the honest, and Musa the calm, and ‘Ali the pleasing one, and Muhammad the God-fearing, and ‘Ali the pure one, and Hasan the soldier, and Muhammad the guided one, the lord of time, peace upon them.”⁵⁷ The text runs from the outer
lower right in a clockwise spiral, concluding at the lower right of the central square.

The text of the central square repeats the second half of Koran 33:33, which appears in section 2 at the opening of the scroll. The repetition of the same Koranic verse in sections 2 and 33 establishes a textual symmetry, bookending the scroll.

Section 34 and 35: These sections are composed of a rectangular panel framed by a braided border with the central field divided into three parts (fig. 15, showing sections 34 and 35). The top and bottom parts contain verse 55 of Sura 5 (al-Māʾida [The Feast]) of the Koran, written in thuluth script in black ink: “Your only friends are God and His Messenger, and those who believe and are steadfast in devotion, who pay the alms and bow in homage [before God].” The verse is not related to the pilgrimage but states that the true believer’s only friends are God, the Prophet Muhammad, and Muslims; these lines emphasize necessary acts such as prayers, the payment of alms (zakat), and homage to God. The line of text at the bottom, written in pink thuluth script and set inside a black cartouche, reads: “This is the place of witnessing [tomb] of the Commander of the Faithful” (hadhā mashhad amīr al-muʾminīn), in reference to the tomb of ‘Ali in Najaf, which is depicted in the next section.

Section 36: While Najaf is not explicitly named in the preceding caption (section 35), the illustration is composed of a domed tomb set within an arcaded compound whose labels specify it as the burial place of Murtadaʾ ‘Ali (fig. 16).58 As in previous topographic representations, Najaf is depicted as a sacred space bounded by four arcades with hanging lamps and minarets rising from each corner (fig. 16[a]). Only one entrance is labelled, the “Gate of Peace” (bāb al-salām) (fig. 16[b]). The tomb is a tall slender structure capped by a dome, with multiple lamps hanging in the interior and a cenotaph ornamented with colorful discs. The cenotaph is described as the “chest of ‘Ali the beloved, may God be pleased with him” (ṣundūq-i Murtadāʾ ‘Ali raḍāʾ Allāh ‘anhu) (fig. 16[c]). Two objects are depicted outside the tomb. To the right we see the iconic double-bladed sword, an attribute of ‘Ali given to him by the Prophet Muhammad in the Battle of Uhud. Labelled as the “double-pointed sword of the viceroy of Najaf” (dhū al-fiqār shaḥna al-Najaf) (fig. 16[d]), it is another object of symbolic ritual value. To the left, balancing the sword—and the composition as a whole—we see a metalwork candlestick with a candle.

Section 37: The single line of text functions as a caption introducing the topographic representation of Karbala in the next section 38 (fig. 17, showing sections 37 and 38). The caption, written in thuluth script in black ink, reads: “This is the place of witnessing of the Commander of the Faithful Husayn b. ‘Ali, may God be pleased with them” (hadhā mashhad amīr al-muʾminīn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Ali raḍāʾ Allāh ‘anhumā). While Karbala is not named in the caption, the site was commonly referred to as the shrine—or place of martyrdom—of Husayn (mashhad al-Ḥusayn).

Section 38: Husayn’s shrine in Karbala is depicted in a manner echoing that of his father, ‘Ali, at Najaf, and is conceptually consistent with all of the sacred precincts depicted in the earlier sections of the scroll (fig. 17).59 We find the same courtyard enclosed by arcades with suspended lamps—signifying its illumination, surely a visual metaphor for spirituality and holy emanation—and the same towering minarets anchored in the corners of the precinct (fig. 17[a], manār mashhad al-Ḥusayn).60 One point of entrance and exit is labelled as the “Gate of Peace” (bāb al-salām) (fig. 17[b]). The tomb is morphologically identical to that of ‘Ali at Najaf, depicted as a tall domed chamber illuminated from within by hanging lamps and featuring a broken arch of the type associated with architecture of the Ilkhanid period, perhaps intended to signify the historical vintage of the building.61 The cenotaph is similarly ornamented with a series of polychrome discs (fig. 17[c], ṣundūq amīr al-muʾminīn Husayn raḍāʾ Allāh ‘anhu). Also comparable to the previous image of Najaf are the two objects flanking Husayn’s tomb, which are, in this instance, two metalwork candlesticks with candles. Repetitions in the visual conception of the shrines at Karbala and Najaf emphasize the relationship between Husayn and ‘Ali as son and father, and as imams, while their general topographic features highlight a sacred nature also seen in the preceding locales represented on the scroll, namely, Hebron, Jerusalem, Medina, and Mecca.
Fig. 15. Sections 34–35 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 16. Najaf. Section 36 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Section 39: The scroll concludes with twenty-six lines written in riqā’ script in black ink (figs. 18–21). A mixture of Arabic and Persian, the text, which is prefaced by the monumental basmala (bi-ism Allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm), is enclosed in cloud-like forms against a ground of crosshatched lines ruled in ochre and red ink. It describes the Najaf segment of the pilgrimage and is dated 21 Muharram 837 (September 6, 1433), which is, notably, eleven days after the major Shi’i feast of ‘Āshūrā’ commemorating Husayn’s martyrdom. The pilgrim who performed the visitations is named: Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana. Unlike section 21, this is not a later addition.

After praising God and the Prophet Muhammad, the narrative states that the reason for writing the scroll (sabab-i taḥrīr īn kalamāt va taqrīr īn muqaddamāt) was to record Sayyid Yusuf’s journey to the shrine of ‘Ali in Najaf. ‘Ali b. Abi Talib is then extolled through an invocation of his numerous qualities and titles. Next come the details of Sayyid Yusuf’s pilgrimage to Najaf—which is identified as a shrine (mashhad and rawda), as well as a “noble threshold” (ʿataba-yi sharīfa). He walked to the precinct, kissed the threshold and placed his foot on it, and made a circumambulation followed by two sequences of prayer, according to the accepted custom. He humbled himself by kissing the hand of ‘Ali b. Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Kammuna al-Husayni as a sign of respect. Kammuna is also praised and blessings are offered to him and his family. After Sayyid Yusuf visited the four harams and two mashhads, he was presented with a wallet (ṣufra), two lamps (chirāgh), and a standard (ʿalam), and made “successor to the dervishes” (khalīfa-yi darvīshān), which gave him the authority to give and receive robes (kisvat) and to give and receive rites (tarīq). We next learn that Sayyid Yusuf commissioned the scroll to present to leaders and dignitaries in whatever region of the world he happened to be traveling. According to the text, when presented with
Fig. 18. Section 39 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 19. Section 39 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Fig. 20. Section 39 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 21. Section 39 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
this scroll, sultans (saḥāīn), amirs (umārā), governors (navvāb), viziers (vuzzārā), lords (saḍāt), sayyids (sādāt), judges (quḍāt), holders of fiefs (ayyīma), the wealthy (aghniyā), dervishes (takīya-dārān), standard bearers (ʿalam-dārān), and superintendents of endowments and treasuries (mutawalīyān-i avqāf va bayt al-māl) should all honor and respect Sayyid Yusuf and offer him every form of assistance. The text closes with an invocation to God and a request that God bless the Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his Companions. It is here that the date is written.

Section 40: The concluding section of the scroll contains the signatures of the six witnesses who verified the completion of Sayyid Yusuf’s pilgrimage (fig. 22). These are arranged in three lines and read (from right to left and top to bottom): “And as we said, the one who needs God the Sublime’s mercy, Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Hazin al-Khazin, may he have God the Sublime’s pardon” (wa ka-dhā qūlu al-muḥtāj ilā raḥma a h [abbrev. for “Allāh”] ta’alā Muḥammad bin Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī bin Ḥazīn al-Khāzin ghafr Allāhu ta’alā lahu); “As we said, the poor one before God the Great, Ahmad b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Hazin al-Khazin, may he have God’s pardon” (ka-dhā qūlu al-faqīr ilā Allāh ta’alā Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī bin Ḥazin al-Khāzin ghafr a h [abbrev. for “Allāh”] lahu); “The situation as heard, exaltation and […], least of the servants of God the Sublime, ‘Ali b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Kammuna al-Husayni, may God the Sublime pardon him” (al-ḥāl ka-mā sumiʿa [i’lā] wa […] asghar al-ʿibād ilā Allāh ta’alā ‘Alī bin Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī bin Kammūna al-Husaynī ‘afā Allāh ta’alā ‘anhu); “The poor one [before] God the Rich, ‘Ali Asghar, son of the possessor of excellent qualities, the Husayni” (al-faqīr ilā Allāh al-ghanī ‘Alī Asghar bin Abī al-Makārīm al-Ḥusaynī); “The neediest of God’s worshippers, Abu Taḥlib al-Husaynī” (aḥwaj ‘ubbād Allāh Abū Taḥlib al-Ḥusaynī); and “Written by ‘Abd al-[…] Muḥammad Asghar, son of the possessor of excellent qualities, the Husayni” (katabahu ‘Abd [al-…] Muḥammad Asghar bin Abī al-Makārīm al-Ḥusaynī).

While the first three attestations are written out in three lines each, with formulas specifying their role in verifying the pilgrim’s actions, the second group of three signatures lacks this explicit textual protocol. Instead, they share the distinctive visual form of the ṭughrā, a stylized pattern within which the elements of the per-

Fig. 22. Section 40 of the Timurid pilgrimage scroll. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
son’s name are composed, often in the shape of a seal. From their signatures, we know that the first two witnesses also held the position of khāzin, a term used in the context of medieval Islamic administration for workers in finances and the chancellery. The khāzin, literally “he who keeps safe, stores something away,” was typically a keeper and or archivist. Because of this important role, it was crucial that the khāzin be a person of the highest moral probity.

The only other person whose name furnishes clues of more precise historical value is ʿAli b. Husayn. ‘Ali b. Kammuna al-Husayni, the figure whose hand Sayyid Yusuf kissed during his visit to ‘Ali’s mashhad in Najaf. The Kammuna tribe of Iraq had a long association with Baghdad, Najaf, and Karbala. After the Safavid ruler Shah Isma‘il took Baghdad in 1508, he released the imprisoned local leader of the Twelver Shi‘i, named Sayyid Muhammad Kammuna, and visited the Shi‘i shrines of ‘Ali in Najaf and Husayn in Karbala, to which he gave numerous presents while also issuing orders to have the former rebuilt and the latter repaired. Muhammad Kammuna, who was made keeper of the shrine at Najaf, died in 1514 supporting Shah Isma‘il at the Battle of Chaldiran.

Before Shah Isma‘il’s campaign in Iraq, the Kammuna family had held the position in Baghdad of “head of the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad” (nāqib al-ashrāf). The Doha scroll offers evidence of the privileged place enjoyed by the Kammuna family in Najaf society as early as the 1430s, if not before.

TECHNICAL EXAMINATION OF THE SCROLL

Physical description and condition

Before it was acquired in 1998, the scroll, which is currently in good condition, was conserved with museum-standard treatments including mending and inlays of losses with toned Japanese paper. The support has also been fully lined: this addition limits the visibility of the verso and prevents the accurate measurement of paper thickness and texture. Two pieces of equipment were used to visually observe and study the object: the light sheet and the digital microscope. Both devices reveal information that is not visible to the naked eye. The light sheet is a great help not only for assessing the current and past condition of the support but also because it provides us with a better understanding of the fabrication and layout of the scroll. The digital microscope enables in-depth observation by supplying close-up views that can buttress arguments concerning the conception and history of the scroll.

After examining the scroll with transmitted light, however, it became clear that the object must have been in poor condition before conservation, and that a thorough treatment such as a lining was required to provide physical cohesion to the support, which shows extensive areas of paper loss in the sections with polychrome images. Large pieces of the borders have also been lost and the verso reveals pulled-out sections of paper that are visible with the transmitted light sheet. Areas of the painted and drawn religious sites that had previously been lost have now been replaced with modern infills. At the beginning of the scroll, the paper support is widely missing around the Kufic square (fig. 2, sections 1–3). The Ka‘ba (fig. 4, section 10) also shows a large loss in its center, as do the upper and lower areas of the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina (fig. 23) and areas around the image of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal (fig. 23).

There are three main interrelated causes for the scroll’s deterioration. First, it has been subject to intensive handling and use, leading to physical damage to the support. Repeated rolling and unrolling have contributed to the network of horizontal cracks, tearing, and losses. The second cause of damage stems from the corrosive effect of some pigments, which is a contributing factor in the deterioration of the support. Over time, the copper-based green pigment has corroded under humid conditions and has taken on an unfortunate brown tone. The process of corrosion degrades cellulose materials and causes cracks and extended areas of loss (fig. 24). Most parts of the Kufic inscriptions painted in green have now disappeared, depriving us of the opportunity to read and analyze them. The third cause of damage relates to the brown marks and stains on the support. It seems that the scroll has suffered from water damage that caused blurring of the paint and ink and also catalyzed the green pigment corrosion.
The pigment layers present severe mechanical degradations including abrasions, flaking, and losses. These are caused by several factors, chiefly, the handling and use of the scroll, its format, and the quality of the means of production. In general, the paints were applied in thick layers that tend to be more prone to flaking (fig. 24). White washes were also applied to hide stains, marks, and pigment smears, as seen in the large calligraphic panel above the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem (fig. 25). However, it is not possible to determine when these additions occurred in the history of the object. Some retouching was also done to tone down the pigment abrasions or losses.

The paper support

The scroll measures 35 centimeters in width by 615 centimeters in length (the length including modern conservation treatments is 665 cm). The support is made up of numerous sheets of paper of various sizes joined horizontally. Large joints measuring about 1–1.5 centimeters seem to be part of the original conception of the scroll, whereas the thin strips of paper on the verso (visible through the transmitted light sheet) are confusing; it is unclear whether they represent the results of old repairs, the joints of original sheets, or altered portions of paper. Therefore, it is not easy to determine the exact measurement, number, and pattern of arrangement of the separate paper sheets. Moreover, some pieces of the border were added later and do not match the papers used to join the sheets. All of these features indicate that the scroll was restored at different periods in time and...
that some parts of it may have been altered or shuffled to produce new sequences. For example, observations made using transmitted light above the site of Mecca reveal horizontal and vertical strips of paper pasted onto the verso side, raising questions regarding the original arrangement of the three lines of calligraphy in sections 7, 8, and 9 (fig. 26). Similarly, we can observe that the sandal was painted on a narrow piece of paper measuring 35 centimeters in width by 15 centimeters in height, which seems to have been added to the scroll with thin strips of paper (fig. 27).

Close visual study using a transmitted light sheet and microscope reveals that the paper was torn out at the place of the signature (section 21). Figure 27 illustrates the loss of substrate indicated by the lighter zone. Figure 28, taken with a microscope under raking light, shows a clear indentation into the paper sheet. The new signature was then penned on the rough and dented paper surface, disrupting the flow of the ink and the motion of the pen. The writing appears rugged in comparison to the fluid and clear calligraphy surrounding it (fig. 29).

**Pigments and paints**

The color palette is limited to three main pigments: black, green, and red. Gold paint is used for the ruled lines that frame the text, as well as for the outlines of the architecture and for the monumental inscriptions set between the images of religious sites. Dr. Myrto Georgakopoulou of University College London, Qatar, examined some specimens using X-ray fluorescence spectrometry, or XRF analysis. This non-destructive analytical method—which allows for the identification of heavy non-organic components—provided us with more information about the pigments used and the physical nature of the scroll.67

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Fig. 25. The image of the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem (fig. 12, section 29) features large painted areas of bright pink and red pigments that visually differ from the paints used in the images of Mecca and Medina. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Results regarding the green color highlight the presence of copper, indicating that it is a copper-based pigment. Verdigris is a general term used for copper-containing pigments of different chemical compositions, including copper basic, acetates, chlorides, carbonates, and other types of different chemical compositions.68 The most common, basic copper acetate, results from the action of vinegar on copper plates (fig. 30). XRF spectrum analysis also reveals a small quantity of lead, which comes from another unknown material. Fresh verdigris was vibrant, and economical and easy to manufacture compared to malachite, an expensive mineral that was also time-consuming to grind and prepare.69 However, copper-based pigments were widely used in Islamic manuscripts for not only economic but also practical reasons, particularly because they were easy to apply to supports.

In the red pigment, analysis using XRF spectrometry has pinpointed the presence of sulphur and mercury, indicating that vermilion was used (fig. 31). Vermilion was produced either mechanically, by simply grinding cinnabar, a mercury (II) sulfide mineral, or synthetically, by combining mercury and molten sulphur before heating the mixture. Heat caused it to convert to the red crystalline form of mercuric sulphide.70 It was a tedious and dangerous process, since mercury is highly toxic, but it provided a range of warm, dense hues valued by artists.71

The pink color found around the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal and the arches enclosing the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, and the brown hue seen in the
Fig. 27. The appearance of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal (fig. 7, sections 16–17) through the transmitted light sheet. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 28. The lighter zone in the middle of the image (fig. 9, section 21) indicates that the paper was torn out, probably to remove the original pilgrim’s name. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Several passages of black ink were analyzed using XRF spectrometry on areas of the scroll’s calligraphy as well as on the topographic and architectural images. The results highlight different components such as iron, lead, zinc, and copper, present in varying amounts, depending on the position on the scroll. Carbon, a light element not detected by the XRF method, has not been identified. While this does not help to identify the types of inks used, it does provide general information about the black medium. Black inks are usually of three kinds: carbon-based, metal-based, or mixtures of both (organic components and metallic ions). Identifying inks is, therefore, usually a complex process in light of the plethora of possible combinations, which varied according to the historical and artistic context, the availability of materials, and the personal recipes of the penman.

From a general perspective, we can observe that there are significant differences among the painted features of the images. The depictions of Mecca and Medina present a similar design and consistent layout. Even if the Medina minarets show fresh outlines of black ink, which seem to be a later addition, the details are fine and free from alterations, apart from a few pigments applied as retouching to tone down the effect of some abrasions. The architectural elements are outlined with a succession of thin ruled lines of black, green, and gold inks. The colors are also refined and subtle. On the other part of the scroll, after the portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal down to the site of Karbala, the palette maintains the same tonality of red, pink, and green, but the hues appear cruder and brighter. Pink is used extensively to cover large areas throughout the buildings and the arcades. The red is of a different quality and has blurred over the course of time. Moreover, the buildings are outlined with thick lines of red and green. The Karbala tomb features discs that are painted in purple, as opposed to the patterns painted in gray in the Najaf site. Neither color is found in the representations of Mecca and Medina. Also, unlike the latter two images, no gold paint is used on the other side of the scroll to highlight details or to frame buildings. As a result of these differences, the compositions representing sacred precinct of Mecca, are derived from red vermillion. XRF spectrum analysis shows that the pink results from a mixture of vermillion and lead white (fig. 32). As reported in scientific surveys, there are several ways to obtain the color brown, resulting from various combinations of pigments such as minium, vermillion, indigo, and sometimes haematite (fig. 33). The latter, a mineral containing iron (III) oxide found in ochre, was rarely identified as a stand alone pigment but rather in mixture used to darken a hue. Lead white is a basic lead (II) carbonate manufactured from lead scraps and vinegar. These colors—verdigris, vermillion, minium, and lead white—are common pigments encountered in the Islamic palette from East to West and have been reported in scientific studies of Persianate painting.\footnote{74}
Fig. 30. XRF spectrum analysis of the copper green pigment highlights the presence of copper with a small quantity of lead. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 31. XRF spectrum analysis of the vermilion pigment highlights the presence of its characteristic chemical compounds, such as mercury and sulphur. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
Fig. 32. XRF spectrum analysis of the pink pigment shows mercury, sulphur, and lead components, indicating that the color is constituted of vermilion and lead white. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)

Fig. 33. In the XRF spectrum analysis of the brown pigment, the presence of mercury, sulphur, and iron highlights the presence of vermilion with an iron-based component, perhaps black ink or haematite. (Photo: Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar)
the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal, Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala appear rougher and more schematic than the images of Mecca and Medina.

**INTERPRETING THE DOHA SCROLL**

Before examining the Doha scroll in light of comparative artefacts, a process that will identify its conventional and (thus far) unique features, it is important to review first the evidence gathered from the technical analysis, which will be considered in conjunction with the artistic and aesthetic dimensions of the visual elements of the scroll, its various forms of calligraphic script, and the representations of Mecca, Medina, the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal, Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala.

*Physical history and reproduction*

On close inspection, the scroll is a mess. Its heavy use over time, with frequent unrolling and rolling, has caused creasing, abrasions, staining, and paint loss. To its further detriment, the corrosive effect of chemicals in the watercolor pigments has eaten away the paper support in some areas. These various effects are quite obvious upon cursory study. While the scroll might give the initial impression of having been made at one moment in time, it is actually the result of different periods of production and various kinds of intervention—interpolations, redactions, and additions—accomplished before and after the date of September 6, 1433, recorded in section 39.

The scroll can be divided into two main components, sections 1–28 and sections 29–40. Sections 1–28 are marked by a consistency in the materials, stylistic features, palette, and manner of execution of both the calligraphy and representations of the holy sites. This first component runs from the introductory texts (sections 1–3) through to the depictions of Mecca and Medina, the textual narrative describing the pilgrim’s ‘*umra*, and the signatures of the witnesses (sections 26 and 27), ending with the final section of Koran 48:2 in section 28 (the previous passages of this verse having appeared in sections 6, 13, and 19). Changes made to the first component (sections 1–28) include the redaction of the original pilgrim’s name in section 21 (replaced with the name of Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana [which appears again, without evidence of alteration, in the second component, section 39]) (figs. 28 and 29); and the insertion of the image of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal (section 17) (fig. 27). The transmitted light sheet revealed that section 17 has a different width than all of the other pieces of paper that make up the scroll. The quality of pigments used to paint the sandal is quite distinct from those used for Mecca and Medina.

Other possible changes include the sequence of the calligraphy in sections 7–9—cuts and seams are visible under transmitted light—though these texts make sense when read sequentially and in relation to what comes before and after them (fig. 26). The names of the witnesses in sections 26 and 27 could also be additions, compensating for the loss of the original section of the scroll, where the witnesses’ signatures would have appeared. A strip of paper has been used between sections 26 and 28 to join both parts together. Because the writing of section 27 goes across these two parts, it perhaps indicates that this signature was a later addition, and that the signature in section 26, which uses the same script, may date to the same period.

If we consider the textual structure of the sentence in section 1 in light of Ayyubid pilgrimage certificates, this part would be the continuation of a formula that is missing from the Doha scroll. If the latter followed the pattern of Ayyubid-period examples, it would begin with the *basmala*, followed by the *ḥamd Allāh*, and a formula glorifying God as the master of light and the pen that was inspired by the Koran (39:69). Another glorification of the chosen people, who received the pilgrimage and the right religion, would follow. This textual sequence is continued in Ayyubid-period scrolls with a list of the various buildings of the Meccan Masjid al-Haram, which we find in section 1 of the Doha scroll and in other similar pious formulas (section 7). However, the legal formulas that routinely follow the preambles of Ayyubid-period scrolls are absent from the Doha scroll. This feature can be explained by the fact that most Ayyubid scrolls were made to record and verify proxy pilgrimages, which required a particular form of legal validation. Why they are not found in the Doha scroll cannot be ascertained: they may have been lost—located on the outer edge of the rolled-up scroll, they
were more susceptible to damage from handling and repeated use—or not included in the first place, especially if the original pilgrimage it recorded was made by the pilgrim and not by his or her proxy.

The second component of the scroll, sections 29–40, like the first, is characterized by an internal uniformity in its materials, style, palette, and mode of execution in both calligraphy and representations of holy sites, which encompass Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala. While little separates the repertoire of calligraphic scripts and the quality of their execution in the second as opposed to the first component, differences between the two are mostly visible in the palette and formal features of topographic representations. The colors used to depict Jerusalem (section 29), Hebron (section 31), Najaf (section 36), and Karbala (section 38) are quite distinct from those seen in the preceding representations of Mecca and Medina, as are aspects of their execution and key stylistic details: the most conspicuous example is the completely distinct bracket form near the top of the minarets.

The calligraphic panel introducing Najaf (sections 34–35) shares the material features of the second component. What is less certain is whether sections 32–33—comprising square Kufic calligraphy with the names of the Prophet Muhammad, the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, the Twelve Imams, and Koran 33:33—are integral to the period of production of the second component. Sections 32–33 share the distinctive pink pigment found in the images of Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala. However, though remarkably similar in orthographic features to the examples of square Kufic calligraphy occurring in the first component (sections 1–28), slight differences in execution suggest that the square Kufic calligraphy in sections 32–33 was made in emulation of the historically antecedent first component.

The concluding sections of the second component (39–40) contain the narrative text of the visitation (ziyārātnāma), which included four harams—Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Hebron—and two mashhads—Najaf and Karbala—as well as the signatures of six witnesses. The name of one witness, ‘Ali b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Kammuna al-Husayni, also appears in the body of the narrative. As noted above, he was a person of importance, almost certainly the custodian of the Najaf shrine. In Najaf, the narrative records, Sayyid Yusuf paid respect to ‘Ali b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Kammuna al-Husayni by kissing his hand.

To summarize: the material and formal features of the Doha scroll reveal that it consists of two distinct components. A preexisting scroll (sections 1–28) of undetermined date—made sometime between 1398 and 1433—recording an ʿumra was repurposed on behalf of Sayyid Yusuf, who also visited Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala. As part of this repurposing, an image of one of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandals (section 17) was inserted, the name of the first pilgrim was redacted (section 21), and twelve new sections (29–40) were added. A potentially third historical layer, on or after 1433, is represented by the addition of the labels written in nastaʿlīq script. The shared orthographic features of the nastaʿlīq labels in the first and second components of the Doha scroll suggest that they were added in a single temporal intervention, after the two components described above had been joined. Whether the nastaʿlīq captions were added in 1433 or after is not easy to determine.

An analysis of the overall conjoined historical structure of the Doha scroll should also address its place(s) of production. While it is conceivable that the first component was made in Mecca—as many earlier scrolls appear to have been, given the local pilgrimage industry—its calligraphy and stylistic features show general affinities to works on paper throughout Iraq and Greater Iran in the Timurid period. As to the second component, the date September 6, 1433, appears in the last line of section 39 after praise to God and a blessing upon the Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his Companions, along with the term “he wrote it” (ḥarrarahu). This is a common verb used in the arts of the book, but it appears here without the maker’s name or place of copying. The text of the ziyārātnāma only mentions the pilgrim’s wish that his pilgrimage be recorded as an object he could show to various people as evidence of his pious acts of devotion. The scroll would secure an enhanced social position for him. The chronology laid out in the text implies that the scroll was made after the conclusion of his travels (to the four harams and two mashhads), which, as visualized on the scroll, occurred in Karbala (the last in the sequence of holy sites). And yet the signature of ‘Ali b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Kammuna
al-Husayni, whom Sayyid Yusuf met at the culmination of his visitation to Najaf, appears in the final portion of the scroll (section 40). The simplest conclusion would be that the scroll was made in Najaf to Sayyid Yusuf’s specifications, but it is not inconceivable that it was made in Karbala and that the pilgrim returned to Najaf to have the witnesses sign the document. There are surely other possibilities—the narrative of the visitations does not specify their temporal relation to the ceremony in Najaf—but the stylistic and material features of the scroll do not permit a more specific attribution across the lands of Iraq and Greater Iran.

The visual program of the Doha Scroll vis-à-vis other sources

The conventions adopted by the artists of the Doha scroll largely resemble those of earlier examples of the Seljuq and Ayyubid through early Mamluk periods, and are closer still to the contemporary 1432–33 scroll made for Maymuna bint Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah al-Zardali. In the earlier medieval corpus, one finds diagrams of sites composed of numerous architectural and landscape elements. Space is suggested by combined plan and elevation views, spatial interrelation by the relative position and difference in size of the physical signs and markers constituting each holy site. However, these schematic, diagrammatic images do not attempt to evoke an actual physical and measured reality, despite the fact that early pilgrimage narratives often specify dimensions in various units of measurement. (Some of the captions written in nasta’liq on the Doha scroll enumerate quantities of length and height: see appendix). The medieval scroll diagrams were not created according to an overall, or absolute, relative scale, but did attempt to convey orders of magnitude. Different colors and patterns were used to animate the diagrammatic views and to enhance legibility of the parts in relation to the whole. When viewed together, each site is distinguished from others by its unique elements (e.g., the Ka’ba of Mecca, the date palms and oil house of Medina), and yet the representations of the sites are subject to a typology of the sacred that seeks to denote shared attributes.

Representations of holy sites and sacred space on the Doha scroll continue the spatial concepts characteristic of the earlier medieval corpus while expanding the palette and incidence of detail. Although the Doha scroll shares broad stylistic and conceptual traits with the London scroll of 1432–33—as well as the overlapping iconography of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal and some choice Koranic verses (2:48 and 3:96–97)—it significantly expands the inventory of places and objects visited by the pilgrim. Despite the two historical periods evidenced in the Doha scroll—sections 1–28 (between 1398 and 1433) and sections 29–40 (September 6, 1433, or soon thereafter)—the representations of Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala are remarkably similar, each one conceived as an enclosure bounded by a perimeter of arcades, with hanging lamps and minarets at each of the four corners projecting inward to the center. Freestanding architectural structures, whether mosques or mausoleums, are generally represented as domed buildings, with cutaway views revealing interior arrangements. The configuration of the Mosque of the Prophet at Medina suggests a rectangular plan—within which we find the tomb, minbar, and mihrab—while the image of the Aqsa Mosque at Jerusalem does not suggest its actual plan but rather stresses a formal affinity to the adjacent Dome of the Rock. Subtle differences established by coloring and structural forms modulate the typologically related images of Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala. Representations of architecture, en bloc, do not signal variations of regional building traditions and materials, or indicate historical inflections. Rather, a contemporaneity is proposed for the group through formal and morphological similarities. As in earlier medieval examples, the images of holy places on the Doha scroll attempt to arrange the elements of each site according to their relative spatial coordinates, sometimes with intimations of cardinal directions (north, south, east, and west), though this is not fastidiously applied. Jerusalem is a good example: the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are placed side by side and not one before the other, as they should have been if conforming to the N–S and E–W-oriented arcades that enclose the Haram al-Sharif. The “Gate of Hell,” for example, faces east, orienting the entire ensemble. Overall, the images balance the desire to stress the shared nature and significance of holy sites with the necessity of highlighting the elements that made
each place unique. The routine habit of composing the elements of each site inside square or rectangular frames—which signify sacred precincts—has the effect of enhancing the viewer’s concentration in the process of visual contemplation. The interrelatedness of holy sites, achieved through patterning and self-referential visual modelling, as well as the connections between these images and historical models, secures their immediate identification in terms of their generic and specific aspects as shrines.

The chief differences between the content of the Doha scroll and comparable materials can be explained by the pilgrim’s specific itinerary. As noted above, a large number of medieval scrolls represent the sites associated with the hajj—Mount ʿArafat, Muzdalifa, Mina, the Meccan Masjid al-Haram, and Mounts Safa and Marwa—despite the fact that they recorded ʿumras, and frequently included Medina and Jerusalem. Some of the elements making up the sacred precincts visited by pilgrims in Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in the medieval period are also documented on the Doha scroll. In the 1432–33 London scroll, Maymuna bint Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allah al-Zardali performed a hajj in Mecca and only visited Medina. The scroll enumerates the rituals performed and places visited as the Kaʿba and multazam, Mounts ʿArafat, Safa and Marwa, and the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Its formal and stylistic features—especially in the calligraphy—suggest a context of production different from that of the Doha scroll. In the later dated example briefly considered here, i.e., the proxy pilgrimage performed on behalf of the Ottoman prince Şehzade Mehmed (in 1544–45), the sites visited during the hajj are depicted, along with Medina and Jerusalem; there is also a representation of the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal. The sequence of separate sites, those in Mecca and its vicinity, departs from earlier medieval conventions.

The Doha, London, and Istanbul scrolls all feature the Prophet Muhammad’s sandal, which is absent from the medieval corpus as it is presently known. The sandals represent the earliest examples of a visual tradition that increased in popularity with the rapid growth of devotional literature, particularly in the Ottoman lands from the late 1500s onwards. The single sandals depicted on the Doha and London scrolls are stylistically quite similar, especially in their shape and the four discs at the corners of the enclosing rectangle. While these resemble wheels on the Doha scroll, on the London scroll the gilded discs contain the names of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs. Other differences include the arrangement of the calligraphy. The lines of Arabic text are written across the width of the sandal—divided into three parts from toe to heel—on the London scroll, while on the Doha scroll the text runs around the outer edge of the sandal and occupies a small cartouche in its middle. Indeed, the theme of the text in the cartouche of the Doha scroll is nearly identical to that seen in the cartouche in the London scroll, except that the longer version found on the latter (in the section at the toes) provided more context and expressed its meaning with greater clarity. On the London scroll, the text reads: ‘The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: ‘I have never found myself in a house that caught fire, or in a caravan that was robbed, or in a vessel that suffered a storm, or in a business that went to ruin.’ As a blessing of the Prophet, upon him be peace.”

The Doha scroll does not include the context of the saying but merely introduces the sandal as an image (mithāl) of its referent, stating, “Never has an image of the noble sandals been in a ship that has sunk or in a house that has been looted.” In the Doha scroll, the protection afforded by the image of the sandal is discussed in the text encircling the actual image of the sandal. It might be possible to explain the extensive losses here, and elsewhere, on the Doha scroll to the secondary functions of the artefact in its post-production contexts of use: once separated from its original owner, the scroll functioned primarily as an object of devotion, capable of transporting the viewer to distant places and transmitting a blessing through the touch of the hand. Among pilgrimage scrolls made before or after, the Doha scroll is thus far the only one known to contain an image of the Haram of Hebron depicting the Cave of the Patriarchs (Abraham, Jacob, Isaac) and the cenotaph of Joseph (fig. 13). While Joseph’s cenotaph stands alone, the adjacent prophets Jacob, Abraham, and Isaac are buried alongside their wives. Close to Jerusalem and often regarded as one of the places where the Prophet Muhammad stopped during his Night Journey (isrā’), Hebron is commonly mentioned in medieval pilgrimage narratives.
In addition to being revered by Sunnis, who made pilgrimages to the site and sponsored architectural monuments there, Hebron held significance for Shi‘is. According to Shi‘i theology, a continuous sequence of imams had existed between the time of Adam and Muhammad. Some of these men were also prophets who brought books and new religious law, viz. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. In the Shi‘i exegetical tradition, many verses of the Koran were interpreted as references to the position of the imam and the imamate. One of the most commonly discussed was Koran 3:33, “God had chosen Adam and Noah, and the families of Abraham and ‘Imran in preference to others,” where the reference to the family of Abraham was understood as constituting a precursor to the family of Muhammad. Other verses mentioning Abraham’s offspring were interpreted as references to the imams. The Shi‘i interpretative tradition also developed a parallel between Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Isma‘il and the tragedy of Imam Husayn’s martyrdom. In the narrative relayed by Abu Muhammad al-Fadl b. Shadhan al-Nisaburi (d. 873–74), for example, when God informs him of the future martyrdom of Husayn, Abraham is deeply saddened. Because of the anguish that Abraham has shown, God redeems his sacrifice—his son Isma‘il—with the ram.

Given the wide-ranging associations the city of Hebron had across the spectrum of Muslim belief, it is no surprise that Sayyid Yusuf visited it and that it is included on the scroll. It amplified and developed the Abrahamic associations with Mecca: the sacred precinct housed the Ka‘ba, which was rebuilt by Abraham and Isma‘il, as well as the station where Abraham prayed; it was also the site of the graves of Abraham’s second wife, Hagar, and son Isma‘il. Nor should we fail to emphasize the importance of the matriarchs of the early prophets. The depiction of their cenotaphs in the Haram of Hebron is consistent with the Alid emphasis on the Prophet Muhammad’s family and the imamate’s link to Muhammad through his daughter Fatima, who married ‘Ali. Shi‘i and Sunni pilgrims to Medina alike visited the tomb of Fatima, in the rawda (lit. “garden”) of the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad, as well as the tomb of the Prophet’s daughter Zaynab in the graveyard of al-Baqi‘. To a pro-Alid viewer, the representation of the successive tombs of Abraham and his family might have been seen as analogous to the line of succession of the imams. This genealogical construct is manifest visually in the adjacent portion of the vertically oriented scroll (section 33), where the Prophet Muhammad and the Twelve Imams are named in a striking composition of square Kufic enclosing Koran 33:33: “God desires to remove impurities from you, O inmates of this house, and to cleanse and bring out the best in you.”

The last two sites depicted on the scroll, Najaf and Karbala, had by the eighth century already become central sites of Shi‘i devotional culture and practice but were equally visited by Sunnis. The Doha scroll is currently the earliest known example to include representations of Najaf and Karbala, which became key toponyms in later scrolls recording Shi‘i pilgrimages. Najaf was the burial site of ʿAli b. Abi Talib (d. 661), the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, and the first Shi‘i imam and fourth Sunni caliph; Karbala was the burial site of Husayn b. ‘Ali (d. 680), grandson of the Prophet Muhammad and the third Shi‘i imam. By the tenth century, both locales had taken on a definitively public aspect and experienced continuous support from a host of local and regional leaders from across the Islamic lands. Members of the Hamdanid (906–1004) and Buyid (932–1062) dynasties revived both shrines in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. In addition to housing the burials of the first and third imams, members of the family of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt), each site grew in importance within the full span of Islamic cosmology, thereby establishing their pre-Islamic eminence. According to traditions attributed to the Sixth Imam, Ja‘far al-Sadiq (d. 765), Najaf was associated with Moses, Jesus, Abraham, and Muhammad, while the soil of Karbala was regarded as superior to that around the Ka‘ba in Mecca. The city also featured graves attributed to the prophets Adam, Noah, Hud, and Salih. By the eleventh century, Najaf and Karbala had both become established pilgrimage destinations and were largely independent of external rule and patronage in light of their considerable, and growing, revenues. The Shi‘i religious elite received the khums tax (lit. “one fifth” of specified forms of income) from the Shi‘i community, and the local economy benefited generally from the commerce associated with pilgrimage, as well as from payments made for burial in the vicinity of the shrines.
The cemetery at Wadi al-Salam outside Najaf is a prime example.

By the time Sayyid Yusuf performed his pilgrimage, Najaf and Karbala had long since secured their preeminence within Muslim belief and religious practice. Among the Shi’i, visits to Karbala had been promoted in the early history of the imams: several traditions of the Fifth and Sixth Imams, Muhammad al-Baqir (d. 733) and Ja’far al-Sadiq, referred to the necessity and fundamental importance of making the pilgrimage to Karbala.98 In certain periods, the pilgrimage to Karbala was considered to be a perfectly acceptable substitution for Mecca. By the late tenth century, an attempt was made to define a calendar marking the religious feasts on which it was deemed especially meritorious to visit Najaf and Karbala. The earliest effort to formalize a calendar of “special visitations” (ziyārat makhsūsa) was made by Ja’far b. Muhammad b. Qulawayh (d. 980–81) in the Kāmil al-ziyārat.99 Such processes were clearly intended to regulate Shi’i visitation in a pattern emulating the fixed calendrical sequence required by the ḥajj. Further, visits made to Karbala on special days were believed to exceed in merit the accomplishment of the ‘umra and ḥajj in multiples of different quantities, as laid out in the Faḍl ziyārat al-Ḥusayn of Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn al-ʿAlawi al-Shajari (d. 1053–54).100

At the same time that these developments were taking place, Shi’i pilgrimage manuals started to emerge in growing numbers. These works proposed itineraries for pilgrims, described ritual behavior, and matched specific prayers and supplications to places to be visited.101 Ibn Qulawayh’s Kāmil al-ziyārat is one of the earliest of its type; another example, the Miṣbāḥ al-mutahājjid by Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Tusi (d. 1067), specified details of visits to the imams and also included voluntary prayers to be made by Shi’is during the ḥajj.102 Ibn Qulawayh lays out the components of the pilgrim’s visit to Karbala but also offers an entire chapter on the value of poetry and its recitation during pilgrimage.103 Analysis of the corpus of poetry points to the heightened sensory experience of pilgrims to Karbala, where the soil—imbued with the blood of the martyred Husayn—is touched and kissed, its scent inhaled.104 The pilgrim prays for rain to fall on the tomb, presumably to heighten the sensory experience gained through the faculties of sight and smell.

The histories of the Alid shrines at Najaf and Karbala also evidence continual visitation and patronage by Sunni Muslims since their inception. In just the later historical periods, closer in time to the visit of Sayyid Yusuf, the list of prominent Sunni patrons included Ghazan Khan, Shaykh Uways b. Hasan, and Timur, each one of whom made repairs to the shrines and lavished gifts upon them. When the Ottoman sultan Suleyman I (r. 1520–66) visited Iraq in the 1530s, he journeyed to Najaf and Karbala, in 1534, and is likely to have funded restorations to the architecture in addition to the numerous gifts he offered.105

**ENVOI**

The finished ziyārātnāma produced for Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana consisted of a repurposed scroll recording an ‘umra and a visit to Medina, as well as a newly made component recording visits to Jerusalem, Hebron, Najaf, and Karbala. The narrative text added as a conclusion (section 39) and dated September 6, 1433, places emphasis on the rites completed by Sayyid Yusuf in Najaf, and suggests his enhanced social position, but does not supply details of what he did during his visits to other sites. Some of that was already described in the redacted component of the repurposed scroll (sections 20–25) listing the rites of the ‘umra and visitation to Medina. As a whole, the scroll combines the three major holy sites of Islam, Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem—which were of equal importance to Sunnis and Shi’is—and deepens the Abrahamic connotations of Mecca through the addition of Hebron, which also enjoyed a broad ecumenical appeal. The family of Abraham’s offspring might be seen as a fitting parallel to the family of the Prophet Muhammad descended through his daughter Fatima’s marriage to ‘Ali. These genealogies are visually manifest on the scroll through the representations of Medina, Najaf, and Karbala, but they are also configured through the square Kufic calligraphic panel composed of the list of names of the Prophet Muhammad and the Twelve Imams.

Although it is not possible from the available evidence to narrow the place and timeframe for the production of the scroll—other than the terminus post quem of 21 Muḥarram 837 (September 6, 1433)—the Islamic ritual cal-
endar is itself suggestive. If Sayyid Yusuf completed his pilgrimages before 21 Muharram—as the zi‘yārāt-nāma asserts—this would have occurred only eleven days after the major feast of ‘Aşhūrā’ (10 Muharram), the high point in Karbala’s calendar, and some thirty-three days after the holiday commemorating the Prophet Muhammad’s nomination of ‘Ali as his successor at Ghadir Khumm (‘īd al-ghādir, 18 Dhu‘l-Hijja), one of the most special days of visitation (zi‘yārāt al-makhsūsa) to Najaf. Regardless of when or where the scroll was made within this period, Sayyid Yusuf’s visits closely followed, or perhaps coincided with, the most important dates in the ritual calendar of Najaf and Karbala.

Sayyid Yusuf’s individual religious beliefs and affiliations are not easy to pinpoint. In addition to being a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (sayyid) and of a family with Transoxianan origins, Yusuf was a Sufi, as becomes clear from the language of the zi‘yārāt-nāma and his being honoured with the title “successor of the dervishes.” The first caliphs—Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthman—are named alongside the Twelve Imams in the epigraphic panels composed of square Kufic, and the Companions and family of the Prophet Muhammad are again blessed in the concluding prayer of the narrative of visitation. This is consonant with a religious culture in which veneration of the Alids was non-sectarian in nature, a phenomenon noted for various geographical and historical contexts across the Islamic lands and styled “ahl al-baytism” by Robert McChesney. Other scholars have noted the extent to which Sunni Islam in Iran particularly venerated the family of the Prophet Muhammad. Examples of architectural epigraphy show the combination of the names of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Twelve Imams—as at the Ilkhanid-period shrine at Linjan from 1312. And throughout the Timurid and Turkmen periods, it became increasingly common for imams to be named in Sunni contexts, such as, for example, at the Masjid-i Jami’ in Yazd and in Bafriuya.107

In one of the most visible acts of pro-Alid support by a Sunni patron, between 1416 and 1418 Gawhar Shad, wife of the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (r. 1409–47), sponsored the construction of the Masjid-i Jami’ in Mashhad, in the precincts of the shrine of the eighth Shi‘i imam, Riza.108 May Farhat’s detailed study of this shrine has demonstrated a long historical practice of visitation and patronage by Sunnis before sectarian lines hardened in the Safavid and Ottoman periods.109 Whatever Sayyid Yusuf’s personal religious belief and practice, his pilgrimage to the holy sites and their depiction on the scroll amply attest to the great reverence accorded the family of the Prophet Muhammad, extending from its core members—Fatima, ‘Ali, Hasan, and Husayn—to the last imam, the Lord of Time.

Mounia Chekhab-Abudaya, Curator, Museum of Islamic Art, Doha

Amélie Couvrat Desvergnes, Paper and Book Conservator, Museum of Islamic Art, Doha

David J. Roxburgh, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Professor of Islamic Art History and Department Chair, Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University
APPENDIX

Transcription and Translation of
The Timurid Pilgrimage Scroll (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS.267,1998)

The authors have taken care to ensure that the transcription below is as faithful as possible to the original text. Nevertheless, some diacritical, vocalization, and calligraphic marks deemed by them as being simply decorative have not been included. Furthermore, certain characters are not supported by computers and therefore could not be added. The following text, however, presents the reader with the content of the scroll section by section, while photographic details will address the original script.
سِبْحَانَ اللَّهِ أُحْمَدُهُ[\[square damaged and lost\]]

إِنَّا يَرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَهْدِي عِنْكَ الرَّجُلِ أهَلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطْهِرُكَ تَطْهِيرًا

وَلَا تَعْلَفُوا وَسَكُنْ حُكْمَ بَيْنَ الْهَيْدَرِيَ مَحِيَّةً

تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي نَعْمَهُ

ۖ مَا تَقْدِمَ مِنْ ذِيَٰلِكَ

سَلَّهُ الْأَنَامِ بِالْحَقِّ الْعَظِيمِ وَالْفَيْضِ الأَقْوَمِ نَسَاهُمَا تَمَامَ النَّشْمَ

ۖ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَرَّكَ وَتَعَالَى

ۖ اسْتَطِعِ الْيَوْمَ سَيْلًا

ۚ ۖ مَنْ سَمَّى الْحَرَامَ

.ا

"upper inscription: ستونها إن صف صد و يك عدد"

.ب

"lower inscription: ستونهاي إن صف ندو [سُه] عدد"

.inscription at left: ستونهاي إن صف صد و سى و دو

.inscription at right: ستونهاي إن طرف صد و سى و يك عدد

.inscription at left, outside of the haṭīm: ستونهاي ماشي طواف معظم سى و دو

.inscription to the left of the Ka’ba: بلاندی كيه معظم بست و هفت ك [گر] كر

.upper inscription: عرض كيه معظم هشت و يك ك [گر] كر

.د

.upper left: جنوب

.upper right: مغرب

.lower left: مشرق

.lower right: شمال
1. And the Venerable House, and the Station, and Zamzam, and we were given preference over

2. Glory be to God/ and Praise be to God/ [square damaged and lost]/ and God is Great

3. “God desires to remove impurities from you, O inmates of this house, and to cleanse and bring out the best in you” [Koran 33:33]

4. “And do not shave your heads until the offering has reached the place of sacrifice” [Koran 2:196]

5. I put my trust in God/ I put my trust in God/ God

6. “[save] you from earlier” [Koran 48:2]

7. Wayfarer of the nations of the great pilgrimage and the most correct religion, we ask Him for His complete Grace

8. “God the Blessed and Sublime said”

9. “The first House of God to be set up for men was at Bakkah the blessed, a guidance for the people of the world. It contains clear signs, and the spot where Abraham had stood. And anyone who enters it will find security. And whosoever can afford should visit the House on a pilgrimage” [Koran 3:96–97]

10.

a. Minaret of the Masjid al-Haram

b. upper inscription: the columns of this row number one hundred and one

   lower inscription: the columns of this row number ninety [three]

   inscription at left: the columns of this row are one hundred thirty-two

   inscription at right: the columns of this side number one hundred and thirty-five

c. inscription at left, outside of the ḥaṭīm: the columns of the exalted place of circumambulation are thirty-two

   inscription to the left of the Ka’ba: the height of the exalted Ka’ba is twenty-seven gaz

   upper inscription: the width of the exalted Ka’ba is twenty-one gaz

d. upper left: South

   upper right: West

   lower left: East

   lower right: North
upper structure: مقام الملكي
derector structure: مقام الشافعي
left structure: مقام الحنفي
right structure: مقام الحنفي

upper left corner of the Ka‘ba: ركن الشامى
upper right corner of the Ka‘ba: ركن الثبت
lower right corner of the Ka‘ba: ركن عراقى

لا آله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

 البحر السعيل
مثبت
الحجر الأسود
ملزم
مقام الجبل
مقام السيف
جبل النور
 فيه زمزم
مقام إبراهيم
درجة الكعبة
منبر الخطبة
في الساعات
الصفا
جبل آحر
سوق العطار
المروة

[One corroded line in square Kufic script]
e. **upper structure**: Maliki station  
   **lower structure**: Shafi’i station  
   **left structure**: Hanbali station  
   **right structure**: Hanafi station  

f. **upper left corner of the Ka’ba**: Syrian corner  
   **upper right corner of the Ka’ba**: Yemeni corner  
   **lower right corner of the Ka’ba**: Iraqi corner  

g. There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God.  

h. Stone of Isma’il  

i. Rainwater spout  

j. The Black Stone  

k. The pressing place  

l. Station of Gabriel  

m. The Watering Place of ‘Abbas  

n. Mountain of Light  

o. Dome of Zamzam  

p. Station of Abraham  

q. The stairs of the Ka’ba  

r. Minbar of the Friday sermon  

s. Dome of the Hours  

t. [Mount] Safa  

u. and v. Red Mountain  

w. Perfume market  

x. [Mount] Marwa  

11. “Truly Safa and Marwa are the symbols of God. Whoever goes on pilgrimage to the House (of God), or on a Holy Visit, is not guilty of wrong if he walk around them” [Koran 2:158]  

12. [One corroded line in square Kufic script]  

13. “and subsequent [blames], and complete His favors” [Koran 48:2]  

14. He is God the most Generous, the Clement, the most Merciful and His praying.
doors on the left side, from top to bottom:

باب السلم
باب جبريل

doors on the right side, from top to bottom:

باب الزهرة
باب السلام
فلهمي حرم

لا اله الا الله هد [رس...]

from right to left:

قيّة رسول الله
صل الله عليه وسلم
فيّ النبي عليه السلام
فيّ أبو بكر الصديق
فيّ عمر الفاروق

مَعَ جَيْدَ الرَسُول الَّدَيْنَ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ الآَيَةَ

Center:

مثال نُعَال الشريفة مكانت في مركز عُرفت ولا في دار فسقَت

Border:

مثال لئل المصطفى سيّد الزرئعي مجد المبعث من آل هاشم فقد أخرَتنا سادة من سبوعهم باستادهم عن علمهم بعد عالم فقد ست

العلو التي قد عُدّت له عوائف أركان الملك العواصم مثال نُعَال الشريفة المصونه طويي من مس بجاهمره لله تعالى يسيّرها

[One corroded line in square Kufic script]
15.  
   a. Minaret of the city of the chosen one  
   b. *doors on the left side, from top to bottom:*  
      Women's Gate  
      Gabriel's Gate  
   *doors on the right side, from top to bottom:*  
      Gate of Mercy  
      Gate of Peace  
   c. Palm trees of the sanctuary  
   d. There is no God but God, Muhammad [...]  
   e. *from right to left:*  
      Dome of the Messenger of God,  
      prayers and peace be upon him  
   f. Tomb of the Prophet, peace be upon him  
   g. Tomb of Abu Bakr, the truthful  
   h. Tomb of 'Umar, the just  
   i. Mihrab of the Prophet  
   j. Minbar of the Friday sermon  
   k. Furnishings depot  
   l. Dome of the oil house  
16. “Muhammad is only a messenger; and many a messenger has gone before him” [Koran 3:144]  
17. *Center:*  
   Never has an image of the noble sandals been in a ship that has sunk or in a house that has been looted.  
   *Border:*  
   Image of a sandal of the chosen lord of mankind, the envoy of God from the house of Hashim. The lords reported from the Exalted, through their chain of authority and from one scholar to another, that the sandal became sacred and the greatest kings conferred all of their favor upon it. The image of the noble and protective sandals can bless anyone who touches his forehead to them. They both have toe separators. On their straps [...] and their length is one foot and two fingers.  
18. [One corroded line in square Kufic script]
19. عليّه و تعالى

20. على خبر العرب والأنجح و سراج العلم وهو أحمد رسول

21. الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى جميع الأئمة والمسلمين آمن

اما بعد فما كان الدعاء بالعيد للحرام متحف الأجلة على مرك

البهم و الأغماد فقد من الله تعالى على النبي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

وأخضعوا إلى تجربة نسيب يوسف بن سعيد شهاب الدين الروماني و البهم

إطعام الله آمنة و أخرى بالصهايب عامه بالوصول إلى تلك النقاط

العظام و وافق وكلا السحرة البنيه أسعد كامال على النبي

وقبل الجزء الأصحب الذي قلته سيد الأناضيل و صلى الله عليه وسلم

ودعو و تضرع تحت مراقب السحرة الفلك والفلكين سنة

الطواف خلف الناقم سيدا إبراهيم خليل الرحمن صلوات الله

عليه وعلى بنيه عليه أفضل الصلاة والسلام و طيب

من ماء زمر شفاء آله سنام و آله تغمر ألمدما و تشع بالبيت المعظم

وجاء النبي الكريم على كل وافق على هذه التفاصيل البسيطة من جميع الملوك والسلاتين

والأفيضات والشهود والمحبوب والموالين والصنايع الصداقة أعد الله

يهب الله عبدا و دا لله العز و الرشكتين أن يبتوا المتشعف المذكور على صور دهر

وبوقع صدفة كراما من وقف ينادي و تشع بالبيت وشيك بنبر من أسماه في

يرجى الله السعيدين ولا ضيع أجر السحيبين [rosette] ثم تلمح إلى

المتمفح و جراء النبي الكريم على كل وافق على هذه المنظور أكبر من جميع الأكابر و

الصورة أن يبتوا المتشعف المذكور على صور دهر و بوقع صدفة و يبتو إلى دهر و يبتوا

من احبة المتشعف المذكور و السهاد لمنع تعالى وحدا

22. والعبد في عون أحقه وقال الرافعين يرحمهم الرحمن

23. إنهما من في الارض يرحمهم من في السماء عان الله من

24. أغاثا المتشعف المذكور والحكم له تعالى وحده
21. "God, Prayer of God be upon him and peace [Prophet Muhammad], and upon all of the prophets and messengers. Amen. Thereafter when the call [came] to the sacred land, to accomplish the obligation over the passage of ages and years, God—may He be Glorified—granted His favor to the poor servant of God the Exalted, Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana. God, who achieves His desires and purifies good deeds, helped him to attain these great wishes. He circumambulated the Ka’ba over the period of one week. He embraced the Black Stone, the qibla and master of all things; he prayed next to the stone of Isma’il; he made invocations and supplications beneath the rainwater spout that gathers divine grace. He completed two sequences of prayer, following tradition, then visited the Station of Abraham, the faithful of the Merciful. Prayers upon God

22. and upon His and our Prophet, the best of prayers and peace upon him. He drank

23. the Water of Zamzam, which cures illness; he accomplished his duty and pressed himself at the pressing place; he asked for intercession at the Sacred House; the revered Prophet granted him salvation at each of the places where he stood during this honorable intercession among all the kings, sultans, judges, witnesses, chamberlains, religious men, administrators of endowments, and virtuous learned men. God has honored them with religion and has given them the strength and capacity to help the above-mentioned supplicant in devoting his life to attaining the goal of honoring God; for whoever has stood at His door, who has pleaded in His proximity, and who fears the circumstances of the Day of Judgment, God will repay the charitable and will not fail to repay those who give alms. The blessed pilgrim mentioned above made entreaties at the Sacred House. The revered Prophet has granted him salvation at each place where he stood at this blessed and covered house, [and is] among the best and most important who helped the above-mentioned supplicant in spending his life in the realization of this goal; he has benefited from them and has attained [this goal] with beneficence and compassion. [The Prophet] (God’s prayer and peace be upon him) said, “God the Sublime assists His servants as long as

24. they help their brethren.” And He said: “Those who attempt to be merciful obtain the greatest mercy.”

25. Give mercy to those on earth and you shall obtain mercy from Him who is in heaven. God helps whoever helps the supplicant mentioned above. God, the Sublime, the One, be praised.
26. The incident is also reported in the biography of ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Mālik, son of Ḥasan ibn Mūsā, and mentioned by Ḥasan ibn Mūsā, son of Ḥasan ibn Mālik, son of Muḥammad al-Hadhiṣi, the son of ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Mālik, son of Ḥasan ibn Mālik, son of Muhammad al-Hadhiṣi, the son of ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Mālik, son of Ḥasan ibn Mālik, son of Muḥammad al-Hadhiṣi.

27. In this incident, ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Mālik, son of Ḥasan ibn Mūsā, mentioned by Ḥasan ibn Mūsā, son of Ḥasan ibn Mālik, son of Muḥammad al-Hadhiṣi, the son of ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Mālik, son of Ḥasan ibn Mālik, son of Muḥammad al-Hadhiṣi.

28. (Surah al-Maʿālik)

29. (Surah al-Maʿālik)

doors on the left side, from top to bottom:

. a
. b

bab al-salam

door on the right side:

. c
. d
. e
. f
. g
. h
. i
. j
. k
. l
. m

bab al-ʿĀlim

surah al-maʿālik

khwār al-ʿĀlim

wa-l-ḥayyān al-dawāʾa walaʿīn al-bayyina walaʿīn al-tawqīb

30. (Surah al-Maʿālik)

31. (Surah al-Maʿālik)


28. “on the straight path” [Koran 48:2]

29.
   a. Minaret of the Aqsa Mosque
   b. Minaret of the Dome of the Rock
   c. doors on the left side, from top to bottom:
      ‘Ali’s Gate
      Gate of Peace
      door on the right side:
      Gate of Hell
   d. Aqsa Mosque
   e. Station of Abraham
   f. Minbar
   g. Dome of the Rock
   h. Moses’ rod
   i. Isma’il’s knife
   j. Hamza’s shield
   k. Stone of the rock and impression of the footprint of his holiness the chosen, peace be upon him
   l. Adam’s Cave
   m. Cradle of Jesus, peace be upon him

30. “And We sent revelations to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob” [Koran 4:163]

31.
   a. Minaret of the sacred precinct of God’s friend
   b. Abraham’s Cave
   c. Minbar of the mosque of God’s friend
محمد عليا محمد عليا محمد عليا محمد علي

_center_: 32

Third from left:
ابو بكر عمر عثمان علي محمد
_to the right:_ 32

Center:
محمد عليا محمد عليا محمد علي

_second from left:_ 33

To the left:
محمد عليا محمد عليا محمد عليا محمد علي

Center: 33

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اهما يريد الله ليذهب عنكم الرجس اهل البيت ويطهركم تطهيرا

_border:_
الله يعلم [صلى] على محمد المصطفى وعلي المرتوض وحسين المجتهد وحسين الشهيد بربرالإ وعلي زين العابدين ومحمد الباقر وعفر الصادق وموسي الكاظم وعلي الراضي وعلي النبي وحسين السكري ومحمد المهدي صاحب الزمان عليهم السلام

آمَّاَوَأَوْلَمْكُمُ اللّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالذِّينَ آمَنُواَذُكُّمْ

فيَعَمِّسُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيَوْمُومُ الرَّكَبَةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

هذا مشهد امير المومينين

34

35
d. Joseph's tomb  
e. Jacob's tomb  
f. Tomb of the faithful lady (Mu'mina Khatun)  
g. Abraham's tomb  
h. Tomb of Lady Sarah (Sarah Khatun)  
i. Isaac's tomb  
j. Tomb of Isaac's wife  
k. Gate of Peace

32. To the right:
Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli

Second from right:
Abu Bakr ʿUmar ʿUthman ʿAli Muhammad

Center:
Muhammad / Muhammad / Muhammad / Muhammad

Second from left:
Abu Bakr ʿUmar ʿUthman ʿAli Muhammad

To the left:
Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli / Muhammad ʿAli

33. Center:
“God desires to remove impurities from you, O inmates of this house, and to cleanse and bring out the best in you” [Koran 33:33]

Border:
“O God! [Pray] for Muhammad the elect, and ‘Ali the beloved, and Hasan the chosen, and Husayn the martyr of Karbala, and ‘Ali the ornament of the worshippers, and Muhammad the revealer, and Jaʿfar the honest, and Musa the calm, and ‘Ali the pleasing one, and Muhammad the God-fearing, and ‘Ali the pure one, and Hasan the soldier, and Muhammad the guided one, lord of time, peace upon them”

34. “Your only friends are God and His Messenger, and those who believe and are steadfast in devotion, who pay the alms and bow in homage [before God]” [Koran 5:55]

35. This is the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful
منار مشهد مرتضى علي
باب السلام
صدوق مرتضى علي رضي الله عنه
ذو الفقار شهد النجف
هذا مسجد أمير المومنين حسن بن علي رضي الله عنه
منار مشهد حسين
صدوق أمير المومنين حسن رضي الله عنه
باب السلام
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
آلله أنت乘车 الإنسان عربي disappoints, erson منتشه عن مشاهدة الأعراض
والجسام وصلى الله على سيد أمير سليم وأشرف إمام عبد النبي
وعلى الله آلاما، مكاناً ما بعثت بعث ابن كمال وتقرر ابن
مقدّمات آله حاضر شهد در مشهد مقدّس ورّاح منّه مجموع قبه
وعدّه أحد العالم إمام المهاب وابن عبد غام أمير المومنين وماما Manila
ووارث علمي آلهتيّ وقيلة المغاربة وأوصيّ الدين وخلية الله في
لزمّ الذين طالب [الطلاب] إمام المرتضى على بن أبي طالب كرم الله
وجهة ورُبّت الله عنه دُوّين من بُسط فريد طرق تجريد طيب [يوسف]
بن سيدي شهاب آل الذين ما وراء النهر، عبده شريفه را بكم تظّليم وخيل مقيّم
علما مرتضى يدته قدم في بحري شريف نهاد وطواف خرفيّ مبارك كرد و بعذار
أدا ركبتين شكر حق جلب وعلا روّى تقضيّ برّ حاك نبار يحضرت بي ناز نهاد
وجّه يد بش עשויّ مرتضى أعظم ملك أسرادا وأنتّيقو في العالم جمع محسن
آخلاقا وأنتّيقو سلالة إله ورس خلائمة عيان، والمغنين آله كرم
الآباد الكرم مركز آخِلَة وآل الدّين علي بن حسن بن علي بن كونه الحسنيّ إدام
36.
   a. Minaret of the shrine of ‘Ali the beloved
   b. Gate of Peace
   c. Chest of ‘Ali the beloved, may God be pleased with him
   d. Double-pointed sword of the viceroy of Najaf

37. This is the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful Husayn b. ‘Ali, may God be pleased with them

38.
   a. Minaret of Husayn’s shrine
   b. Chest of the Commander of the Faithful Husayn, may God be pleased with him
   c. Gate of Peace

39. In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.
   Praise be to God, who stands alone in power and eternity, free of any resemblance to accidents and material substances, and may God bless the lord of messengers and noblest among mankind, Muhammad the Prophet, as well as his most glorious and generous offspring. Now then. The reason for composing these words and relating this introduction will become evident. In the holy mausoleum and the sublime illuminated garden of the qibla and exemplum of the family of the world, the magnificent imam, lion-like hero, Commander of the Faithful, imam of the virtuous, heir to the prophetic sciences, sacred pole of the saints, chief of religion, and caliph of God in the two worlds, seeker of seekers, the chosen Imam ‘Ali b. Abi Talib—may God honor him and may God be pleased with him—the pious dervish, traveler on the path of solitude, Sayyid Yusuf b. Sayyid Shihab al-Din of Transoxiana, kissed the sacred threshold and placed his foot on the noble threshold, and he made a pure and blessed circumambulation. After performing two prostrations—in gratitude to the deity (be He glorified and exalted) the narrator humbled himself as necessary by honoring the lord without equal, kissing his hand, the most sublime among the chosen, king of the sayyids and lords in the world, gatherer of beautiful virtues and dispositions, progeny of the family of tā’ hā and yā sīn, purest among water and clay, the master, the greatest, most glorious, and generous sayyid—may he support the truth, the state, and religion—‘Ali b. Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Kam-muna al-Husayni (may God the Sublime extend his rule and perpetuate his office).
الله تعالى سباعيتاه وابن قابته مشرف شهد بعد از اثاث زوارات جهار حرم و‌و...
مشهد رأى يافته رود وبقي جهار حرم و‌ود ومشهد أو رافد دو دز راش وعل وماده بوند
وخليفة دروشان كردابه ومامور بدعان كبوت برسان و‌كو و‌كبوت بستاند
و‌طرف بكود وطرف رسد اذاس زيارت نامه كردبنبر مثلمس باهن زيارت نامه
هرام أو كردبنبر شد تاههد ديار كردب سلاطين وأمر أو نواب و وزرا و‌سادات
و‌سادات وقصادة و آية و‌اغتها وكيب داران وعلم أران مسانس أوف و‌بيت المال
ضر ارز و‌الكرام وكباد دشست و‌رعيان أو نياوان وماييد و‌بقدر الوسع والإمكان
ضر توق و‌احتراق أو سعي و‌مانيه و‌قدوم إر حرود مبارك داد و‌ود و‌طر و‌سيان
مذو معاون حولا أو كردبنبر الله لا يضع اجر المحسنين توقيف مراقبة و‌باد
الحمد لله تعالى وحمد وصل الله على سيدنا زيد وأله وصحب أطيار
سُمّت تسليما كثرا حزرة في أخادي والشعرة بن حزم الحرام سنع و‌ثليين وممثليه
Names of the witnesses from left to right, top to bottom:  . . .
After visitations to the four sanctuaries and two shrines had been completed, the leaders of the four sanctuaries and two shrines gave him a wallet, two lamps, and a standard, and made him a successor to the dervishes. Because of that, he was granted the authority to give and receive robes, to give and receive rites, and he solicited a book of visitation (ziyārātnāma). He also requested that the book of visitation be made so that in whichever region he traveled sultans, amirs, governors, viziers, lords, sayyids, judges, holders of fiefs, the wealthy, dervishes, standard bearers, and superintendents of endowments and treasuries would not stint in showing him honor, respect, protection, and favor, would make every possible effort to bestow honor, dignity, and reverence upon him, would take it upon themselves to welcome him, and, by following the ways of reward, would help and assist him in his circumstances. Verily, God does not squander the alms of those who do good; may all the Companions prosper through divine grace. Praise be to God the Sublime, the One, and may God bless our lord Muhammad and his family and pure Companions, and complete peace [upon them]. Written on the 21st of Muharram the sacred [in] the year seven and thirty and eight hundred.

40. Names of the witnesses from left to right, top to bottom:

And as we said, the one who needs God the Sublime’s mercy, Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Hazin al-Khazin, may he have God the Sublime’s pardon
As we said, the poor one before God the Great, Ahmad b. Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Hazin al-Khazin, may he have God’s pardon
The situation as heard, [exaltation] and […], least of the servants of God the Sublime,
The poor one [before] God the Rich, ‘Ali Asghar, son of the possessor of excellent qualities, the Husayni
The neediest of God’s worshippers, Abu Talib al-Husayni
Written by ‘Abd al-[...] Muhammad Asghar, son of the possessor of excellent qualities, the Husayni
NOTES

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1. The pilgrimage scroll (MS.267.1998), owned by the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar, was purchased directly from a private collector, Mr. Kuzmeli, in 1998. The scroll was previously offered at auction on October 23, 1972, by Christie, Manson & Woods, where it was called a “rare illuminated Arabic manuscript scroll,” with little detailed information or description (Christie, Manson & Woods, London, Classical, Western Asiatic, Byzantine and Islamic Antiquities, October 23, 1972, lot 109, 36). Since 2010, the scroll has been displayed on rotation in the permanent galleries of the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, and was included among the objects exhibited in “Hajj: The Journey through Art” in 2013. The Doha exhibition occurred the year after the hajj-themed show organized by the British Museum, London. The London exhibition featured several pilgrimage certificates, which were presented as illustrations of the pilgrimage. See Venetia Porter, ed., Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 32, 39, 137, and 197.

2. For a model study that integrates sources on the history of religion and its practices with architecture and urbanism in medieval Islamic society, see Christopher S. Taylor, In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyāra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt (Leiden: Brill, 1999). For the mashhad al-ruʿyā, see ibid., 32, 45, and 88.

3. The same attributes have been noted as applicable to later historical examples. See Luitgard Mols, “Souvenir, Testimony, and Device for Instruction: Late Nineteenth-and Early Twentieth-Century Printed Hajj Certificates,” in Hajj: Global Interactions through Pilgrimage, ed. Luitgard Mols and Marjo Buitelaar, Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde 43 (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015), 185–212, esp. 194–95.

4. While the general purposes of the medieval pilgrimage scrolls are evident, less certain is whether or not their audience was inherently private and restricted or possibly public. The display function of the scrolls is generally accepted by scholars, supported in part by physical analysis. See Şule Aksoy and Rachel Milstein, “A Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates,” in M. Uğur Derman Armagan: Altınışbeşinci Yaşı minasabeytyle Sunulmuş Teblığer = M. Uğur Derman Festschrift: Papers Presented on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Sabanci Universitesi, 2000), 101–34, 103–4; and Janine Sourdrel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdrel, “Nouveaux documents sur l’histoire religieuse et sociale de Damas au Moyen Âge,” Revue des Etudes Islamiques 32 (1964): 1–25, at 4. An early commentator on scrolls, Joseph Reinaud, Description des monumens musulmans du cabinet de M. le duc de Blacas, 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1828), 2224 and 310, mentioned that scrolls were deposited in mosques and displayed on their walls in addition to being preserved by families. He based this on observations made by the earlier travelers Chardin and Neibuhr. Reinaud regarded the scrolls as expressions of the pilgrim’s piety, presumably also evidencing the pilgrim’s enhanced social status. For the display of scrolls in the modern and contemporary periods, see Mols, “Souvenir, Testimony, and Device for Instruction,” 198. For the practice in a Shi’i context, see Ingvild Flakerud, Visualizing Belief and Piety in Iranian Shi’ism (London: Continuum, 2010), 5 and 102.

5. The study of scroll-format objects, comprising different kinds of texts and serving various functions, is a growing field of inquiry. For a recent analysis focused on talismanic scrolls, see Yasmine F. al-Saleh, ‘licit Magic’: The Touch and Sight of Islamic Talismanic Scrolls (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2014).


Christanity, Islam (London: British Library, 2007), 213. The scroll and its inscriptions were described in some detail by Reinaud, Description des monuments musulmans, 310–24.


10. See the highly detailed analysis of block-printing and pilgrimage scrolls by Aksoy and Milstein, “Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates,” 123–34.

11. Whether or not the scroll reflected the completion of a hajj or an umrah, the earlier scrolls typically open with an image of the “Mount of Mercy” (jabal al-raḥma), also known as Mount Arafat, followed by Muzdalifah, Mina, and the Masjid al-Haram (Sacred Mosque) in Mecca, and Mounts Safa and Marwa. For the hajj, all of these sites must be visited between the 8th and 13th of Dhul-Hijja. The umrah, by contrast, does not have to be undertaken at a specific time in the Islamic calendar and only requires the performance of prescribed actions in the Masjid al-Haram and in the corridor connecting Mounts Safa and Marwa. For the rites associated with the hajj and the umrah, see Richard C. Martin, “Muslim Pilgrimage,” in The Encyclopedia of Religion, ed. Mircea Eliade, 16 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 11:338–46.


14. The third day of the hajj is the “Day of Sacrifice” (yawm al-nahr or id al-adḥa), which commemorates Abraham’s sacrifice. The pilgrim goes to Mina in the morning to stone the devil at the first symbolic station (jamra al-aḍḥā or jamra al-kubrā). He throws seven stones while pronouncing the formula “in the name of God, God is Great” (bi-ism Allāhū Allāhu Akbar). The rites at Mina are related to the return of Abraham to Mecca, when he took his son Isma’il and asked him to follow him to Mount Thabir with a knife and a rope (Koran 33:8–10). Along the way, the devil appeared three times to attempt to dissuade Abraham, and revealed to Isma’il his father’s purpose. Abraham stoned the devil three times. At the moment of sacrifice, God sent a ram to be sacrificed instead of Isma’il, since Abraham had proved his obedience to God. The pilgrim then sacrifices an animal after the first stoning. This was usually a sheep, but goats or camels were also permissible. In present times, due to matters of hygiene and especially to the number of pilgrims, each pilgrim donates the value of the animal, which is then sacrificed in a designated place dedicated to that purpose in Mina; the meat is offered to the needy. The men then shave their heads or cut their hair, and the women cut a lock of hair (about 2.5 cm). The pilgrims then return to Mecca to perform the circumambulation again and recite prayers, before traveling back to Mina to spend the night.

15. The Koran refers to the city in two ways, Makka (48:24) and Bakka (33:6). Koran 33:6–97 is commonly used to begin pilgrimage manuals. See Martin, “Muslim Pilgrimage,” 338.


19. The hisam (Ar. “belt”) corresponds to the two levels of large silver or gold embroidered bands that are sewn together and placed around the top of the black silk fabric (kiswa al-sharifa), replaced annually, that covers the Ka’ba. The hisam usually bears cartouches inscribed with Koranic verses. For further information on the Ka’ba textiles across historical periods, medieval through modern, see M. Gaudfroy-Demombryne, “Le voile de la Ka’ba,” Studia Islamica 2 (1954): 5–21; Nevzat Bayhan, ed., Imperial Surra, trans. Zeynep Güden (Istanbul: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Culture Co. Publications, 2008), 43–66; and

20. The haṭīm is not identified by name on the scroll.


22. For each of the seven circuits of circumambulation, it is recommended that the pilgrim kiss (*taqūḥ* or *istišām*) the Black Stone. Gabriel is believed to have brought the Black Stone, thought to have come originally from heaven, to Abraham. At its creation, the stone was white but had blackened over time because of the sins of men. See *EI* 2, s.v. "Kaʿba," (Arent J. Wensinck and Jacques Jomier), vol. 4, 317–18.

23. The Station of Gabriel is usually presented as being in Medina, inside the dome of the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad. Its identification on the scroll in Mecca could be a mistake, or a reference to a legend that mentions Gabriel transporting the Black Stone. See Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 74.

24. It already existed before the advent of Islam, but the Prophet Muhammad gave his uncle 'Abbas the responsibility of administering this amenity after the conquest of Mecca. See *EI* 2, s.v. "Kaʿba." (A. J. Wensinck and Jacques Jomier), vol. 4, 320. In earlier pilgrimage scrolls it is often identified in captions as the *qubba al-sharāb* and in medieval written sources as *al-qubba al-'Abbāsīyya*. See Aksoy and Milstein, "Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates," 112.

25. The Mountain of Light (*jabal al-nūr*) is located outside the Meccan Masjid al-Haram. It was the site of the cave of Hira’, where the Prophet Muhammad received his first revelation.

26. In the Koran (2:235 and 3:97) this place is associated with Bakka and specifically the “House of God” (*Bayt Allāh*), where believers may pray (*musāla*). Abraham plays an important role in the rituals of the *ḥaṭīm* and the construction of the Kaʿba. Abraham's “footprint” was taken as the mark of the mason who built the Kaʿba. Legends record that when the walls became too high, the stones would rise and sink to allow Abraham to build, and to help Ismaʿil’s hand stones to his father. Abraham is believed to have stood atop the *maqām* before his people when he asked them to perform the pilgrimage at God's request. Muslims took the stone as a place of prayer, praying on it in the direction of the Kaʿba. This is why people usually place the *maqām* between them and the Kaʿba while performing some of the prayers in the Masjid al-Haram, although this is not required in the rituals of the *ḥaṭīm*. Scholars have condemned the desire of some pilgrims who want to kiss the stone, or even the practice of circumambulating the maqām. See *EI* 2, s.v. "Makam 'Ibrahim" (M. J. Kister); M. J. Kister, "Maqām Ibrāhīm, a Stone with an Inscription," *Le Muséon* 84 (1971): 477–491; and Francis E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 16–17.

27. This is used to access the Kaʿba’s door and interior. See *EI*, s.v. "Kaʿba." (Arent J. Wensinck and Jacques Jomier).


29. The saʿy between Mounts Safa and Marwa must be done seven times, walking briskly, as the Arabic root indicates. It is set down in the Koran (2:235) and is performed as part of both the *ḥaṭīm* and the 'umrā. This ritual, along with the drinking of water from the Well of Zamzam, is connected to the story of Hagar and her son Ismaʿil, whom Abraham brought to the Hijaz at God's request (Koran 14:37) and abandoned. Hagar wandered with her son seven times between Safa and Marwa searching for water. At Marwa, an angel appeared to her and struck the ground with his wing near a mountain on which there were several springs of water. Hagar then dug the well that is still known as Zamzam. While there are several wells in the vicinity of Mecca, Zamzam is the only one located inside the Masjid al-Haram.

30. The visit to Medina, styled “the illumined city” in Arabic (*al-Madīna al-munawwara*), is not a mandatory ritual of the pilgrimage but is considered meritorious. Pilgrims usually travel to Medina (about 225 miles from Mecca) after completing the 'umra or *ḥaṭīm* in Mecca. Other pilgrims begin their journey by visiting Medina and then travel to Mecca. During the visit, pilgrims usually arrive by way of the Bab al-Salam to the west and pass through al-Rawda to visit the graves. A space in the mosque interior, *al-Rawda* (Ar. "garden") is mentioned by both Muhammad b. Ismaʿil al-Bukhari and Muslim b. al-Hajaj in their hadith compilations, while al-Harawi styles it “Fatima’s garden” (*rawda al-Fāṭima*). According to Nasir-i Khusraw, “it is said to be one of the gardens of Paradise, since the Prophet said, ‘Between my grave and my pulpit is one of the gardens of Paradise.’ The Shiʿis say that the tomb of Fatema Zahrā is there also”: Wheeler M. Thackston, *Nāsir-e Khosrow’s Book of Travels (Ṣafarnāma)* (Albany, N.Y.: Bibliotheca Persica, 1986), 59. While inside the mosque, pilgrims performed their prayers near the minbar and recited Suras 109 (al-Kāfirūn [The Unbelievers]) and 112 (al-Ikhlaš [Oneness]) from the Koran. With their backs turned to the mihrab, they then faced the southern window and pronounced pious formulas (*duʿāʾ*) in the name of the Prophet Muhammad. Similar rituals were practiced at the graves of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and Fatima. After returning to al-Rawda, pilgrims again performed a prayer and then visited the


32. It was acquired by the Ottoman sultan Selim I (r. 1512–20) and in Ottoman Turkish is variously named sanjak-i şerif, livāʾ-i şerif, and ‘alem-i nebevi. See *EI2*, s.v. “sandjak-i Sherif” (A. H. de Groot).

33. This mixed iconography is not a curious conflation of tradition but rather a reflection of religious diversity. For example, one tradition locates the footprint of Abraham on the Dome of the Rock, while others locate it in Mecca.

34. For more information about Jerusalem and its architecture, see *Holy City of Medina*, 50 and 95.


36. On the first day (*ṭawāf*), 8 Dhul-Hijja, pilgrims usually carry out the circumambulation (*ṭawāf*) and *saʿy* between Mounts Safa and Marwa. The *ṭawāf* is a pre-Islamic practice that was instituted by the Prophet Muhammad when he made his farewell pilgrimage in 632. He carried it out while riding on his camel, touching each corner (*rukn*) of the Ka’ba. He indicated what was forbidden (such as hanging clothes on the Ka’ba [Koran 7:289]), and provided information on the steps of the ritual: turning seven times around the Ka’ba, and taking as a starting point the black stone (*maṭaf*) that was instigated by the Prophet Muhammad when he made his farewell pilgrimage in 632. He carried it out while riding on his camel, touching each corner (*rukn*) of the Ka’ba. He indicated what was forbidden (such as hanging clothes on the Ka’ba [Koran 7:289]), and provided information on the steps of the ritual: turning seven times around the Ka’ba, and taking as a starting point the black stone (*maṭaf*).


38. One of the most commonly mentioned artefacts is the pair of horns from the ram sacrificed by Abraham in the place of his son Isma’il (which, according to one tradition, were transported from the Ka’ba to Jerusalem). Another is the crown of the Sasanian king Kiswa. See Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, 52 and 160.

39. The place where all mankind would assemble for judgment. The area east of the Haram was thought to be Hell. See Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, 76–77.


41. In their analysis of the Damascene corpus, and their focused study of a scroll dated 608 (1211), Aksoy and Milstein suggest that some representations of mihrabs in the image of the Haram al-Sharif could be those of David and/or Zakariyya (Aksoy and Milstein, “Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates,” 113–14).


44. For the names given to the doors of the Haram in earlier periods, see ibid., xxii–xxiii, and accompanying descriptive entries.

45. In their analysis of the Damascene corpus, and their focused study of a scroll dated 608 (1211), Aksoy and Milstein suggest that some representations of mihrabs in the image of the Haram al-Sharif could be those of David and/or Zakariyya (Aksoy and Milstein, “Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates,” 113–14).

46. Modern sources record that Hamza’s shield was removed from the Dome of the Rock in the 1880s and possibly sent to Constantinople. See C. W. Wilson, “The ‘Buckler’ of
Hamza,* in Palestine Exploration Fund: Quarterly Statement, January 1903 (London: Published at the Fund’s Office, 1903), 175–77. In 1047, Nasir-i Khusraw mentions seeing it “carved in stone” on the wall and relates the tradition that “[Hamza] sat there with his shield on his back and that this is the impression of that shield.” See Thackston, *Nāṣer-e Khusraw’s Book of Travels,* 28.


50. The closest Adamic association is a tradition mentioned in the version of the cave of the patriarchs in the old testament, January 1903 (London: Published at the Fund’s Office, 1903), 175–77. in 1047, nasir-i khusraw mentions seeing it “[hamza] sat there with his shield on his back and that this is the impression of that shield.” see thackston, *Lonely Wayfarer’s Guide to Pilgrimage,* 66 and 78. Nasir-i Khusraw writes that Joseph was buried near the village of Balata.


55. *Allāhumma [sallā] ‘alā Muhammad al-muṣṭafā wa ‘Ali al-murtaḍa wa Hasan al-mujtabā wa Ḥusayn al-shāhid bi-Karbalā’ wa ‘Ali zayn al-‘abidin wa Muhammad al-baqir wa Ja‘far al-sādig wa Mūsā al-kāẓim wa ‘Ali al-‘ṣāda wa Muhammad al-taqi wa ‘Ali al-naqi wa Hasan al-‘askari wa Muhammad al-mahdī sabīb al-zamān ‘alayhum al-salām.* A word is inserted between *allāhumma* and *‘alā* with the three of them interconnected. The most likely reading for the middle word is *sallā.* This introductory formula (al-lāhumma sallā ‘alā) is used in a square Kufic panel of carved plaster in the tomb of Pir-i Bakran at Linjan dating to 1342 (the panel consists of the names of Muhammad, Fatima, and the Twelve Imams). It is illustrated and described in Blair, *Islamic Inscriptions,* 85–86; and Allan, *Art and Architecture of Twelver Shi’ism,* 46.


57. For an overview of the history of the site, see *EI2,* s.v. “Karbalā’” (E. Honigmann); *Elr,* s.v. “Karbala” (Meir Litvak); and Grabar, “Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures,” 20.

58. The illumination of Karbala and Najaf was commonly remarked upon by visitors. During his visit to Najaf in 1326, Ibn Battuta described the furniture of the shrine in some detail, highlighting the silver and gold hanging lamps. See Tabbaa and Mervin, Najaf: The Gate of Wisdom, 77–78; and ‘Abbās ‘Azzāwī, *Tārikh al-Trāq bayna ihtilālāyin,* 8 vols. (Baghdād: Maṭba‘at biqād, 1935–), 369.

59. Repairs were made to the shrines in Najaf and Karbala under the Mongols, but they were much adapted and
rebuilt in later historical periods. See Efr, s.v. “Atabat” (H. Algar). The shrine at Najaf was destroyed in a fire in 1354 and rebuilt in 1358. See Efr, s.v. “Najaf” (Rose Aslan).

62. The term ‘atabat is used to identify the four great Shi‘i shrine cities in Iraq: Najaf, Karbala, Kazimayn, and Samarra. See Efr, s.v. “Atabat” (H. Algar).

63. The better-studied form of <tughra> is the repertoire of official emblems and monograms applied to chancery documents from the time of the Seljuqs. See Efr, s.v. “Tughra” (C. E. Bosworth).

64. See Efr, s.v. “Khāzin” (C. E. Bosworth). Qalqashandī reported that Ibn al-Sayrafi had said of the role of khāzin that “the guiding reins of the whole divān are in his hands.”


67. The technique used a handheld XRF Olympus Innov-X Delta Premium with a 4W, 40kV Rh anode X-ray tube.


69. For a mid-fifteenth century source mentioning the acquisition of malachite, see David J. Roxburgh, “Many a wish has turned to dust: Pir Budaq and the Formation of Turkmen Arts of the Book,” in Roxburgh, Envisioning Islamic Art and Architecture, 175–222, 183.


71. Vermilion was particularly praised by Indian painters working at the Rajput courts. The significance of this color was discussed by Anita Chowdry in her paper “More than the Colour Red: The Unspoken Symbolism of Cinnabar Pigment in Indian Painting,” presented at the conference “Visions of Enchantments: Occultism, Spirituality and Visual Culture,” University of Cambridge, Cambridge, March 17–18, 2014.


A preliminary effort to gather and study objects of Meccan production was made by Carine Juvin, “Catalogy and Writing Activities in Mecca during the Medieval Period (Twelfth–Fifteenth Centuries),” Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies 43 (2013): 153–66. Juvin notes the uncertainty surrounding the medieval corpus of pilgrimage scrolls, suggesting that they were “prepared before the pilgrimage and then completed with the name of the performer of the hajj and the legal witnesses”—but, she also asks, “Were they prepared in the country of the beneficiary or in the holy city, as a specific local activity?” (ibid., 154).


Examples include the narratives of pilgrimage recorded by ‘Ali al-Harawi, Nasir-i Khushraw, and Ibn Battuta. Due to the scope of extant materials, it is not possible to prove a continuous tradition of pilgrimage scroll making across the medieval and early modern periods. (Indeed, the practice of making scrolls, especially printed ones, seems to have fallen off sharply during the Mamluk era, only to pick up again in the modern period.) We do not want to suggest that the fifteenth-century scrolls are in direct dialogue with the medieval corpus. With that noted, the medieval Damascus corpus and the two fifteenth-century scrolls do show shared conceptual traits, despite the chronological gap that separates them. It is entirely reasonable to propose that the artistic traditions seen in the fifteenth-century scrolls in Doha and London are linked to pilgrimage scrolls,
talismans, and cartography of deep historical vintage; they certainly do not reflect the modes of architectural and spatial representation characteristic of post-Mongol manuscript painting. The habit of arranging scrolls to be viewed vertically continued from medieval through early modern times. For printed examples from the nineteenth century, see Mols, "Souvenir, Testimony, and Device for Instruction," 185–212; Ulrich Marzolff, "From Mecca to Mashhad: The Narrative of an Illustrated Shi'i Pilgrimage Scroll from the Qajar Period," Muqarnas 31 (2014): 1–36; and J. Hjarpe, "A Hajj Certificate from the Early 20th Century," in Being Religious and Living through the Eyes: Studies in Religious Iconography and Iconology, A Celebratory Publication in Honour of Professor Jan Bergman, Faculty of Theology, Uppsala University, Published on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday, June 2, 1998, ed. Peter Schalk and Michael Stausberg (Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 1998), 197–204. These examples are highly detailed, especially in their captioning. They also refer to elements never depicted before, such as the "Day of Judgment," and present detailed topographic views of the cemetery of al-Baqi'. Indian scrolls of comparable detail begin as early as the seventeenth century. The level of detail in post-medieval scrolls is discussed in Roxburgh, "Visualizing the Sites and Monuments of Islamic Pilgrimage," 34.


81. The extent to which images of holy sites and their monuments reflect historical realities is addressed by Esin in her study of the 1544–45 proxy pilgrimage scroll made for Şehzade Mehmed. Esin considers how the images reflect construction of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods (Esin, "Un manuscrit illustré représentant les sanctuaires de la Mecque et Médine," 175–190). Milstein has pointed out historical inconsistencies, often resulting from such artistic concerns as making a symmetrical composition, in the case of images of Jerusalem. See Rachel Milstein, "Stories of the Prophets and Their Illustration in Islamic Mysticism," in Biblical Stories in Islamic Painting, ed. Na’ama Brosh (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1991), 19–42.

82. As Sourdell-Thomine observed, Jerusalem became increasingly important as a pilgrimage site and was represented more commonly after its recapture by Salah al-Din in the late twelfth century. Janine Sourdell-Thomine, Une image musulmane de Jérusalem au début du XIIIe siècle, in Poirion, Jérusalem, Rome, Constantinople, 217–33.

83. One example dated 608 (1211) (Istanbul, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi [Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art], inv. no. 4091) is particularly well studied and described. For a list of the sites it illustrates in Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, see Aksoy and Milstein, Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates, fgs. 1–4; and Roxburgh, Pilgrimage City, 764–67. Without knowing of the existence of the Doha scroll, Milstein pointed out the absence of representations of Jerusalem between the medieval Damascus corpus and the 1544–45 Ottoman scroll for Şehzade Mehmed. See Milstein, "Drawings of the Haram of Jerusalem in Ottoman Manuscripts," 62–69. The argument is restated in Rachel Milstein, "Kitâb Shawq-nâma: An Illustrated Tour of Holy Arabia," Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 25 (2001): 275–345, at 317.

84. Some inscriptions on Add. Ms.27566 were discussed by Reinaud, Description des monumens musulmans, 2:321.

85. Without specifying a context for the production of the scroll, Porter, ed., Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam, 137, suggests that Maymuna may have come on her pilgrimage from North Africa.

86. For an enumeration of the fifteen framed scenes identified by Esin and a discussion of their sequence, see Roxburgh, "Pilgrimage City," 771.

87. See Reinaud, Description des monumens musulmans, 2:321.

88. It is interesting to consider the parallels between Muslim pilgrimage scrolls and documents of the Jewish tradition, in which, for example, the Dome of the Rock is used as an amulet. See Pamela C. Berger, The Crescent on the Temple: The Dome of the Rock as Image of the Ancient Jewish Sanctuary (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 225–51.

89. For example, Hebron was visited by the Ottoman sultan Suleyman, who made repairs and gave endowments to it. See Necipoğlu, "Dome of the Rock as Palimpsest," 98–99 and 100n21.

90. The interpretation of Koran 3:33 was made by Fadl b. Hasan al-Tabarsi (d. 1153) in his commentary Majma‘ al-bahrāyn. Other verses related to Abraham’s offspring included Koran 19:38 and 14:37. See Moojan Momen, An Introduction to Shi‘i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi‘ism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 152.


92. Munt, Holy City of Medina, 121.

93. Overviews of the history of each city and their shrines are presented in Elr, s.v. "Najaf" (Rose Aslan) and Elr, s.v. "Karbalā" (Meir Litvak).

94. For a scroll combining pilgrimage to Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, and Najaf dated 1787–78, see Roxburgh, "Visualizing the Sites and Monuments of Islamic Pilgrimage," 34 and cat. no. 11.

95. See Elr, s.v. “Atabât” (H. Algar).

96. Elr, s.v. "Najaf" (Rose Aslan).

97. Ibid.


105. Sunni visitors and patrons of Najaf and Karbala are mentioned in most of the studies cited in the notes. Historical overviews are offered by Allan, Art and Architecture of Twelver Shi’ism, chap. 1; and Tabbaa and Mervin, Najaf: The Gate of Wisdom, 78–79.
107. See Golombek and Wilber, Timurid Architecture, 1:59, and cat. nos. 141 and 221. An earlier historical example is the Mashhad al-Husayn in Aleppo, whose portal is attributed to the Ayyubid sultan al-Zahir. The names of the Prophet Muhammad and Twelve Imams appear together on the portal with another inscription naming the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs. See Mulder, Shrines of the ’Alids in Medieval Syria, esp. 90–97.
Sphero-conical vessels are relatively small vessels (10–20 cm or 4–8 in. high) with a narrow, nipple-shaped opening, a distinctive torpedo shape, and relatively thick walls. Most are made of dense ceramic fabrics with small, well-sorted non-plastic inclusions, fired at a high temperature in a reducing environment that produces sturdy, relatively heavy vessels with dark, nonporous walls.1 Many of these vessels are decorated with incised or molded geometric patterns, animals, or inscriptions; some are glazed on the outside or made of glass.2 The remains of spherico-conical vessels are commonly found in small quantities at medieval urban settlements in the Levant and modern Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. The primary function of these vessels has been debated since the 1930s. This debate was partly fueled by a paucity of research, which was furthermore sometimes published in museum catalogues or excavation reports with relatively limited scholarly impact. An overview of relevant publications was published by Maria Vittoria Fontana in 1999 and a classification by Emilie Savage-Smith in 1997.3 Two important articles on the subject appeared in *Muqarnas* in 1992 and 1993.4 We report here on our biochemical analysis of the residues in four spherico-conical vessels found in twelfth–thirteenth century layers at Dvin, Armenia (fig. 1).

One suggestion for the intended use of spherico-conical vessels is as incendiary or explosive weapons similar to Molotov cocktails or hand grenades.5 The use of such devices in medieval times is well documented.6 On the other hand, the careful surface treatment of many vessels, together with the fact that numerous vessels have been found intact, seems to contradict this interpretation. Alternatively, it has been proposed that these vessels were primarily used as fire blowers (aeolipiles) in kilns by employing the draft of hot air or steam that would emit from a vessel when heated.7 However, as Richard Ettinghausen has noted, “Few of these vessels have soot marks or other signs of having been near fires.”8 Charles K. Wilkinson has pointed out that there is no archaeological evidence for such use,9 nor have Ghouchani and Adle found “Persian or Arabic [written] sources that refer to the use of these vessels as fire blowers.”10 Another thought is that spherico-conical vessels could have been the central part of a water pipe (hookah, narghile, or shisha),11 which would have been employed to smoke hashish or opium. Herodotus famously reported that the Scythians bathed in the smoke of hemp seed,12 but there is no firm evidence that smoking from pipes was practiced in the Near East before the introduction of tobacco in the region around the end of the sixteenth century.13 Analyses in 1989 and 1990 of some of the spherico-conical vessels kept by the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada, did not reveal the presence of cannabinoids or other alkaloids.14 Other interpretations of the vessels include that they were primarily intended as containers for precious liquids, such as mercury,15 scented oil,16 beer or wine,17 or ink.18 Ettinghausen reports tests that have proven the ability of the vessels to “hold volatile liquids, water, and oil for weeks without seepage.”19 Analysis of the spherico-conical vessels excavated at Sidon in Lebanon revealed that some contained small drops of mercury,20 while a vessel that was in the Romanov Museum in Moscow until the First World War was said to have been filled with mercury.21 Contemporary written sources indicate that mercury was used for a variety of medicinal, cosmetic, and industrial purposes. Linguistic data further corro-
borate the significance of mercury; for instance, according to Ettinghausen, the Armenian physician Amir Dawlat (d. ca. 1496) “mentions twenty different names for mercury in his medical treatise.”22 Far too many of these vessels have been found, however, for all of them to have been intended as containers for mercury,23 which even today is a rare commodity. Analysis of the content of a vessel from Israel did not reveal any mercury, but rather ferric sulfate—\( \text{Fe}_2(\text{SO}_4)_{3/2} \)—interpreted as “originally \( \text{FeS}_2 \) (pyrite).” “This material,” states Ervin Jungreis, “was used in conjunction with flint and timber to start fires.”24 The small size and careful surface treatment of the vessels, often with images or names of women, supports the hypothesis that they were used for fragrant liquids (scented oils or perfumes), and most vessels in museum collections are labeled as perfume containers. This categorization is in accordance with the sphero-conical vessel held by a statue of the archangel Gabriel in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, for which, writes Fontana, “its function of containing a liquid and its use as a sprinkler seem to be the most likely.”25 It is very probable, however, according to Savage-Smith, that sphero-conical vessels are “objects that are not only made of different materials but that were also evidently meant for different purposes,”26 and some may have been meant to serve as plumb bobs rather than containers.27

Perfumes are composed by dissolving a small amount of a compound with a distinctive fragrance—often an aromatic molecule or a terpenoid—or a combination of
such compounds in a much larger amount of a neutral compound, the base or excipient. A variety of other compounds may be added to this basic mix to modify its color or behavior, such as blending agents, fixatives, and preservatives. Starting around the end of the fifteenth century, the basis for perfumes became almost exclusively ethanol with varying amounts of water and methanol. Such a base will quickly evaporate after application, leaving behind the less volatile fragrant ingredients. The basis for ancient perfumes was mostly olive oil and, to a lesser extent, other vegetable oils, such as almond or ben oil (of *Moringa oleifera*), as well as liquefied waxes or animal fats. The major component (50–70%) of the mentioned oils is oleic acid (*cis*-9-octadecenoic acid, a mono-unsaturated fatty acid). Most natural waxes are esters of a long-chain alkanol (alcohol) and a long-chain fatty acid; fats are mono-, di-, or triglycerides in which one, two, or three fatty acids, respectively, are connected with an ester bond to a glycerol backbone (fig. 2).

Although distillation was known in the ancient world, it was used in the perfume production process only to purify and concentrate the fragrant components, not to produce ethanol to be used as the base of the final product.

Compounds valued for their olfactory properties—incense, scented oils, and perfumes, as well as their ingredients—were economically and socially important in the Near East from early times onward. The Arab conquest (622–732) resulted in many new ingredients being introduced into the region, while others slowly lost their popularity. New ingredients included camphor (a terpenoid mostly of *Cinnamomum camphora*), ambergris (a digestive waste product of *Physeter* spp.), and sandalwood (mostly of *Santalum album*). Ingredients that became less fashionable include balsam (sap likely of *Commiphora* spp.) and myrrh (resin of *Commiphora* spp.); the former was commonly replaced by camphor and the latter by musk (a glandular secretion of *Moschus* spp.). Ingredients that apparently kept their popularity include cinnamon (bark of *Cinnamomum* spp.), costus (rhizomes of *Costus speciosus*), frankincense (resin of *Boswellia* spp.), rose water and oil (of *Rosa* spp.), saffron (styles and stigmas of *Crocus sativus*), and spikenard (oil of *Nardostachys jatamansi*). The value of such fragrant commodities is indicated by classical, Hebrew, and Islamic sources and, among others, by the small Herodian juglet (37 B.C.–A.D. 6) that was found in a cave near Qumran, Israel, wrapped in palm fibers and most likely deliberately hidden in antiquity. It was found to contain a “viscous plant oil, only very slightly oxidized,” as Joseph Patrich and Benny Arubas have reported. After analysis by Zeev Aizenshtat and Dorit Aschengrau, this oil was tentatively interpreted as balsam oil or a similar aromatic substance.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Located in modern Armenia about 40 kilometers southeast of the capital Yerevan, Dvin was founded as a royal hunting lodge of the Arsacid dynasty (A.D. 54–428) around 335 on a mound of cultural deposits of multiple earlier settlements (fig. 3, left). Rapid urban growth took place between 460 and 480 after the see of the patriarch.
of the Armenian Church was transferred there from Vagarshapat (Echmiadzin) and the political capital from Artashat (Artaxata). Dvin remained the political center of Armenia during its dominance by the Persian (Sasanian) and Islamic (Umayyad and Abbasid) empires until 884. Devastating damage resulted from an earthquake in 893, after which Ani assumed the central political and religious role previously played by Dvin. Despite these events, Dvin remained an important commercial center until its gradual decline was accelerated by the Mongol invasion in 1236. The city was abandoned by the second decade of the fourteenth century. Since 1937, Dvin has been systematically excavated by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, part of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. Most of the spherico-conical vessels from Dvin have inscriptions or symbols scratched or painted on the surface of the vessel after firing. These are usually names of people that probably at one time owned the vessel, while symbolic markings may have indicated the contents of the vessels. In 2007, four sherds, interpreted as fragments of spherico-conical vessels from different medieval (twelfth–thirteenth century) layers at Dvin (fig. 3, right), were presented to the authors for analysis by mass spectrometry combined with gas chromatography. Not enough of the vessels was preserved for their secure classification, and only limited archaeological information was available on the excavation context of the sherds.

The four sherds from Dvin were ground into a fine powder with an aluminum-oxide mortar and pestle after which the organic molecules were dissolved in an organic solvent. The analytical instrument used was the Micromass (Waters) GC/EI-ToF-MS, purchased by the Pasarow Mass Spectrometry Laboratory at UCLA through NSF grant CHE 0078299 (see appendix). The output of this instrument is a combination of a single chromatogram, created by gas chromatography, and a large number of mass spectra, created by the mass spectrometer. Each peak in the chromatogram represents a molecule in the sample, and a mass spectrum can be created for each of these peaks. With specialized software, mass spectra of the unknown compounds in the sample can be electronically compared with the spectra of known compounds in a digital library. This
comparison usually leads to the identification, with a reasonable amount of certainty, of many of the components in most of the samples.36

RESULTS

All four samples appeared to contain significant amounts of phthalates, represented by a large peak at m/z 149 in the mass spectra.37 Phthalates are a group of anthropogenetic molecules that are added to plastics to control their thermoplasticity. It is likely that these phthalates were introduced into the samples by contact with storage materials (such as plastic bags) or laboratory equipment (such as pipette tips), and they should be considered modern contaminants.38 Similarly, siloxanes in the samples are either released by the GC-column or the result of the derivatization agent reacting with itself, and they are thus unrelated to the ancient organic residue. Two of the sherds, SCV-01 and SCV-03, appeared to contain small amounts of hexadecanoic (palmitic) and octadecanoic (stearic) acid. These saturated fatty acids are indicative of organic residues but not very specific concerning their source. Furthermore, the blanks that were run between the archaeological samples also returned small amounts of these molecules along with one of the phthalates (fig. 4, top). As these molecules were not seen in the blanks that were run at the beginning of the analysis, they are likely molecules from the samples that remained behind on the GC-column. In the absence of an internal standard this cannot be readily confirmed. The two remaining sherds, SCV-02 and SCV-04, however, returned better interpretable results (fig. 4, bottom). Molecules that are likely part of the

Fig. 4. Total ion current (TIC) display of the data returned by sherds SCV-02 and SCV-04, excavated from medieval (twelfth–thirteenth century) layers at Dvin, Armenia, and interpreted to be from spherico-conical vessels. The larger peaks were identified by comparing their mass spectra after electron impact ionization with the spectra in the 2013 version of the NIST/EPA/NIH Mass Spectral Library (see fig. 5). The chromatogram of one of the blanks that were run between the archaeological samples is shown for comparison (top).
residue of the former contents of the vessel that produced sherd SCV-02 include nonadecanoic acid (16.04 min), undecanol (19.06 min), hexadecanoic acid (23.74 min), oleic acid (25.32 min), and octadecanoic acid (25.51 min after injection of the sample). Molecules that are likely part of the residue of the former contents of vessel SCV-04 are glycerol (14.90 min), nonadecanoic acid (16.05 min), dodecanoic acid (19.67 min), tetradecanoic acid (21.80 min), hexadecanoic acid (23.74 min), and octadecanoic acid (25.51 min after injection of the sample).

DISCUSSION

Archaeological organic residue analysis is usually concerned with interrogating a mixture of unknown compounds that are combined in unknown ratios. The aim is to obtain information on the ancient origin of the components of the mixture. The combination of the superior resolving power of capillary gas chromatography to separate a complex mixture of molecules into its constituent components, and the near-certain identification of these components by comparing their reproducible fragmentation patterns after electron impact ionization with those of known molecules (fig. 5), make GC-MS a reliable technique for studying such samples. Disadvantages of this technique include the requirement for thermal stability of the analytes, which limits the range of molecules that can be identified and usually necessitates their chemical derivatization. Furthermore, the relatively small fraction of the sample that can be loaded onto a GC-column challenges the ability of the instrument to detect molecules that are present in the sample in low abundance. The main issue, however, remains the determination of the ancient source of the residue. In some cases the residue has preserved biomarkers, molecules that are considered unique to a single ancient source. In other cases, comparing the ratios of selected fatty acids can indicate a more or less specific ancient source of the organic residue. Neither approach is without its limitations and complicating factors, nor are they mutually exclusive. Whenever possible they should be combined to generate as much information as possible.
from the necessarily limited amount of available data. Moreover, analytical chemical research of archaeological artifacts should not take place in isolation, but all available archaeological, historical, and anthropological information should be taken into consideration to allow for the most comprehensive interpretation of the findings.

The possibly ancient fatty acids and alkanols preserved in the four sherds of sphero-conical vessels presented here do not independently provide much insight into the specific use of the vessels. They do, however, allow for a choice to be made between the various theories, briefly discussed above, that have been proposed for the intended original use of these vessels. Our results support the identification of the vessels as containers for scented oils. They do not, however, exclude interpretations other than the mentioned hypotheses of earlier researchers. Sherd SCV-02 preserved oleic acid, the mono-unsaturated fatty acid that is the main constituent of the three vegetable oils most commonly used as the base for ancient perfumes. This molecule is unlikely to be the result of modern contamination from the environment. Sherd SCV-04 did not preserve a detectable amount of oleic acid but did contain five different saturated fatty acids as well as glycerol and tetradecanol, a long-chain alkanol. These molecules are likely the residue of ancient waxes or fats after their ester bond is broken by hydrolysis in an acidic environment or by saponification in a basic environment. The three saturated fatty acids and undecanol, another long-chain alkanol, preserved in sherd SCV-02 probably have the same origin. This finding is concurrent with complex perfumes that are composed of several different fragrant compounds, each delivered in their own specific base (oil, wax, or fat).

Although our results corroborate the hypothesis that the four vessels we studied did once contain scented oils, other sphero-conical vessels may have been used to store wine or beer, although their volume seems rather small for this purpose. Such use would probably not have removed all the fatty residue of the original contents from the ceramic matrix of the vessel, as these substances are poorly soluble in water and would have resulted in the deposition of little if any additional residue. Still other vessels may have been reused as incendiary weapons in times of conflict, much like Molotov cocktails are often made out of empty beer bottles. The fuel for such devices in antiquity was not usually a vegetable oil but rather short-chained petroleum derivatives, the residues of which will most likely be lost following ignition. Finally and least likely, some vessels may have been used to construct water pipes; many commodity jars and aerosol cans in the region today end their life this way. Neither the historical record nor analytical research, however, provides any support that such ever occurred in medieval times, nor do they give much credence to the use of the vessels as fire blowers. The mercury observed in the 1960s in the vessels from Sidon may likewise have been part of the recipe of a perfume or medicine, or some sphero-conical vessels may have been used or reused to store mercury, as was obviously the case for the vessel formerly in the Romanov Museum. Alternatively, some of the vessels may have been used for the production of mercury. In ancient times mercury was often produced by heating cinnabar to catalyze oxidation (HgS + O₂ → Hg + SO₂). The upper part of the apparatus used for this—the ambix or bikos that served as the receptacle for the released elemental mercury—had a shape similar to a sphero-conical vessel.

Our analysis provides additional evidence for the interpretation of the vessels as containers for scented oils, as a constituent of a perfume or a medicinal concoction, an inference originally based on their size, appearance, and ubiquity within the medieval Near East. At the same time, it indicates the value of analytical biochemical research in identifying the contents of archaeological receptacles such as sphero-conical vessels. It is obviously problematic to draw general conclusions from the analysis of four vessels from a single site. The fact that two, and possibly four, of these four vessels yield data that confirm one of the theories concerning their function, however, can serve to corroborate this particular theory. Future investigations of sphero-conical vessels should comprise an interdisciplinary cross-comparison of the organic residues in multiple samples from different sites combined with an interpretation of the various inscriptions and symbols found on the vessels. During this investigation, special efforts should be made to identify molecules likely to be associated with the fragrance of
the perfume, probably aromatic compounds or terpenoids, rather than its much less specific base. Obvious candidates for such targeted research are molecules considered to be more or less specific for *Boswellia* spp. (frankincense), *Cinnamomum camphora* (camphor), *Cinnamomum* spp. (cinnamon), *Commiphora* spp. (balsam and myrrh), *Costus speciosus* (costus), *Crocus sativus* (saffron), *Moschus* spp. (musk), *Nardostachys jatamansi* (spikenard), *Physeter* spp. (ambergris), *Rosa* spp. (rose water and oil), or *Santalum album* (sandalwood). In combination with historical data, identifying traces of such fragrant substances may provide information on the date of the vessel or refine our knowledge of the use over time of the different raw materials for incense, scented oils, and perfumes.

**APPENDIX: ANALYTICAL METHODS AND INSTRUMENTATION**

To prevent contamination, all tools were cleaned with water, acetic acid, and acetone, sequentially, both before and after processing each sample, and examination gloves were worn at all times when handling the pottery powder. Of this powder, 500 mg was combined with 2 mL of an extraction solution (chloroform/methanol, 2/1, v/v) in clean, marked test tubes. The resulting four test tubes were vigorously mixed on a vortex mixer (20 s), sonicated in a water bath (20 min), mixed again (20 s), and then centrifuged (1500 g, 20 min). The supernatants were transferred into a second set of clean, marked test tubes. The extraction procedure was repeated with another 1 mL of extraction solution, after which the supernatants of each sample were combined and the test tubes with the depleted sediment discarded. The four samples were dried in a vacuum centrifuge, redissolved in 60 μL ethyl-acetate, and transferred into glass autosampler vials. The samples were then treated with 40 μL N,O-bis-trimethylsilyl-trifluoroacetamide (BSTFA) containing 1% (v/v) trimethylchlorosilane (TMCS) and incubated at 60°C for one hour. This procedure converts most functional carboxyl-, amino-, and hydroxyl-groups into their trimethylsilyl (TMS) derivatives, principally to increase the volatility and thermal stability of the analytes. Finally, 1 μL of each sample was subjected to combined gas chromatography–mass spectrometry (GC-MS) in split-less mode. Because of the limited amount of material and the fact that our research question was quantitative rather than qualitative, we did not add an internal standard to any of the samples.

The autosampler injector port (250°C) was connected to a bonded-phase nonpolar fused silica capillary column (50 m × 320 μm; 0.25 μm film thickness). The column was eluted with ultra-high-purity helium (constant flow, 1.2 mL/min). The oven was held at 50°C for 2 min following injection, then raised 10°C/min to 350°C, and finally kept at that temperature for another 10 min (total run time 42 min). The end of the column (transfer line at 250°C) was inserted into the electron-impact source (180°C, 70 eV) of a time-of-flight mass spectrometer scanning from m/z 40–600 (1.0 scan/s). Data were collected using the MassLynx software suite (version 4.1) supplied by the manufacturer of the instrument, and analyzed by comparing unknown spectra with those in the 2011 version of the NIST/EPA/NIH Mass Spectral Library.

The sample inlet of a combined GC-MS instrument consists of a gas chromatograph, a long and narrow glass column through which a flow of carrier gas is maintained. This column is coated on the inside with a thin layer that attracts some of the molecules in the sample. The column is in an oven for which the temperature can be carefully controlled. The end of the column is connected to the ion source of a mass spectrometer. Once the sample is on the column, the mobile phase (the carrier gas) and the stationary phase (the coating inside the
column) compete for the molecules in the sample. For each molecule the outcome of this competition depends on the temperature inside the column. As the temperature is slowly raised, the various components of the sample leave the stationary phase one by one and travel with the carrier gas to the end of the column and into the electron impact (EI+) ion source of the mass spectrometer (fig. 6). Ionization is necessary to enable the electromagnetic forces in the mass analyzer to manipulate the molecules and measure their mass, but will also fragment some of the molecules. When molecules are ionized by electron impact, the resulting fragments and their relative abundance appear to be highly reproducible. This allows the comparison of the mass spectra generated by an unknown compound with known spectra in large digital libraries. A time-of-flight mass analyzer (ToF) consists of a metal tube at high vacuum with an ion accelerator at its beginning and an ion detector at its end. Upon entering the analyzer, the ions are accelerated by an electromagnetic pulse, after which they are allowed to drift toward the detector. Typically it takes 10–100 μsec for ions to travel the distance of around 2 m between the accelerator and the detector. The speed of each ion, and, consequently, the time it needs to complete this journey, depend on its mass and charge state (m/z). Different ions reach the detector at different times from which the m/z of each ion can be extrapolated.

NOTES

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25. Fontana, "Islamic Sphero-Conical Object," 9–33.


27. Ibid., 330–31.


33. Ibid.


44. Choronis, “Chemical Warfare”; Haldon and Byrne, “Possible Solution to the Problem of Greek Fire,” 92; Roland, “Secrecy, Technology, and War,” 658.

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