MUQARNAS
J.M. ROGERS
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J. Michael Rogers is an exceptionally erudite and versatile historian of Islamic art. The scope of his scholarly and other interests has earned him his reputation as a man of Renaissance ideals.

He began his academic career at Oxford, where he read philosophy, politics, and economics (PPE) at Corpus Christi College. After graduating in 1958, he moved to Oriel College, where he was awarded a research fellowship in philosophy. He then taught philosophy at both Pembroke and Wadham Colleges. As an undergraduate he had already visited Eastern Turkey, where the impressive architecture of the Seljuq period had caught his imagination. His interests gradually shifted from philosophy to the study of Islamic art; he learned Turkish, and, under the supervision of Samuel Stern and Victor Ménage, wrote his PhD thesis on the architectural patronage of Seljuq Anatolia.

From 1965 to 1977 he taught Islamic Art at the American University in Cairo. In 1977 he moved to London, where he joined the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum. For fourteen years he was in charge of the Islamic collections there, and he organized several exhibitions dealing with the arts of Turkey, Iran, and India, including Islamic Art and Design (1983) and Süleyman the Magnificent (1988). He was also responsible for the reinstallation of the Islamic collections in the new John Addis Gallery of the Museum (1989).

From 1991 to 2000, he was the Nasser D Khalili Professor of Islamic Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His appointment was of great benefit not only to the Department but also to the School as a whole and to the study of Islamic art in the United Kingdom. In the meantime, he had developed a close connection with the Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, of which he has been Honorary Curator since 1992. There he continues to work, extending the prestigious series of scholarly catalogues.

He has long held other positions that show the high regard he enjoys in the academic field: in 1972 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and since 1988 he has been a Fellow of the British Academy.

Michael Rogers’s approach to scholarship is multifaceted. His knowledge of museum collections of Islamic Art worldwide is unparalleled, and he has worked with archival sources and manuscripts in the libraries of the Muslim world, Europe, and the United States. He has also participated in archeological expeditions: he dug with the Belgian mission at Apamaea-on-the-Orontes/Qal‘at al-Mudiq in Syria and has been responsible for the publication of its medieval Islamic material.

His panoramic scholarly scope is coupled with an unequalled talent for languages. He is fluent in French, Russian, German, Italian, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish and in addition possesses good reading knowledge in many more Eastern and European languages. During his National Service before he attended Oxford he had studied for Civil Service qualification as a Russian interpreter.

The vastness of his scholarship is matched by an equal meticulousness in his research, based on thorough acquaintance with primary sources. His philosophical background notwithstanding, Michael Rogers considers himself a positivist scholar. With a genuinely British contempt of theory for its own sake, he shows what he calls “proper concern for the facts,” a trait that is also responsible for his astonishing erudition. He himself has said that he was probably influenced in this regard by the fact that his father was a naval engineer. Like someone with a passion for engines, Michael often seems to take a subject apart so he can see how it works. Luckily, he then puts it back together again.

Michael Rogers’s list of publications is gigantic and covers the spectrum of the arts of the Muslim world, particularly those of Turkey, Iran, and Central Asia, over the entire Islamic period. To his students, his erudition and the meticulousness of his scholarship have been a challenge and a privilege that the editors of this volume
are grateful to have experienced. The enthusiasm with which colleagues responded to the invitation to contribute to this Festschrift and the amplitude and diversity of scholarship displayed herein are an eloquent testimonio to the esteem in which Michael is held by scholars over the whole field of Islamic art. His generosity and kindness to his students and friends, his multiple talents, and his brilliance have earned him the gratitude and admiration of many.

Michael’s interests are not solely scholarly: he plays the piano and loves detective stories and botany, especially the flora of Turkey, Iran, and Central Asia. He is also an excellent cook and a great host. He lives in central London, surrounded by what he calls “far too many books.”

The Editors

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Proceedings of the Near Eastern History Group, All Souls and St. Anthony’s College, Oxford, Papers in Islamic History, vols. 1–3, as follows:


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The frequent depictions of camel fights over a period of more than four hundred years in Persian and Mughal painting are generally traced back to a miniature in the *Muraqqa-i Gulshan* in the Gulistan Library in Tehran (fig. 1). It bears a lengthy inscription in a cartouche in the upper right-hand corner, to the effect that this “miraculous creation” (*khalqat-i badi‘*) alludes to the Qur’anic verse (88:17): “Do they not look at the camels, how they are made?” It further states that it is the work of the master Bihzad, who turned to the subject when he was more than seventy years old and had attained “the wealth of experience.” Bihzad’s name is accompanied by the formulae of humiliation (*qalam-i shikasta, faqir, nāmurūd*) characteristic of authentic signatures of Persian painters and concludes with a prayer for pardon from Allah.

Since Bihzad died in 942 (1535–36), according to a chronogram in Dust Muhammad’s preface to the Bahram Mirza album, this painting has conventionally been dated “circa 1525.” Binyon, Wilkinson, and Gray wrote in 1931 that “there is no reason to reject the attribution to Bihzad,” noting only that “the drawing of the two fighting camels from Tehran does, perhaps, contain a suggestion of decline.” Most scholars, however, have

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**Fig. 1.** Miniature, with an attribution to Bihzad, Herat, 1540s. Tehran, Gulistan Library, *Muraqqa-i Gulshan*. (After Binyon, Wilkinson, and Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting*, pl. 87a)
treated the attribution with some reserve, while Ivan Stchoukine has decisively rejected it as apocryphal and identifies the painting as a work of the Tabriz school of the 1550s. In his review of Stchoukine’s *Les peintures des manuscrits safavis de 1502 à 1587*, S. C. Welch has also adhered to this view.

Various features of the miniature in the Tehran album indicate, moreover, that it is a copy, not the original. It shows a paler camel in combat with a darker adversary, with onlookers trying to separate them, one on the left with a rope attached to the camel’s foreleg, and one on the right with a stick he holds in his upraised hand. In the background is an elderly man with a spindle and, over his arm, a skein of wool that he is spinning into thread. There is also a spindle in the girdle of the man with the stick. In contrast to other versions of this subject, details have obviously been suppressed: For example, not all the necessary fastenings for the saddlecloths and the camels harness have been drawn in; the drawing of the hind legs of the darker camel lacks conviction; and the inexpressive figure of the right-hand camel driver, weakly brandishing his stick, holds no rope, even though the position of his hands, as on the other versions of the scene, shows that he should have held one. It should also be noted that, in the light of our present knowledge, Persian painters only began to give prominence to their signatures in the later sixteenth century; previously signatures are rare and are always “concealed” in inconspicuous places. This miniature needs thorough examination to determine whether it has been subsequently retouched or partly repainted and also whether the inscription panel has been pasted on or is written on the same paper.

The question of Bihzad’s authorship is not the subject of this article. However, I should like to draw attention to two single sheets showing a couched lion, belled and chained, in the album compiled by Dust Muhammad in 951 (1544–45) for the Safavid prince Bahram Mirza (Topkapi Saray Library H. 2154). One is a tinted drawing with an attribution to Bihzad in Dust Muhammad’s hand; the other is a painted version of the same image. Unlike the drawing, which shows the lion against a background of plain paper, the miniature shows him in a landscape strikingly similar to that of the camel fight in the Tehran album; the same valley covered with rocks and small tufts of grass, the same hillside and trees. Especially interesting is the fact that, exactly as in the Tehran miniature showing the camel fight, the drawing of the hind legs of the lion also
known in the time of the Yueqin (about 200 BC) I am afraid the identification is of no help to us, either in place or time. Nevertheless, it should be noted here that among many depictions of camels in Persian miniatures, only this and a few related drawings (see below) show two-humped or one-and-a-half-humped camels.

We should also note that in the Istanbul drawing the camels are shown foreshortened, one of them from the side and the other from the side in rear view, each biting the other. In the Tehran miniature the camels are both depicted in strict profile, and their entwined necks conform to the laws of symmetry. The whole scene is represented against a landscape, while the ground of the drawing is left blank.

On folio 46a of H. 2153 is another scene of a camel fight (fig. 3), evidently a miniature, which has not so far attracted the attention of scholars, though it shows a symmetrical variant of a fight between two single-humped camels that is closer to the miniature attributed to Bihzad. Here also a pale-colored camel has forced the head of a darker camel to the ground, though its head is barely higher than its opponent’s; the bodies of the two are shown symmetrically, and they are not biting one another. Unfortunately, this miniature, as is clearly visible from the reproduction, has not survived intact, having been cut down on all sides and subsequently filled out at the bottom and sides to fit the dimensions of the album page, with the camels’ legs and the neck of one of them added. Thus we have no idea whether the composition originally included human figures.

Later copies are known of the two variants—the one with complex foreshortening and the other with a symmetrical disposition—each with a different chain of transmission. In the course of time, however, elements from one variant appear in copies of the other,
showing that some painters were familiar with both.

To the first type, represented by the drawing with its complex foreshortening (H. 2153, folio 82b), can be assigned three compositions in which, although the scene is cut down and the human figures suppressed, the central section with the fighting camels is exactly reproduced. One of these is a miniature formerly in the Kraus collection in New York, which has been published by E. J. Grube as a work of the seventeenth-century Isfahan school (fig. 4). A miniature in the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay (fig. 5) is, in Moti Chandra’s view, a Mughal work of ca. 1620. And on the basis of its Qajar style, a page in the Pozzi collection in Geneva has been attributed by B. W. Robinson to nineteenth-century Iran.

In these three works, as in the drawing in H. 2153, the darker camel is gnawing at the haunch of the paler one, which has the other’s leg in its jaws. The former is shown in rear view with its legs wide apart, and the forelegs of the animals are similarly intertwined. The sheets from Bombay and the Kraus collection even share a significant detail with the drawing: the head of the darker camel gnawing at its adversary’s haunch is turned so that only its lower jaw with its pointed teeth is visible. This indicates an indisputable connection with the drawing in H. 2153, as does the fact that in the drawing the lighter camel is shown, although somewhat ineptly, as two-humped. In all these works the saddlecloths on the camels’ backs have rounded edges and drape in soft folds.

Only the Pozzi sheet follows the Istanbul drawing in leaving the background blank. On the Kraus sheet the background is a landscape, with flowering bushes and clouds painted in gold ink in the style of the Isfahan school. Similar bushes appear in the Mughal miniature in Bombay, which shows that the motifs were borrowed from Persian painting, and indeed this may well be a Persian, not a Mughal, work. It is also relevant to note that these two miniatures, from the Kraus collection and from Bombay, are mirror images of the Istanbul drawing, which points to the idea of their execution as facing pages in a *muraqqa*, where they had to observe the accepted law of symmetry, the facing images “looking” at each other.
Fig. 4. Tinted drawing, Isfahan, seventeenth century. Khalili collection, MSS 651.

Fig. 5. Tinted drawing, Mughal or Persian. Bombay, Prince of Wales Museum of Western India. (After Chandra, Indian Art, pl. 35)
Regarding the second, symmetrical type of composition, it should be noted that in addition to the miniature described above on folio 46a of H. 2153 (fig. 3), there is a drawing enhanced with gold wash on folio 91a of the so-called Baysunghur album (Topkapı Saray Library H. 2152), which contains material mainly from the first four decades of the fifteenth century. This unpublished drawing shows a symmetrical variant of the two one-humped camels in combat that is very close in composition to H. 2153, folio 46a. In both drawings the camels have saddlecloths edged with rings.

The second, symmetrical type includes a series of compositions with human figures—even though, as has been remarked, only the central section of the earliest of them, H. 2153 folio 46a, has been preserved. To this series belongs the miniature attributed to Bihzad discussed above (fig. 1), as well as the miniature facing it in the Murqqa‘-i Gulshan (fig. 6), which is signed by the Mughal painter Nanha, who worked for both Akbar and Jahangir, and similarly bears a cartouche in the upper right-hand corner: “This work of the master Bihzad was seen and copied by Nanha-i Musavir according to my orders. Written by Jahangir b. Akbar Padshah Ghazi. The year 1017 [1608–9].” Nanha’s painting was evidently copied—and very exactly at that—from the miniature attributed to Bihzad, for it reproduces all the features of the prototype. We can only suppose that the miniature ascribed to Bihzad came into the possession of Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and was inherited by Jahangir from his father’s library. As for Jahangir’s words, in kār-i ustād Bihzād ki ʿū dida, they may be understood to mean that he knew the author of the drawing to be Bihzad.

Although in the Murqqa‘-i Gulshan the two paintings are on facing pages (wrongly numbered: folio 8 precedes folio 7), they can scarcely have been intended for the same album, because the facing image on a double-page spread is normally reversed. They were thus most probably mounted in the later sixteenth century when, from the mostly Indian material brought back from India by Nadir Shah, a new album was made up for Nasir al-Din Shah. The two drawings have been
expanded at the bottom and on each side to suit the format of the new album.

Yet another embodiment of this second type is the work of 'Abd al-Samad, the Persian painter in Shah Tahmasp's court atelier at Tabriz who in the 1540s was taken into Humayun's service and accompanied him to Kabul and thence to India, where he worked with two of his sons, Sharif Khan and Bihzad. 'Abd al-Samad's miniature (fig. 7) was clearly executed after he reached India, as the "Mughal" faces of the two camel drivers testify, while the background landscape, although close to that of the miniature in the Tehran album, is also Mughal in style. Lentz and Lowry assert that the source of this miniature is "a painting by Bihzad of two camels fighting (c. 1525), which had belonged to Akbar... [and which] was copied around 1585." The iconographic type is that of the two miniatures in the Muraqqa'-i Gulshan; but it is, first, reversed and, second, more detailed and complete: all the fastenings of the back cloths are shown, and both the ropes are attached to the camels' legs. The light-colored camel falls with its full weight on the darker camel, putting its leg over the latter's neck and biting its haunch, a detail taken from the first iconographic
version. Whereas the two paintings in the Muraqqa'-i Gulshan show differences only of detail, the work of 'Abd al-Samad, though including all the basic elements of the composition, shows more radical differences—in the forms of the back-cloths, and in details of dress and landscape. The darker camel is still on its feet, but one of its forelegs is half-bent, whereas in the miniature attributed to Bihzad both legs are bent. 'Abd al-Samad must therefore have been copying some lost or hitherto undiscovered prototype, perhaps actually a work of Bihzad’s. The man spinning wool in 'Abd al-Samad’s miniature has a skein of wool wrapped around his right wrist and holds the spindle in his left hand, unlike most of the depictions of the camel drivers, and one of the drivers is holding a stick in his left hand: these details doubtless point to the reversed copying of a prototype.\textsuperscript{22}

Two tinted drawings—one, of the late sixteenth century, in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and the other, of the seventeenth century, in the collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan in Geneva\textsuperscript{23}—belong to the second type. In these, as in the 'Abd al-Samad painting, the left-hand camel is forcing the head of the other to the ground, though only one camel driver is shown. In the Metropolitan painting he is shown to the left, pulling on a rope attached to the muzzle of the left-hand camel (another detail from the first iconographic type), whereas in the other miniature he is to the right and tugs at a rope attached to the leg of the left-hand beast.

In the second iconographic type, taken as a whole, the painters regularly separate the camels. The miniature on folio 46a of H. 2153 (fig. 3) depicts their bodies twisted into a single oval mass. Evidently, intricately intertwined contours of the camels’ bodies were beyond many painters. Moreover, the painter of folio 46a was not able to depict convincingly the mass of the camel being forced to the ground. It is therefore probable that because of the complexity of the composition (or perhaps for the sake of greater clarity and harmoniousness) the camels came to be shown so that their bodies were distinct and only their necks were intertwined.

Interestingly, among the material in the Diez albums in Berlin, which are related to the contents of H. 2152, H. 2153, and H. 2160, there is an ink drawing (fig. 8)

Fig. 8. Drawing, fifteenth century. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Diez albums. (After Lentz and Lowry, \textit{Timur and the Princely Vision}, cat. no. 68, ill. p. 180)
that is a clear attempt to reproduce yet another version of the theme—one camel trampling the other—possibly by means of a pounced drawing, the traces of which are visible on the photograph. The drawing is unfinished, however, for the draftsman muddled up the lines and abandoned it. This is the only known representation of this compact, non-symmetrical compositional type in miniature painting. The connection of H. 2153 folio 46a (fig. 3) with this drawing is shown by the fact that the saddlecloth of the right-hand camel in each work is identically decorated with an animal. The theme therefore had at least three distinct iconographic types, all going back to drawings in the Istanbul albums H. 2152 and H. 2153 and to the Diez albums in Berlin. One further detail supports the connection of these drawings with the later versions: the clothing of one of the camel drivers—a shirt and baggy trousers that are pushed into his boots. This costume is a conspicuous feature of all the figures in H. 2153, folio 82b, the two miniatures in the Muraqqa’-i Gulshan, the ‘Abd al-Samad miniature, and even the two seventeenth-century tinted drawings, although here this old motif is treated rather more freely.

There are, however, other variants that have no direct prototypes in the Istanbul and Berlin albums. A drawing from the Goloubew collection now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (fig. 9), which was published in the early twentieth century and has not subsequently attracted scholarly attention, is of the symmetrical type, but the camels are shown savagely biting one another’s haunch and leg. Marteau and Vever dated this drawing to the seventeenth century, following the fashion at the time to assign drawings executed in a lively, energetic manner to that period; but this drawing is at least a hundred years earlier.

One further type of camel fight without an earlier model appears on a few seventeenth-to-nineteenth-century drawings. An example formerly in the Kraus collection (fig. 10) is identified by Grube as the work of a late-seventeenth-century Persian painter; the other, in the Archaeological Museum in Tehran, has been attributed by Hajek to the later-seventeenth-century
Mughal school. Here the animals’ bodies are shown parallel, with both of their heads appearing in the left half of the composition; each bites the other’s foreleg. The most substantial difference from the other types discussed is that the camels have no saddlecloths or bridles, and their tails hang free: that is, they are shown as wild. As the earliest of these drawings seems to be the one in the Archaeological Museum in Tehran, ascribed to a Mughal artist, the type possibly originated in Mughal India. It is no wonder that it became popular among the masters of the later-seventeenth-century Isfahan school, when European and Indianizing tendencies became distinctive features and when both Persian and Mughal painters were concerned with depicting gradations of shading and foreshortening. This version of the camel fight was also very popular in the Zand and Qajar periods, which inherited and developed the tendencies of the late Isfahan school.

There were, furthermore, predecessors of the miniatures hitherto ascribed to Bihzad to which the numerous versions of camel fights have been traced back: namely, miniatures and drawings of the fifteenth century executed for Timurid and Turkmen rulers. But in fact the theme goes far back into antiquity. The fighting camels (invariably two-humped) appear frequently in art of the Scythian and Sarmatian periods, or, to use the now-standard term, the art of the Eurasian steppes. The most surprising thing, therefore, is that some of the compositions of the drawings and miniatures described above go back to representational types that evolved in the second and first millennia BC. Although there is a gap of almost two thousand years between these and the drawings we have been discussing, the connection between them is evident.

To judge from the surviving material, the most ancient version is the camels symmetrically disposed, biting one another. This is how they appear on a fragmentary stone amulet from Margiana datable to the second millennium BC, as E. F. Korol’kova has conclusively shown. The same symmetrical variant appears...
on a fine bronze plaque from the fifth- or fourth-century BC barrow burial at Filippovka (fig. 11, left). Thus, the drawing in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (fig. 9), which almost exactly reproduces these ancient compositions, possibly represents the earliest type of camel fight in the mediaeval figural art of Iran. Camels disposed symmetrically with their necks intertwined though they are not biting one another, which appear in a series of miniatures (figs. 1, 3, and 6), go back to a variant represented on medieval rock drawings in Khakasiya (fig. 11, center). Finally, there are plaques of the mid-first millennium BC from western Kazakhstan and the southern Urals that show the heads of the camels at different heights, with one of them biting the hump of its adversary (fig. 11, right). It was evidently this version that the artist of the drawing in the Diez albums (fig. 8) was attempting to reproduce. I have already observed that this type was to have no further development.

The foreshortened version (figs. 2, 4, and 5) has no ancient prototype, and its creation is evidently to be seen as a stylistic evolution of the fifteenth century.31 Here J. M. Rogers’s essay on Muhammad Siyah Qalam, to whom are ascribed many of the drawings in the three Topkapi albums (H. 2152, H. 2153, and H. 2160) is of interest. He drew attention to the striking use of contrapposto in many of the works ascribed to that painter and suggested that it was the result of European influence.32 In that case one might see the version represented by the drawing on folio 82b of H. 2153 (fig. 2) as an evolution or transformation, in accord with the aesthetics of the period, of a preexistent symmetrical version of the fight with the camels biting one another.

Rogers describes another case of contrapposto: “a camel rider, evidently in conversation with another, with a scrawled attribution to Muhammad Siyah Qalam.”33 Interestingly, the pose of the camel in this drawing, foreshortened from the rear and with its head in profile turned to the left, is repeated in a drawing by the well-known seventeenth-century Isfahan painter, Mu’in Musavvir.34 In the latter drawing, as in the miniature attributed to Bihzad, the camel is shown with a turbaned figure standing behind a hillock; in the Mu’in drawing he turns with an energetic gesture to an invisible interlocutor on the left. Evidently only part of Mu’in’s original two-camel composition has survived, since an inscription by the artist now appears in the upper left-hand corner but was originally between the two figures, as is often the case in his works. The inscription states that “these two camels” were drawn by Mu’in Musavvir after the composition (tarḥ) of the master Bihzad Sultani on the night of Wednesday, 28 Shawwal, 1089 (November 25, 1678).

Scholars of Indian and Persian painting have followed the tradition associating the theme of the camel fight with the name of Bihzad. It is difficult, however, to explain Bihzad’s connection with it, or with the material in H. 2153 and other Istanbul albums. Lowry and Lentz have observed that a monk seated under a tree
in one of the miniatures of a manuscript of `Attar’s *Mantiq al-Tayr*, acknowledged by most scholars to be the work of Bihzad, is after a miniature in the album H. 2160, which contains material similar to the contents of H. 2153. The camel fight is yet another strand connecting later works of Persian painting (and Bihzad’s activity as well) with material in the Istanbul albums.

The numerous illustrations of camel fights and their chronological span from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century testify to the popularity of the subject. The coexistence of versions that are reversed and the right way round also shows that they were executed for albums (*muraqqas*). It is quite possible that those who ordered these albums stipulated the range of compositions and subjects for them. This resulted in a sort of “print run” for works by the most outstanding or most highly regarded masters and for favorite or significant subjects, corresponding to the role of prints in contemporary Western Europe. As in Western Europe, moreover, these copies preserved the memory of their famous originals. Camel fights also appear in the applied arts, for example on ceramics and textiles. The appearance of identical subjects on such diverse works of Iranian art and the consistent representation of their basic traditional characteristics over almost three millennia also strongly suggest that they had a particular symbolic importance.

It has sometimes been suggested, unconvincingly, that these depictions of camel fights, like bull or elephant fights, represent traditional court spectacles. If they are spectacles, however, why are the onlookers in the paintings trying to separate the beasts? Why is the scene set in a natural landscape? How do we explain the presence of figures with spindles? And why, if the fight represents a mere diversion, does a Qur’anic verse appear on the miniature in Tehran attributed to Bihzad?

Lentz and Lowry have suggested *à propos* the drawing from the Diez albums in Berlin (fig. 8) that “the motif of fighting camels illustrates in its most elemental form what the artist Sadiqi Beg described at the end of the sixteenth century in his *Qānūn al-Suwār* (The Canons of Painting) as *girift-ü gir*, the ‘give and take’ of animals locked in combat.” Why then are the saddlecloths so richly decorated, and why do the camels often bear loads on their backs? Moreover, these drawings certainly were not a mere exercise to demonstrate the artist’s skill in depicting the difficult poses and movements of the animals interlocked in combat. It seems the time has not yet come to give a definite answer on the meaning of such representations of camel fights. What follows is a mere suggestion.

The treatment of the content of camel fights in Eurasian art is still a matter of dispute, but authors have often noted the frequent mention of camels in the Avesta, where they are described as “possessing exceptional strength and power,” “violent,” and “evil,” which explains the marked “rapacity” of images of camels with teeth bared and the fangs of a beast of prey. In Islam, however, this traditional motif, while retaining the iconography for the camel as laid down in the Avesta, was rethought and given a new content. If we assume that in Islamic art any representation of a creature should in one way or another remind one of God and His creation, the Qur’anic verse in the cartouche of the miniature attributed to Bihzad becomes crucial for the comprehension of the sense of the motif. In Qur’an 88:17–20, the camels exemplify the miracles of God’s creation:

Do they not look at the Camels, how they are made?
And at the Sky, how it is raised high?
And at the Mountains, how they are fixed firm?
And at the Earth, how it is spread out?

A camel also appears in conjunction with a Qur’anic verse on a gold coin struck in Baghdad in 304 (916–17), now in the Hermitage collections. On its obverse is displayed an eagle with a circular legend in the name of the Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadir, while on the reverse is a saddled, two-humped camel with a circular legend bearing Qur’an 9:33 (or 61:9):

It is He who hath sent
His Messenger with Guidance
And the Religion of Truth,
To prevail
Over all Religion,
Even though the Pagans
May detest [it].

The coin of al-Mutawakkil of 241 (855–56), with an image of the caliph on one side and a one-humped camel with its driver on the other, is well known. Numismatists, however, have not yet decided on the reasons for the appearance of these camels on Abbasid coinage. For our purposes, it is interesting that the camel with its driver is also very widespread in medieval Persian painting, with a long chain of representations, though these have not yet been studied iconographically. One miniature on this theme, in the opinion of some scholars, has a religious subtext—humility.
before God. Signed by Shaykh Muhammad and dated 964 (1556–57), it has a frame of verses in cartouches directly relevant to its subject: “If we have tamed the haughty camel within we may lead our mount from the stable, ready to ride in the caravan to the House of God.”42 Clearly this refers not to the camel but to its rider and the humble faith that should lead him to God. In Shaykh Muhammad’s miniature the rich saddle is decorated with winged angels amid clouds, and the saddlecloth with a sun-face and *vaqatiq* ornament.

*The State Hermitage Museum*
*St. Petersburg, Russia*

**NOTES**


3. It is worth noting that the age of seventy is often mentioned in signatures and attributions found in the works of Persian painters and poets. Cf. R. Skelton, “Farrokh Beg,” *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957): 397 and 406, note 25. The inscription on the *Muraqqa*{-i Gulshan page is especially interesting for the association of the age of seventy with “the age of experience.”


16. B. W. Robinson, *Collection Jean Pozzi* (Geneva, 1992), p. 187, fig. 469. My notes, taken years ago in the libraries of Istanbul, suggest that it is this version that is represented in the so-called Shah Tahmasp Album (Istanbul University Library, F. 1422, fol. 45b) and an album in the Topkapi Saray Library, H. 2137, fol. 28a (both unpublished).


with the stick have other analogies in the Istanbul albums. Cf. Grube and Sims, *Between China and Iran*, fig. 69.


31. Nor, incidentally, does the iconographic type shown in fig. 10 have any ancient prototype. As I have already observed, this evolved no earlier than the seventeenth century, most probably in Mughal India.


33. Ibid., fig. 10.

34. E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Painting from the XIII to XIX Century from Collections in the United States and Canada* (Venice, 1962), no. 120. This drawing is now in the Harvard University Art Museums, 273.1983, promised gift of Stuart Cary Welch, Jr.

35. Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, p. 280, fig. 96, cat. no. 154.


Ottoman sultans would view celebrations, entertainments, or sports activities that took place in gardens, squares, or other open-air areas from pavilions or tents set up at locations that overlooked the entire area. Garden pavilions were among the most prominent elements of privy gardens, which belonged to the sultans personally, and in which they could stroll, taste the fruit, or enjoy the beauty. Generally these pavilions were very simple constructions that served the purpose of providing shelter for viewing the gardens where they were located, nature, or entertainment. Varied architectural forms were used. Though very old examples are no longer in existence, we can see these garden pavilions in miniatures that represent privy gardens, where they catch the eye at first glance. The pyramidal-roofed pavilion shown placed at the corner of the garden walls in a miniature from the Külliyyat of Kâtibi and other such pavilions with Sultan Murad III enjoying the view of the shore in his privy garden in Kandilli are examples of a tradition continuous from the fourteenth century until the end of the sixteenth (fig. 1). The pavilion in the garden of the Silivri Palace is on the shore. The facade is opened with round arches to allow a comfortable view of the sea. The sultan is depicted sitting in this pavilion with carafes, plates of fruit, and rows of vases containing carnations, tulips, and purple violets in front of him. A lattice has been placed on the shoreline to conceal him from the eyes of strangers. The red curtains that first draw the viewer’s eye serve to cover the space between the arches in bad weather conditions. A similar garden pavilion is depicted in a miniature dating to the end of the sixteenth century, at a kiosk on the shore of the Topkapı Palace. The architectural principles are the same, but the red curtain has been placed on the exterior of the arches rather than the interior. The spiraling lines seen upon careful observation indicate that the curtain is rolled up to the top.

These kinds of garden pavilions, of which there are many examples, are reminiscent of tents, especially in their ability to extend outward. In a miniature in the 1568–69 Nüzhet-el Essâr el-Ahbâr der Sefer-i Sigetvar, the two skirts forming the front walls of a yurt-style tent, in which Süleyman the Magnificent is depicted granting an audience to the Hungarian envoy, have been opened to the sides. Tents and canopies were also used as impressive stages during important ceremonies, opened in the front to display their rich interior decoration.

The throne upon which the new ruler, Sultan Selim, is enthroned in Belgrade, where he had come following Süleyman the Magnificent’s death on his Sigetvar campaign, has been placed inside a tent of which the skirts have been opened to the sides. In a miniature of the Nusretname depicting the feast given by Lala Mustafa Pasha for the janissary aghas, we see that single-columned tents have replaced the yurt-style ones. In front of the opened skirts of the tent with a red exterior and a green cloth lining on which we can see embroidered patterns, a meal is set up and extends toward the square.

A photograph taken when King Ferdinand of Bulgaria came to visit Istanbul in 1909 shows that Sultan Mehemd V Reshad greeted him in Sirkeci in a single-columned tent, opened in the front to form a stage for the occasion. This tent is today in the Istanbul Military Museum (fig. 2). In this case the tent has been used as a portable garden pavilion opened to the exterior.

The tent in the Bayerisches Armeemuseum in Ingolstadt, Germany, is the most significant example of this kind and constituted a model for future garden pavilions. The opening of the skirts of this single-column, twelve-section tent has been designed with an obvious architectural concern. The three panels at the back are stationary, but the three flanking these on each side are prepared so that their middle pieces can be rolled up and opened without moving the panels themselves. Windows have also been placed on these panels to permit an outside view without opening the entire tent; the one in the center has been prepared as a door. A
Fig. 1. Sultan Murad III receiving news of victory in the garden kiosk of his privy garden in Kandilli. Seḥiṣāhnāme, TSM B200, fol. 98b. (Photo: after Atasoy, Garden for the Sultan, p. 28, fig. 3)

Fig. 2. Sultan Mehmed V Reshad greets the visiting Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria, March 21, 1909, outside a tent set up in front of the Sirkeci train station. (Photo: after Resimli Kitap 2, 9 [1909]: 947)
fourth group of three panels can also be opened by rolling up the middle parts, but unlike the other groups of three, which can all be rolled up to open to the exterior, this one has windows on only two panels.9

This tent immediately reminds one of the garden pavilions called “tent pavilions.” Although very few examples have survived, the fact that garden pavilions based on this tent model continued to be made until the nineteenth century indicates that a large number of such tents were produced. The tent pavilion in Sadabad, in Kâğıthane, Istanbul, fully exhibits the transformation of the tent into architecture: the struts inserted into the textile sockets between the sections of the tent have been turned into marble columns, and the top of the tent into a baroque roof. Between the arches are curtains that can be rolled up or down as described above. The point here is the extent that tents have influenced architecture as much as the opposite (fig. 3).10 The old, round tent pavilion that was taken down in 1816 and the cloverleaf-shaped tent pavilion built during the reign of Mahmud II to replace it also testify to this phenomenon.

In a miniature that depicts the imperial tent complex set up for the princes’ circumcision festivities held in Okmeydani in 1720, during the reign of Ahmed III (fig. 4), as well as in other depictions of imperial tent complexes, we can see bower-shaped tents that serve11 as tower pavilions, which had existed in palace architecture (for example, the Tower of Justice in the Topkapı Palace and the Cihannûma in the Edirne Palace) since the Saljuq period (fig. 5). Simpler and smaller constructions, these bowers are actually mere garden pavilions. In a miniature in the Hamsa of Nevai dated to 1530,12 we can see an example of a bower-type garden pavilion, which allows a wide view of the outside, turned into a tower pavilion. There are many examples of more developed garden pavilions transformed into tower pavilions: it is sufficient to look at the tower pavilions among the garden kiosks in the gardens made of candy depicted in the Sûrnâme of Ahmed III. An example in the form of a simple bower can be seen in the Gaznevi album:13 here the pavilion, with a dome in the center of its roof, stands on four columns with fencing between them at the bottom and, at the top, curtains that cover the space when necessary. Actually the İftariye Kasrı at the Topkapı Palace, built in 1640 for viewing the Golden Horn from the terrace between the Circumcision Chamber and the Baghdad Kiosk, is nothing more than a simple bower-shaped garden pavilion.14 It can also be considered as a throne, just as the portable Eventide Throne of Ahmed I,15 which is gorgeously decorated with mother-of-pearl and has a
A small dome over four columns, can be viewed as a garden pavilion.

The depiction of the mostly imaginary gardens and garden pavilions in the wall decorations of the harem in the Topkapi Palace reflects the fancy of nineteenth-century artists. Water is an important element in these imagined gardens, which are situated on the edge of pools, rivers, or the sea. Featuring symmetrically arranged geometric flowerbeds and large pots of what seem to be lemons or oranges, the pavilions are sited either very near shores or extending over the water, supported on submerged posts. They are almost completely open on the sides, under roofs supported by columns. Their arches also have rolled-up curtains and wooden window shutters, half of which have been opened downward and half upward. Both the curtains and the shutters can be opened or closed as desired. The garden pavilions in these depictions constitute very large kiosks or even palaces. The pictures emphasize that they are furnished with divans aligning with the windowills, and therefore that people are meant to sit in them and look at their surroundings. We witness that even in these imaginary buildings, the main
principles of the tradition of garden pavilions, developed in connection with tent folklore, are continued.

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NOTES

2. TSM, B. 200, fol. 98b; see Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 3, p. 28.
3. TSM, A. 3595, fol. 13a; see Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 9, p. 31.
4. TSM, B. 200, fol. 149a; see Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 10, p. 31.
6. TSM, H. 1339, fol. 110b–111a; see Atasoy, *Tents*, p. 16.
7. TSM, H. 1365, fol. 34a; see Atasoy, *Tents*, p. 17.
8. Military Museum, Istanbul, inv. no. 26537; see Nurhan Atasoy, *Otaği Hümayun: Osmanlı çadrları = Imperial Ottoman Tents* (Istanbul, 2000), p. 147, fig. 77; also see *Resimli Kitap* 3, 17 (Mart 1326 [March 1910]): 468. Photographs of same tent are also in the same issue, p. 453, and in *Resimli Kitap* 2, 9 (Haziran 1325 [June 1909]): 947.
12. TSM, H. 801, fol. 134a; see Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 4, p. 29.
13. Istanbul Univ. Library T 5461; see Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 11, p. 31.
15. Atasoy, *Garden*, fig. 16, p. 34.
The main characteristic of the art of painting in the Islamic world—be it in a manuscript, in an album, or on a wall—is its dependence, directly or indirectly, on a textual or oral narrative. The most important sources for the thematic inspiration of Islamic painting have predominantly been the masterpieces of Persian literature. The iconographic canons of Islamic painting were founded on repeatedly copying core texts and freely circulating interrelated networks of images. On the one hand, the scenes, figures, settings, and symbols that were developed around these models provided artists with a repertory of ready-made images; on the other hand, they restricted artists in establishing new iconographic and stylistic interpretations. The possibility for images to “wander” through different texts and serve as visual markers largely depended on the artist’s skills and his iconographical interpretation. I have discussed elsewhere how Muslim painters responded to well-known imagery to formulate their own archetypes and visually modify established ones. In this essay, I will examine how some Ottoman painters used both earlier and contemporary images in highly innovative ways to invent their own paintings. Here, I will introduce another method of adoption of earlier images—the art of collage, both pictorial and literal. This method allowed the artist to transform the images developed for one narrative to illustrate another, or to actually cut out the images from one manuscript and paste them into a different one.

The first group consists of imagery inspired by both written and oral sources available to the painter that were modified into “new” representations. Although it is generally assumed that the subject matter of a book painting is understood by referring to the accompanying narrative, it is not always possible to decipher the theme of a painting or some of the iconographic details by merely reading the text. The rich iconographic themes and associations available to both the artist and the viewer is often no longer entirely clear as many visual codes have lost their direct or indirect meaning within the constant change in cultural references. One should, therefore, investigate other visual or textual sources that informed the collective memory of the painter.

A lavishly illustrated copy of the *İskendernâme* of the Ottoman poet Ahmedî (d. 1413), which is now housed in Venice Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (attributed to 1460–70, and to the Ottoman city of Edirne), includes two paintings of the *mi'raj*, or miraculous ascension to heaven, of the Prophet Muhammad. From the fourteenth century on, representations of the *mi'raj* appear in several different literary texts. Except for small variations, the main iconographical scheme of these scenes hardly changes. In earlier examples, the Prophet’s face is shown, while in later ones, it is replaced by a flaming halo and veil; in some instances, his whole body is shown as a holy light. He rides on his human-headed mule, Buraq, and is escorted by Archangel Gabriel, who leads the way. At times, the city of Mecca and the Ka’ba are depicted in the lower part of the painting.

One of the two depictions of the *mi'raj* in the Venice *İskendernâme* follows the traditional model. The other painting, however, introduces new details (fig. 1). In the painting, the sky is filled with angels, golden stars, and clouds, while the riderless Buraq stands in the center. With his finger in his mouth, a generic gesture of astonishment, the angel Gabriel gazes at the Prophet. At the upper left, the unveiled Prophet, standing in a halo of golden flame, is looking towards the right, where a hand set in golden light has appeared. In the text, the *mi'raj* is mentioned twice, but none of the verses explain the meaning of the extended hand.

The possible narrative and pictorial sources for this unusual element can be traced to earlier and contemporary works. For instance, a sixteenth-century Turkish translation of *Maʿāricīl-nubūwāt* (Ascensions of Prophethood), written a century earlier by Muʿin of Herat, informs us about “the hand” and its possible meaning in the painting. According to the text, during the *mi'raj*, when the Angel Gabriel leads the Prophet to safety
in the Sidretül-müntehe (Seventh Heaven), he departs, claiming that this is the last place he is allowed to enter, and that “if he goes forward a finger further, he would be burned.” Following these words, the text relates that another angel extends his hand from a veil and takes the Prophet. Although the hand is not specifically mentioned, another Ottoman text, written by a contemporary of Ahmedî, refers to the angel helping the Prophet to the other side of a veil. The artist’s inclusion of this iconographic element must have been inspired by one of these texts or by the traditions from which they stemmed, which were familiar to the collective cultural memory. Ernst Grube has suggested that the source for the extended hand may have been early Christian and Byzantine paintings. As it is almost certain that no Muslim painter would depict the hand of God in flesh, Christian religious images could have served as a model for the Ottoman artist’s curious iconographic addition. Although we cannot be certain if the artist had visited a church or seen a Christian illustrated manuscript first-hand, it is tempting to propose that Christian religious imagery was known among Muslims in the fifteenth century. This unusual representation of the Prophet’s night journey attests to the availability of diverse visual and literary sources that formed the artist’s visual memory. Moreover, he did not automatically translate the given text into picture, but his response to it was enriched by several pictorial and iconographic sources.

In another illustration from Ahmedî’s Iskendernâme, mentioned earlier, both the author and the painter adopt a previously established model. The main literary sources for Ahmedî constituted Iskandar’s relatively short life-story in Shâhnâma of Firdawsi (d. 1020?), and the Iskandarnâma, the long masnavî of Nizami (d. 1209?). In the selection of themes and iconography, the illustrative programs of Ahmedî’s Iskendernâme also rely heavily on the models developed for both the Iskandar cycle in the Shâhnâma and Nizami’s Iskandarnâma. For instance, in several chapters in Ahmedî’s poem, Iskender’s feats of slaying gigantic dragons are narrated, in order to portray his extraordinary powers and intelligence. In one of these stories Iskender, after conquering India, spends his time hosting courtly gatherings and enjoying the springtime. During one of the royal celebrations, an envoy from Sind arrives, complaining about a dragon that has inflicted great suffering on all the men and animals of his country. Iskender accepts the envoy’s invitation to Sind to save the people from their misery. After observing the creature’s habits for a while, Iskender constructs a wooden chariot with a thousand iron hooks coated with poison. He drinks the antidote for the poison on the hooks, enters the carriage, and drives toward the dragon, who attacks the oxen pulling the cart. At this moment, Iskender slashes the dragon with his sword. The enraged creature now tries to attack the carriage itself, but the poisoned hooks penetrate his mouth and head. Iskender dismounts and delivers the last, lethal wounds to the dragon, first with his sword and then with his arrow. The painting in the Venice manuscript (fol. 90b) includes all the iconographic details of the text (fig. 2).

A similar event, accomplished by a different famed protagonist, Prince Isfandiyar, occurs in Firdawi’s Shâhnâma. Isfandiyar, the son of Shah Gushtasp, has to undergo seven dangerous ordeals on his way to the
Brazen Hold. His aim is to rescue his sisters, who have been imprisoned and held by the Turanian Arjasp. His third ordeal comprises slaying a vicious dragon. As with Ahmedî’s Iskender, the prince has a horse-pulled wooden carriage with swords protruding from its sides. When Isfandiyar meets the dragon, the monster tries to devour the entire chariot, but the blades stick in its throat. Weakened by loss of blood, the creature finally succumbs to Isfandiyar. Ahmedî therefore appropriates Isfandiyar’s attributes, with some minor modifications, for his own hero, Iskender, to underline his courage and skill. Like the poet, the artist, probably working in Edirne, has drawn on the visual models developed for the Isfandiyar story in the *Šâhnâma*. When comparing the illustration in the Venice Ahmedî to one of the numerous representations of Isfandiyar’s feat in the *Šâhnâma* (fig. 3), one can observe their shared iconography, even though the styles are quite different. Thus, both poet and artist appropriate a series of established literary and pictorial elements and transfer them to a different context, where they acquire new meanings and associations. Ahmedî’s poem was composed both as an account of the legendary life story of Iskender and as an encyclopedic compendium of medieval knowledge. In creating his narrative, the author/poet used several scientific texts available to him. One of the most important sources of his chapters on geographical, astrological, botanical, and other scientific fields was probably the *Ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā’ib al-mawjūdāt* (The Wonders of Creation and the Peculiarities of Existing Things) of Qazwini (1203–83). Ahmedî’s exposure to Qazwini and other geographical texts must have played an important role in the stories in which the marvels...
of creation take part as secondary characters. In fact, Ahmedî was not alone in using these anecdotes: even the earliest Greek Alexander romances contain tales in which Alexander encounters such marvels, who reside in exotic islands of the eastern seas. Ahmedî’s work continues to be a part of this intertextuality by describing Iskender’s adventures in these islands, which he usually conquers after confronting and fighting with the inhabitants. The strange physical features and habits of these foreign populations were already known to the poet and his audience through encyclopedic texts such as Qazwini’s. This familiar body of literature also informed contemporary visual culture: like the author, the painter utilized these geographical and encyclopedic texts, at times repeating and replicating their illustrations, and at times adding new protagonists and motifs and adapting them to the new texts.

In one of the Ahmedî’s stories about Iskender, the hero is on an exotic Indian island, where he attempts to conquer a crystal castle guarded by creatures with human bodies and dog heads. A painting in a copy of the Iskendernâme dated to 1500 and attributed to Turkman Shiraz illustrates this anecdote (fig. 4). The dog-headed inhabitants defending the magical castle are identical to the ones in a contemporary illustrated copy of Qazwini’s ‘Ajā’īb al-makhluqât, also from Shiraz (fig. 5). While identifying the original image is difficult (and not necessarily important for my purpose here), both of these images clearly originate from a common visual repertory.
Although Ahmedî does not give the name of the island where the dog-headed people live, Qazwini introduces them, through a sailor who informs the traveler Ya‘qub about them, as residents of Saksar Island in the Sea of Zanzibar. These wild creatures capture strangers and fatten them until they are ready to be devoured. Warned by an older captive, the sailor avoids eating and survives because he remains unappetizing to the creatures. He finally escapes by hiding under the trees, where the dog-headed people cannot reach him, and arrives in an area with different fruit trees inhabited by handsome creatures. One of them jumps on his shoulders, firmly locks his soft, boneless legs around the sailor’s neck, and drives him like an animal from one tree to another so that he may eat fruit. Even when blinded by a tree branch, the creature does not release the sailor, who finally escapes by making his captor drink an excessive amount of “grape juice,” which loosens his legs. Ahmedî also adopts the concept of the “soft legs” for one of the adventures of Iskender: returning from Russia, the hero fights in Khorasan with an army of demons, and in the course of a violent battle, one of them jumps onto his shoulders, wraps his legs like a “strap of leather” around Iskender’s neck, and does not let him to move; Iskender can neither speak nor recite the prayer invoking help. Finally, when the hero thinks he is doomed to fail, an angel descends from the heavens and releases him.

The painting depicting Iskender and the leather-strap-legged demon in the Venice Iskendernâme recalls the Saksar Island native driving the sailor (fig. 6), except for Iskender’s horse (fig. 7). The iconographic similarity of the two illustrations suggests once more the existence of a common and established imagery, which must have guided artists illustrating different texts as to which scenes to depict and how to render them in the canonical iconographic mode. By adopting and recasting certain images according to the narration of the new text, artists transferred them from one manuscript to another and, more importantly, developed new versions of them.

The second group of images migrating from one text to another differs in terms of technique and methods of adaptation. Here, new images were created by literally pasting existing works into new contexts. The practice of assembling paintings and calligraphic works into an album has had a long tradition in the Islamic lands. Originating in Timurid Iran in the fifteenth century, the creation of albums—collections of separate folios, whether paintings or calligraphy, that were not integral parts of books or texts—had spread to Ottoman Turkey and become an important genre of artistic expression by the mid-sixteenth century. Although the examples I will discuss are related to this album tradition in terms of technique, they are quite different in concept and intention: in these cases, the artist takes an earlier manuscript illustration or some element of it and pastes it into a different manuscript, either on its own or in combination with other cut-out images, to illustrate a new narrative.

The first examples of this technique are from the earliest extant illustrated copy of Ahmedî’s Iskendernâme, apparently the first illustrated manuscript produced for Ottoman patrons. Now in the Bibliothèque nationale
de France, it was completed in 1416, in the most important Ottoman provincial city of the age, Amasya. Only three of its twenty-one illustrations are painted on the pages of the manuscript. To fill the spaces reserved for the other illustrations, the rest consist of pasted-on fragments put together to form a scene, with added plain colors and plant or floral decoration. One of these collage paintings (fol. 134b) depicts the arrival of Iskender on Rayic Island in the Indian Ocean (fig. 8). In this composition, only the ships and the sea with fish are actually painted on the page; the figures have been cut from at least two different illustrated manuscripts typical of Inju and Jalayirid ateliers of the fourteenth century. The artist of the Iskendernâme manuscript has excised an enthronement scene, probably from either a copy of the Şâhnâma or one of the historical texts abundantly produced in both Shiraz and Baghdad during the fourteenth century. He has then pasted the image of the enthroned ruler flanked by his courtiers onto his own painting of the ship, and those of other figures available to him onto the other ships, thus transforming the scene into one depicting Iskender and his courtiers exploring the Indian Ocean. In fact, the collage illustration relates directly to the verses above the painting, which explain Iskender’s curiosity.
for marvels, and how his men worked day and night to construct the ships, and that when the ships were ready, he set off for his quest.  

Another painting (fol. 333a) from the same manuscript depicts the bier of Iskender and the mourning of his death (fig. 9). According to the text, when Iskender understands that his death is close, he writes a letter to his mother, Rukiya, to comfort her and to request that his coffin be taken to Egypt and buried. When his body is brought to his house in Egypt, Rukiya approaches his coffin, rests her head on it, and mourns for her son. Later, the sages recite laments for him. The painting, which is in extremely damaged condition, has been assembled in accordance with the narrative. The setting was actually painted on the page by the artist of the Iskendernâme; it shows a coffin in front of a niche with two candlesticks and a lamp, all drawn horizontally. A figure of a woman is pasted diagonally on the coffin, to represent Rukiya leaning over it. The “grieving” men and women consist of seated figures cut from other manuscripts. In order to lend the painting a sense of visual uniformity, the ground of both the original painting and the pasted fragments is covered with a single color.

Another Ottoman manuscript, a three-volume prose translation of the Shâhnâma of Firdawsî now in Istanbul University Library, includes illustrations created in the same manner. The text is not a literal translation of the Shâhnâma and comprises several abbreviations and interpolations. According to the colophon at the end of the first volume (fol. 569a), it was copied in Ramadan 1187 (November 1773) by Seyyid Derviş Mustafa. For its illustrations, paintings in various styles were taken from at least ten manuscripts of different texts, including the Persian Shâhnâma and its Turkish translations. Considered thematically appropriate for the new volume, most of these paintings were used without any change, or with minor additions in accordance with the text.

A late-sixteenth or early-seventeenth-century Safavid painting of a royal reception scene portrays an enthroned ruler conversing with courtiers. It is reused to illustrate a specific enthronement scene, with only slight modification: a veil introduced to hide the face of the figure sitting on the throne (fig. 10). The Turkish text claims that the ruler Bahman has died leaving no heir to the throne except his pregnant wife. His viziers and noblemen decide to enthrone Bahman’s wife Humay until she gives birth to the future ruler. Humay sits on the throne “with a veil on her face” and gives robes of honor to the nobles, who recognize her as their ruler and celebrate her enthronement. The painting, originally representing a male, is therefore transformed into an illustration of the female ruler Humay.

Some of the illustrations in the manuscript were created by reusing not whole paintings but fragments, which were repainted and assembled like a collage. An image in the third volume, for instance, consists of three different pieces and some overpainting. The exact subject matter of this “new” painting is not easily decipherable from its accompanying text (fig. 11).
Fig. 10. Humay sits on the Iranian throne. *Tercüme-i Şehnâme-i Firdowsî*. Istanbul University Library, T. 6133, fol. 728b.

Fig. 11. Faramarz tries to convince Hum to go with him to the encampment of Rustam. *Tercüme-i Şehnâme-i Firdowsî*. Istanbul University Library, T. 6133, fol. 594a.
represents the meeting of Faramarz and the sage-hero Hum. The text relates how Faramarz, Rustam’s son, tries to convince Hum to go with him to Rustam’s encampment before Afrasiyab (the Turanian ruler) and his army arrive. The devout Hum refuses and insists on staying at his place of worship, awaiting the enemy. Faramarz sets off to meet his father and Kay Khusraw and urge them to wage war against Afrasiyab. A major part of the illustration, at the left, is probably from a historical Ottoman manuscript of the second part of the sixteenth century; it shows a person kneeling in front of a polygonal building with a cupola over a high drum. Three palm trees rise behind the structure. Two young attendants stand behind the kneeling figure, and two more men wait at the other side of the building. In its new context, the building, which originally probably represented a mausoleum, has been recast as Hum’s shrine. This main part of the illustration is accompanied by two smaller painted fragments on the right side, one overlapping the other. The lower piece, which relates stylistically to the main part on the left, depicts a horse with three attendants and a groom. The upper one, too fragmentary to be identifiable, shows parts of a man, a horse, and some tents in front of a hill, above which the artist has added two storks. A figure representing the protagonist Faramarz is pasted onto the center front. His face and the details of his armor are repainted, and a big feather is added to his helmet to provide him with an impressive appearance in tune with his heroic character in the narrative. In fact, this refurbished attire is used throughout the manuscript to transform ordinary figures into the celebrated heroes of the Shāhnāma. The added dark green ground, extending from where Faramarz stands to the right-hand edge of the painting and roughly matching the original green ground to the left, joins and unifies the two parts. On the left, the artist has also added a third palm tree and a second cypress to enlarge the main fragment to fit the space left for the illustration. Another curious addition here and in other paintings of the manuscript is the modification of the turbans of the figures. Especially when the artist reuses Ottoman paintings, he carefully paints over the caps around which the turbans are wrapped, transforming them into longer batons (like the ones worn in Safavid Iran), considered more accurate for the Iranian characters of the Shāhnāma.

A further example of how cut-out images circulated amongst Ottoman manuscripts is evident in another eighteenth-century work, again a Persian classic translated into Turkish. The Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî was copied in 1197 (1783), but unfortunately the translator’s name is not given in the text. The paintings are taken from at least seven or eight Iranian and Ottoman manuscripts; some have been only slightly altered, by expanding them to fit the space reserved for the painting. At times, images are used “as is,” without any additions, but they are altered in their context: a princely figure on a hunt is transformed into Shirin hunting, disguised as a man (fol. 109b), and a school interior in a sixteenth-century Ottoman painting becomes a scene of Layla and Majnun at school (fol. 137a).

Another scene, originally depicting Yusuf being sold
to an old woman, has been modified to represent the envoy of Ibn Selam demanding the hand of Layla for his master, complementing the accompanying text (fig. 12). Probably originally part of a copy of Jami’s *Haft Awrang*, the reconfigured painting has become an illustration of a completely different story. To disguise the flaming halo of Yusuf, the area around the prophet’s head has been overpainted in light purple, roughly matching the original color of the ground. Added tents scattered about the scene suggest the nomadic encampment where the event took place.

The last example, from the same eighteenth-century Ottoman manuscript, consists of two fragments of paintings with different provenances, one of which has been enlarged at the top. The illustration depicts Khusraw listening to Shapur’s description of Princess Shirin (fig. 13). According to the text, when Khusraw’s father wrongly suspected his son of plotting against him to seize the throne, Khusraw fled Iran, unaware that Shirin was on her way to meet him there. During Khusraw’s stay in Armenia, Queen Mihin Banu held many royal receptions for the prince. During one, in which musicians and dancers entertained and cup-bearers distributed wine in goblets of gold and silver, Shapur told Khusraw the story of Shirin: how she had fallen in love with his portrait, which Shapur had painted and shown to her, and how she had left for Iran to meet him. Residing in one of Khusraw’s splendid palaces, she was suffering from loneliness and was saddened that she had failed to recognize the prince when their paths crossed. When Khusraw heard this story, he ordered Shapur to go to Iran and bring her back.24

The fragment pasted onto the left part of the painting is from a sixteenth-century manuscript from Shiraz and depicts figures dancing in an interior. Although they resemble Sufis in a trance rather than dancers at a royal gathering, the artist must have deemed the image appropriate, since the text mentions dancers and musicians. The fragment on the right can be attributed on stylistic grounds to a late-fifteenth-century Shirazi manuscript. It shows a young enthroned ruler and an elderly figure talking to him, who must represent Khusraw and Shapur. The faces of the young attendants have been retouched and the baldachin throne probably added by the artist-refurbisher of the composition. Since the event takes place during the wintertime, the ground has been covered with a dark color to indicate the season.

This survey of “new” paintings created out of migrating images demonstrates that the dependency on canonical and trans-cultural imagery hardly prevented artists from interpreting illustrations from a different and personal perspective. Existing illustrations were used in a variety of innovative ways and integrated both physically and conceptually into new compositions. As the first group of examples illustrate, they became constituents of the artist’s visual memory and enriched his iconographic interpretations. The second group of examples shows how the paintings themselves, both in their entirety and as fragments, were used in new contexts. Islamic artists used these two methods to produce “new” images according to their contextual objectives and in accordance with the textual narrative. Judging by the examples at hand, the first technique—the adoption of certain visual codes or images belonging to an intertextual and intervisual network of common memory—was a wider phenomenon, whereas the sec-

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The migration of images by these methods created visual forms to be copied and refashioned in accord with new texts and new contexts to be illustrated, a phenomenon that deserves to be evaluated as a special form of creative activity overcoming the visible constraints on artistic expression.

**NOTES**


4. Fol. 12a. This rich mi’raj scene, painted with precious pigments, follows fifteenth-century Timurid and Turkman models in its depiction of the Ka’ba and the city of Mecca, Muhammad riding Buraq, and the sky filled with golden clouds and several angels. For a reproduction, see Ernst Grube, “A Unique Turkish Painting of the Fifteenth Century,” in E. Grube, Studies in Islamic Painting (London, 1995), fig. 2.

5. Delâ’il-i ni’ibwet-i Muhammedi ve Şemâli’i Fütûvwet-i Ahmedi, transl. Muhammed es-şehir be-Altuparmak. I am grateful to Gönül Tekin for drawing my attention to this text and letting me consult the manuscript in Gönül and Şinasi Tekin’s private library.

6. The Halidünâme of Abdülvâsı Celebi, a verse account of the life of Abraham, dedicated to Sultan Mehmend I (r. 1413–21), includes a lengthy narration of the mi’raj of Muhammad, where a similar event is mentioned. Halidünâme: Abdülvâsı Celebi, ed. A. Gülşas (Ankara, 1996), p. 453.


11. For the text, see Unver, Iskender-nâme, ll. 3507–34.


13. Zakariyya al-Qazwini, ‘Aji’il al-makhlâqat wa-qūbarî el-maw’jūdat, ed. F. Sa’di (Beirut, 1977), pp. 173–74. I am grateful to Dr. Ayman El-Desouky for his help with the Arabic text. The same adventure was also narrated in the Arabiani Nights, this time attached to Sinbad the Sailor (Richard F. Burton, Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights’ Entertainments: New Entitled The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night, 12 vols. [London, 1885], vol. 5, pp. 50–53) attesting to the fact that Qazwini was not the only source that could have been used by the poet. However, concerning the visual vocabulary, one should consider the lavish production of illustrated copies of the Arabic and Persian ‘Aji’il, which would have been much more available to the painter’s memory.


15. Vassali and fassali were the terms defining two techniques practiced by Muslim artists of the book. The first was used for rearranging papers on a new page, the other for setting margins in a manuscript or an album. See Yves Porter, Painters, Paintings, and Books: An Essay on Indo-Persian Technical Literature, 12–19th Centuries, trans. S. Butani (New Delhi, 1994), pp. 118–19.


20. The Istanbul University Library has been closed since the earthquake of August 17, 1999. From that unfortunate day on, not even microfilms of manuscripts have been available. Therefore I was unable to reexamine the volumes, and I cannot give comprehensive information on the content of the text. I rely on the notes I took at the library several years ago, realizing that they are hardly sufficient for a thorough insight into the text of the manuscript, which deserves a detailed study.

21. In Firdawsi’s Shāhānāme, Bahaman (the son of Isfandiyar) is dying because of an illness, and although he has a son (Sasan), he appoints his daughter and wife, Humay, with whom he is passionately in love, as his legal heir. Humay, who is pregnant, ascends to the throne and, being a powerful
and ambitious sovereign, continues to rule even after she gives birth to Bahman’s son, the future Shah Darab. She lays her baby boy in an ark made by the most skillful carpenter of Iran and sends it off in a river (Warner and Warner, *Shahnama of Firdausi*, vol. 5, pp. 290–96). The story differs in several details in the Istanbul University *Tercüme-i Şehnâme*: Azer (Bahman’s brother?) kills Bahman together with a dragon and sends his body to Iran. Since Bahman does not have a son to succeed him, the nobles choose his pregnant wife as their ruler. The translator adds, with reference to “some traditions,” that Bahman was married to his own daughter, which was allowed by the “Pahlavi” religion. The veil worn by Humay seems to be one of several Ottoman additions. The rest of the story, however, parallels the original *Shahnâmâ* (T. 6133, fol. 728b).

22. T. 6133, fol. 594a. The story of Faramarz and Hum in the Turkish *Tercüme-i Şehnâme* is markedly different from that in Firdausi’s original. Hum plays an important role in the execution of Afrasiyab in the *Shahnâmâ*, where he is introduced as a sage living on a mountain who coincidentally finds Afrasiyab in a cave and captures him. Unlike Firdausi, the “translator” of the Turkish version puts specific emphasis on Faramarz here and in several other episodes, which suggests the influence of a *Farâmarzânâmâ* text. Cf. Warner and Warner, *Shahnama of Firdausi*, vol. 4, pp. 259–69.

23. Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1115. Another volume of the *Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizâmi* in a private collection features similar calligraphy. It was published by Géza Fehér-vári in “An Illustrated Turkish Khamsa of Nizâmi,” in *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. G. Fehér (Budapest, 1978), pp. 323–37. Unfortunately, it is not noted if the paintings are original or pasted. However, one of the paintings in particular (fig. 8 in Fehér-vári’s article) seems to be a collage of two fragments.

Palatial tower structures in garden settings have long been a familiar part of the architectural landscape of Iran and its neighbors. They are to be found illustrated in miniatures dating back to the fourteenth century, such as that in the 1396 Divân of Khwaju Kirmani depicting Humayun greeting Prince Humay from a tower set within a walled garden. Multistoried pavilions with lavish decoration in the Timurid gardens of Herat are also described in various sources. In Safavid Isfahan, Chardin among other travelers noted the existence of various pavilions, kiosks, and octagonal lodges in the pleasure gardens of Sa‘adatabad and Hazar Jarib during his visit between 1673 and 1677. In his panorama of Isfahan, Kaempfer in 1712 records a multistoried structure on axis with the Hasht Bihisht within the Gulistan Gardens.

This architectural tradition carried on into the Qajar period, during which tower structures continued to be part of palace complexes. Numerous examples can be found described in the sources. For example, Fath ‘Ali Shah built an octagonal tower that was used as his khwâbgâh (sleeping quarters) in the andarûn (women’s quarters) of the Arg in Tehran. Bassett records another in the palace at Sulaymaniyya at Karaj, previously mentioned by Eastwick:

The conspicuous objects in the village [Karaj] are an imposing gateway and a palace of the Shah out of which the high tower of the King’s chamber rises as at Sultaneah and in other palaces.

Following this practice, Nasir al-Din Shah commissioned his architects to include towers in some of his palaces that formed part of his extensive building program, not only in the capital but also in the provincial centers. Several noteworthy articles have discussed these palace complexes in some detail, but little attention has been given to the towers that were used as the khwâbgâh of the shah. In practical terms, they reflected the shah’s continuing concern for his personal security: by placing his sleeping quarters within a tower, he could easily restrict access to them. Feuvière, the shah’s personal physician from 1889 to 1892, recorded in his account of life at the court that none of the rooms had a designated use, and that the shah moved randomly from room to room. Also, Bennett remarked that the royal bedchamber was always carefully guarded. It must be remembered that a deep fear of assassination permeated the Qajar monarchy, ever mindful of the fate that had befallen the founder of the dynasty, Agha Muhammad Khan, who was assassinated while asleep in his tent in 1789. Nasir al-Din Shah was even more concerned with security after the attempt on his life in 1852, and later these fears proved to be well founded: he was assassinated while at prayers in 1896.

The towers commissioned by Nasir al-Din Shah include Shams al-Imara (1866–67) in the Arg in Tehran; Shams al-Imara (1869–70) at Bandar Anzali; the towers within the palace grounds of Saltanatabad (1857–58) and ‘Ishratabad (1874), located in the outskirts of Tehran; and the tower at Bagh-i Shah (1860–80), situated in the shah’s racecourse in western Tehran. They were generally four to six stories high and formed part of an ensemble of buildings in a garden setting. The upper story generally was an open gallery, or jâhn-nâmā, with the penultimate floor being used as a shâh-nîshân, the private quarters of the shah. There was usually a small pool, or hâwz-khânâ, on the ground floor. Each of these elements can be recognized as a staple part of the architectural vocabulary of Iran since Timurid times. European architectural elements were also grafted onto these traditional structures, which thus present a curious amalgam of both the traditional and the modern in terms of their architecture, building methods, and materials. The form of their structure was dictated by their function, but through the use of new materials, the architects experimented with new floor plans, elevation treatments, and roof designs, adapting traditional construction methods.

The palatial towers were constructed of fired brick,
a building material used in Iran since ancient times, with a mortar of lime and sand on a compacted stone foundation. Wood was used for doors, window frames, and balustrades and, in the case of Anzali, for all the gallery floors and supporting columns. The exteriors were generally rendered and decorated with tiled panels. Better transport facilities and communications during the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah meant that architects could now procure materials that would previously have been impossible or too expensive to obtain, enabling them to build higher and longer-lasting structures than before. The availability of wood meant that it could be used structurally to achieve greater height through the emplacement of wooden rafters, rather than the more traditional use of thick brick walls to support cellular spaces created by vaulting. The introduction of sheet metal meant that this could now be used for roof covering, providing a lighter load for the building to carry and offering better protection against the elements.

Internally, these buildings were also decorated in a mixture of traditional Persian and contemporary European styles. The use of ‘aynak kārī, small pieces of mirror inserted into plaster, was to be found alongside that of large mirrored panes. Tiles were also used in the traditional manner to decorate the interiors, and their designs either were based on traditional motifs or depicted subjects contemporary with the fashions of the age.

These features all account for what has been termed the Perso-European appearance of the buildings, which was very much a reflection of the patron’s taste. Nasir al-Din Shah, while deeply interested in Iran’s past, was also a keen admirer of the material culture of the West. He took an active interest in European architecture and in his diaries describes in some detail the palaces and pavilions that he visited during his trips to Europe. During one trip in 1873, the shah comments:

> The palace of Beyler-Beyi is a most beautiful structure. Its stairs and the panels of the staircases are all of marble. It is partly in the European, partly in the Persian, and partly in the Ottoman style, being by this means extremely pleasing to the eye.

The presence of various foreigners at Nasir al-Din’s court, such as the Frenchman Jules Richard, who was officially employed as the court photographer and at times described as an architectural advisor, must also have influenced the design and decoration of the buildings of the period. The importance of the Dar al-Funun must also be mentioned. This institution, established in 1851, brought European teachers to Iran and provided a focal point for the dissemination of European learning and the introduction of new technologies in a variety of fields. Nasir al-Din Shah took great interest in its progress, often visiting its classrooms, and this in turn must have made him aware of new developments. Additionally, the staff of the Dar al-Funun was actively involved in projects, directly sponsored by Nasir al-Din Shah as a result of his trips to Europe, to transform Tehran into a European city.

The most important of these multistoried structures was the twin-towered Shams al-Imara (fig. 1). It was built on the periphery of the eastern part of the Arg complex in Tehran, backing onto Nasiriyya Street and Square. The introduction and development of this European-type square can be clearly traced by comparing two maps of Tehran, one dating from 1857 and the other from 1891. The first, prepared by August Kriziz, an Austrian artillery officer at the Dar al-Funun, assisted by two of his students, shows a bāzārcha, or small-scale bazaar, facing the Arg perimeter wall with its battlements. The second plan, published by the Dar al-Funun and drawn by Sulayman Khan under the supervision of ‘Abd al-Ghaffar Najm al-Mulk, shows the new square facing the Shams al-Imara complex. This must have been part of the redevelopment of the area adjacent to the palace, providing an open space in front of its gateway.

At the time of Viscount Pollington’s visit in 1865–66, the main structure had been finished but was still being decorated; it was finally completed in 1867. This served as Nasir al-Din Shah’s winter residence and administrative quarters. Viscount Pollington records that the English telegraph office and its staff of operators were located on the ground floor adjacent to the palace, making this the center of operations for Nasir al-Din Shah’s control of his provincial governors. The shah commissioned Dust ‘Ali Khan Mu’ayyir al-Mamalik al-Dawla to build the palace. This individual was known for his European tastes and had built several lavish new European neoclassical-style palaces in his complex in the Sangilaj quarter, which even included a small Arc de Triomphe. He was also responsible for the famous Takiyya Dawlat, built in 1866 for the performance of ta’ziya, or passion plays; although never roofed, it was meant to resemble the Albert Hall. Muhammad ‘Ali Kashi was appointed master builder in charge of the construction.

The Shams al-Imara certainly caught the attention of many travelers to Tehran during the period. The palace at the center of the city towered over nearby one-
or two-story mud-brick buildings. Writing in 1894, Ella Sykes gives the following description:

Passing through the square under an ornate gateway, we had a glimpse of the Ark or palace of the Shah, a beautiful feature of which are two towers close together forming one pavilion and entirely covered in brilliant tiles. No windows are to be seen on the sides towards the street, but there are charming balconies adorned with pilasters and encrusted with mirror work, which flash and gleam in the sunshine.

As noted, the most striking feature was the twin towers, each three stories high, arising from a central block. Photographs taken during the construction of the palace clearly reveal the traditional nature of the building methods. Heavy brick walls were used to support the towers, which were linked by a gallery on the first floor and a screen on the second. According to Feuverier, this area was specifically reserved for the ladies of the andarun, who from such a vantage point had an excellent view of the Gulistan palace on one side and Nasiriyya Square, where one of the principal gates of the bazaar was situated, on the other. Each of the towers was crowned by a gul dasta, or viewing platform—a traditional structure of the type that had been added to the Safavid Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan because the original minarets overlooked the women’s quarters in the Imperial compound. Projecting above the second floor was a European clocktower, which was placed centrally on the main axis of the building, with clocks on both the western and the eastern façades.

The western façade, which overlooked the garden and a large tank, was divided horizontally into two sections: the base, linked to the courtyard terrace buildings, and the body, set back directly above the base block. The base was a complex sub-facade in its own right, projecting forward into the garden from the other courtyard façade, to which it was joined at the north and south. The central section of the base, flanked by two apartments, was originally built as a colonnade with a dado above two shortened columns reached by a staircase of Yazdi marble. Photographs from the 1880s reveal its European-style remodeling as a temple facade, with a pediment fronting a new, pitched roof. This addition
did not stand the test of time and was later removed. The exterior elevation was decorated in a traditional manner with glazed tiles featuring yellow arabesques; above the two principal windows of each apartment was a glazed panel depicting the Imperial Qajar emblem of the *shīr va-khurshīd* (lion and sun).

The official rooms were furnished in European style, while according to Feuvrier those reserved for the shah’s private use were generally unfurnished. Large European-style mirror panels lined the walls above the cornice level, and the ceiling was decorated with a smaller grid of mirrored panes, making a break from the older tradition of *aynak kārī*. The rooms were also provided with large European-style marble fireplaces. In the lower gallery were hung Gobelin tapestries depicting the “Coronation of the Faun” and the “Triumph of Venus”; these had been given to Muhammad Shah by Louis Philippe of France. Bassett noted that the rooms of the palace were lit with gas, and that there were few electric lights, amenities that were introduced in 1879–80.

The most obvious building with which to draw parallels is that of the ‘Ali Qapu in Isfahan. It is known that Nasir al-Din Shah took great interest in the history of the Persian monarchy and its symbolic associations. He undertook refurbishments of the ‘Ali Qapu and in 1857, six years after his royal tour of the city, provided an extension to the structure, dated by inscriptions on ceramic tiles at the two entrances to the palace.

In their respective cities, both buildings were prominent landmarks, towering above the Friday mosques nearby. Each was situated on the perimeter of an urban square, facing it, and each provided a royal gateway to the palace. But in other respects, the buildings differ: The entrance to the ‘Ali Qapu forms part of the main structure of the palace, while that of Shams al-‘Imara stands independently to the south of the building. The *tālār* at the ‘Ali Qapu looks out over the *maydān*, from which the Safavid shahs could see and be seen, while the screen at Shams al-‘Imara allows only partial views of the square. The ‘Ali Qapu was an important government building with an imperial facade projecting towards the *maydān*, while Shams al-‘Imara was an inward-looking royal residence. One may surmise that, although the shah still had to proclaim his presence over the city, after the invention of photography the importance of his being seen in person by his subjects was no longer so great.

The tower at Anzali (fig. 2) on the Caspian Sea provides an interesting example of innovation in building form through the employment of traditional methods. By royal command, this pagoda-like structure was started in 1869 under the governor of Gilan, Mirza Sa‘id Khan Ansari (1816–84, governed 1869–70), also known as Mu’tamid al-Mulk—a minister of foreign affairs who had been secretary to the grand vizier Amir Kabir. It was later completed by Mirza Muhammad Husayn Khizana while he was deputy governor for Mu’ayyir al-Mamalik Nizam al-Dawla Dust ‘Ali Khan, who held the governorship of Gilan in 1866–67 and again in 1871–72. Akbar Khan Bayglarbayki supervised the construction of the building.

Anzali, which had been founded by Fath ‘Ali Shah in 1815 after the loss of the northern territories to the Russians in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, was a small settlement until the development of the
area around Baku in the 1860s and the improvement of navigation. With the inauguration of steamer services between Anzali and other Russian ports, it then became Iran’s most important port on the Caspian Sea, serving as the main entry point to the country. Communication between Tehran and Anzali was further improved with the building of a new road and the provision of guesthouses for travelers taking this route.

For this reason, there are numerous descriptions of the Anzali tower in travelers’ accounts, including that of the shah, who complained in 1873 that it had not been properly finished. One of the most detailed is by Mirza Muhammad Husayn Farahani, who describes it in his travelogue of 1885–88 as a magnificent palace and calls it the Shams al-Imara. H. L. Churchill, who undertook a photographic survey of the area for the British Government, also uses this name. The tower, which formed part of an ensemble of three government buildings, was built to provide lodging for the shah before he embarked on his voyage to Europe in 1873. In his diary of the trip the shah gives the following description:

This tower is of five stories, and each story has a saloon and a balcony all around. It is entirely built of bricks, stone, and lime, excepting the balconies, which are of timber, [and] painted. All kinds of needful furniture, as carpeting, chairs, tables, candlesticks, &c., are there existing and ready.

The height of the building, recorded by Farahani, was 22 Iraqi zár. There was a pool on the ground floor, and all the floors had wooden porticoes with galleries painted in blue, red and green. The structure had a tiled, hipped roof known as a shirvânt, which was a common feature of the architecture of the rainy Caspian region and was adopted for use in other parts of Iran. The intermediary floors were used as lodgings by distinguished foreign travelers, while the upper stories were reserved for the shah. Benjamin, the U.S. chargé d’affaires, gives the following description:

After an elaborate breakfast, we were taken to another pavilion constructed in several stories resembling in shape the porcelain tower of Nankeen. This tower is of five stories, and each story has a saloon and a balcony all around. It is entirely built of bricks, stone, and lime, excepting the balconies, which are of timber, [and] painted. All kinds of needful furniture, as carpeting, chairs, tables, candlesticks, &c., are there existing and ready.

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The view from there was very interesting. The upper room was lined in glass in geometric designs. The upper room was lined in glass in geometric designs. The view from there was very interesting.

In terms of its building materials and arrangements, the tower at Anzali conforms to the traditional type, but Benjamin’s comparison of it with the porcelain tower of Nanking is interesting for several reasons. It is conceivable that Nasir al-Din Shah was acquainted with a series of five books by the Austrian architect Fischer von Erlach, and that these books served as a source of inspiration for such a structure. Representing a total break with previously published architectural texts, which had been concerned only with the classical orders of architecture, this series was considered innovative because it included descriptions and engravings of buildings from other countries. Originally published with an elaborately engraved French and German text in 1721, it was reprinted several times, twice with an English translation, and would certainly have been known to the Austro-Hungarian staff at the Dar al-Funun. Of the series, the third book was extraordinary; it was entitled Of Some Arab and Turkish Buildings as well as Modern Persian, Siamese, Chinese, and Japanese Architecture and included a number of engravings of baths and mosques as well as of the bridge at Isfahan and the porcelain pagoda at Nanking. One may surmise that this series would have been called to the attention of the shah because of its popularity and more particularly because it was the first European architectural text to include, in both its ancient and its modern sections, a number of Persian buildings.

A further source of inspiration may have been the existence of a porcelain palace in the Chinese style built by Louis XIV at Versailles in 1670. It is known that Nasir al-Din Shah was particularly fascinated by the life of Louis XIV, and he may have sought to include a Chinese-style building in his palace repertoire.

It must also be remarked that chinoiserie was popular in Iran at that time. Pagodas appear on pottery and textiles of the Qajar period; contemporary wares produced in Na’in included Chinese pagodas interspersed with Persian birds, fish, and flowers. A portrait of Prince Muhammad Mirza, datable to the early 1830s and now in the Hermitage Museum, shows him wearing a khal’at with a pagoda pattern. It is also interesting to note that the existence of a pagoda-like structure was not limited to Anzali: in his 1878 diary Nasir al-Din Shah mentions another such pagoda, at the palace of his son, the future Muzaffar al-Din Shah, at Tabriz.
At Anzali, the Chinese pagoda form is achieved through the repetitive positioning of galleried floors at all levels rather than the use of roofs in the Chinese manner. Among traditional building types, the polygonal ground plan immediately brings to mind the type termed *namakdān* or *kulāh farangi* (a high building containing a hall). Its development can be traced back to Timurid times, and it occurs repeatedly in the architectural landscapes of Safavid Isfahan and of Shiraz in the early Qajar period; an example of the latter is the Tākht-i Qajar in Shiraz, constructed by Fath 'Ali Shah while he was Governor of Shiraz during his uncle’s reign.\(^{45}\) At Anzali, the Qajar architects have devised an innovative interpretation of a traditional structure, repeating the *namakdān* formula vertically to achieve a pagoda-like appearance.

By the time of d’Allemagne’s visit, the structure was in a lamentable state of repair because of the humidity,\(^ {44}\) and Farahani, although he makes no reference to the structural condition, mentions that the furnishings were worn.\(^ {45}\) The tower was demolished in 1912 to make room for quarantine buildings.\(^ {46}\)

The palaces at Saltanatabad (figs. 3 and 4) and 'Ishratabad (fig. 5) were located in the outskirts of Tehran in the district of Shamiran. Saltanatabad was the largest of the shah’s palaces and his main summer residence, while 'Ishratabad, within easy reach of the city, served as a private pleasure retreat, as its name in Farsi suggests. This particular area north of Tehran had been developed during the reign of Fath 'Ali Shah, when he built the palace of Nigaristan and his summer palace, the Qasr-i Qajar. Benjamin noted:\(^ {47}\)

Fifty years ago there were scarce any villages on the sloping talus of the Shemiran and only the merest sprinkling
of population: I have my facts from old and intelligent residents such as the Mostowfi al Mamalek. But the time came when Tehran began to feel the impulse given to it by becoming the seat of government under the Kha- jar dynasty. The old city has been largely extended in a northerly direction.

Saltanatabad, built between the years of 1857 and 1878, consisted of several buildings within a large park in a traditional garden setting. Here, as in the other palaces, one finds the same juxtaposition of traditional and European elements. Orsolle records four buildings arranged along an avenue and describes a small pavilion at the entrance to the park, where the ambassadors prepared themselves before being admitted to the presence of the shah. There was also a second pavilion, which Feuvrier identifies as an "abdākhāna" (literally, "water house"): a two-story structure in front of a large tank, where the kitchen quarters were housed.

The main palace was situated in front of the tank and consisted of a large domed room surrounded by smaller rooms on two floors. The dome was sheathed in copper and roofed externally with a shallow šīrvānī roof supported by a colonnade of tall wooden columns. Both Orsolle and Feuvrier were impressed by the traditional features of the main room, which was softly lit by colored glass windows and decorated with stucco, with a pool in the center. However, Orsolle is extremely scathing about the European intrusions in the interior decoration, mentioning frescoes on the walls that depicted such scenes as the lobby of the House of Commons and the interior of a restaurant.

Other buildings in the park included a clock tower that according to Feuvrier must have been inspired by the fire towers of ancient Iran, although for his readers he compares it with the Tour Magne at Nîmes. Both Orsolle and Stack describe another building as housing the shah’s natural history collection.

Of importance is the five-story khwābgāh, estimated by Stack in his account to be sixty feet high. This formed part of the andarūn quarters, with a tālār on the first floor overlooking a courtyard. The placement of the shah’s sleeping quarters at the top of this tower and a shāh-nishīn with a large window of the classical Persian type below again adhered to the traditional format. The staircase gave access to a viewing terrace covered by a pyramidal šīrvānī roof in sheet metal, repeating the roof treatment of the main palace.

The exterior of the tower was decorated with tiled panels. The lower three floors were very plain, with a combination of different floral medallions taken from...
the traditional repertoire. Larger panels flanking the shah-nishin depicted Qajar soldiers—a common decorative element of the period, also found on the façades of many official buildings.

The restoration of the building necessitated the loss of two of its unique elements. First, new piers added to the two principal elevations resulted in the loss of the large windows on the penultimate floor, which is now smaller and flanked by two smaller windows. This treatment was repeated on the three lower floors, creating a uniformity never intended in the original design. Second, the new piers enabled the perimeter wall on the top floor to be extended outwards, creating a narrow balcony. Another unique feature, the original overhanging roof, has been tampered with a much shallower pitched roof with an oversized gutter projecting beyond the building.

‘Ishratabad, built in 1874, was a smaller palace, and again the khwābgāh was part of an ensemble with other buildings, described by Feuvrier as the ābdākhāna, bārānī (men’s quarters), and andarūn. The arrangement of the andarūn in relation to the khwābgāh was innovative and unusual: the khwābgāh towered over seventeen small, one-story kiosks arranged around a lake. (Feuvrier makes a fleeting reference to what may have been a similar arrangement in another of the shah’s palaces, at Sahib Qaraniyya in the village Niyavaran, built in 1879 to mark the thirtieth year of his reign, but the author unfortunately provides no description except to refer to the kiosks as independent units.) In his comprehensive biography of the shah, Amanat makes the point that the death in 1873 of the shah’s mother, Malik-Jahan Mahd-i ‘Ulya, a domineering influence in his life and relationships, marked a turning point in the development of his personality. Amanat suggests that the shah’s construction of these separate living units may have been an attempt to encourage more individual and intimate relationships with each of his ladies. The khwābgāh was located within a four-story tiled tower with a traditional rectangular ground plan. The sleeping quarters of the royal andarūn occupy alcoves in either wing, the shah added that its lower story consisted of a tiled room with a marble fountain and a staircase leading to a room above. The only description in the accounts is that of Orsolle, who says: “À part une grande salle décorée, dans le goût persan, de miroirs, de cristaux, et de glaces, tous les appartements sont de déplorables imitations du style européen.” The kiosks, which were identical and situated 1.5 meters apart, were surmounted by classical pediments with pitched roofs. Today only six units remain, and the khwābgāh is in a dilapidated state.

The final tower structure that can be directly associated with Nasir al-Din Shah is that of Bagh-i Shah, which served as the royal racecourse (fig. 6). This was situated in western Tehran and consisted of one main pavilion-grandstand within the racetrack, and a six-story tower and other small pavilions to the south of the track. Unfortunately, the descriptions in the sources only relate to the pavilion itself and make no mention of the tower. Benjamin noted:

During Nooruz or as soon as possible the annual races are conducted under royal auspices. A handsome kiosk or pavilion stands by the course, erected specially for these occasions. Here, his Majesty presides, and the favourites of the royal andaroun occupy alcoves in either wing, screened by lattices. The horses run at a terrific rate six times around the course, which is equivalent to a distance of seven miles.

This pavilion underwent a series of alterations that can be documented through photographs taken between 1860 and 1880. Of particular interest is the architectural development of the central block, where the
shah sat. The three original structures (datable by photograph to 1863) consisted of three simple, two-story blocks, with the shah’s seat positioned in the center. These were later unified and the central section raised, with slender columns used on either side of the newly formed pointed window to emphasize its occupant’s position. The introduction of the window to indicate the shah’s presence echoes the window treatment of the shah-nishin in the khwābgāh at Saltanatabad and 'Ishratabad. By 1885, the central portion had undergone the most striking refurbishment with the replacement of the two-tier roof by one semicircular roof of a type also to be found at the khwābgāh at 'Ishratabad.

The six-story tower was unusual because of its circular ground plan with a portico engaged on two sides and extending upwards for five floors. The first and second floors housed the shah’s private quarters and were provided with only narrow balconies. A spiral staircase forming the core of the structure continued upwards to the sixth floor, with balconies at each level. The sixth floor, roofed in sheet metal, had panoramic views unimpeded by the portico and must have served as the principal viewing platform. The tower has no parallels elsewhere and perhaps was an experimental type. Photographs show that the upper two stories were later demolished, suggesting that the structure was unable to sustain its height (fig. 7). The gardens at Bagh-i Shah were later abandoned, and the racecourse was moved to Doshan Tepe.

All these structures provide interesting examples of architecture during the Qajar period and reflect building practices of the time. In essence, they followed the traditional dictates of architectural schema, materials, and methods but interpreted these in a variety of inno-
The namakdān formula at Anzali is used to achieve a pagoda-like appearance, while through their height and decoration the two towers at Shams al-Imama transform a common traditional building arrangement. The greater availability of new materials—in particular sheet metal—now meant that the architects could manipulate traditional forms and achieve greater height. European elements intruded here and there, but in many cases, as at Shams al-Imama, their durability was short-lived. The interior decoration echoed this approach as European fixtures and fittings were incorporated into a traditional context, creating a tension between the old and the new. These buildings stand as testimony to the ever-changing repertoire of the architects of the period, who continued to adhere to traditional practices while reinterpreting them in imaginative ways.

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NOTES

1. Divān of Khwājū Kirmānī, British Library, Add. 18113, fol. 26v. See B. Gray, Persian Painting (Geneva, 1961), col. pl. on p. 46. I should like to thank Prof. J. M. Rogers for drawing my attention to this.


7. E. Eastwick, Journal of a Diplomate’s Three Years’ Residence in Persia, 2 vols. (London, 1864, repr. 1976), vol. 1, p. 294. He also records another khvālahgāh at the shah’s palace at Selaymanīyā: “This building was erected by Fath Ali Shah in 1808. It has a tower to the east, ascended by fifty steps, each step eighteen inches high.”


9. Other khvālahgāhs, which were not towers, were built within well-protected inner courtyards; an example is the three-story khvālahgāh constructed in 1885 in the Gulistan palace.


12. This article will not discuss tower structures that formed part of administrative buildings such as the governor’s palace at Kirmanshah.


17. Ibid., p. 207.


28. A. Houtum-Schindler and Baron L. de Norman, A Diary Kept by the Shah of Persia, during His Journey to Europe in 1878 (London, 1879), p. 35.

29. Farahani, Shi‘ite Pilgrimage, n. 25, p. 41.


31. Redhouse, Diary, n. 13, p. 16.

32. The zīr was equivalent to 41 inches. See C. Issawi, Economic History of Iran, n. 26, p. 519.


34. J. B. Fischer von Erlach, Entwurf einer historischen Architektur (Vienna, 1721).


36. Pl. 9 contains three Persian designs: “The view of the palace of the Kings of Persia at Isfahan, and of the Meidan, the largest and most regular square or market place in the world”; 2. “A view of the great bridge at Isfahan, over the river ‘Send rud’”; 3. “Bridge of Alyverdy Chan.”
37. Pl. 11, “A plan and elevation in perspective of the Imperial residence at Peking in China”; pl. 12, “The famous Temple near the city of Nanking in China with its outward courts, tombs, walks, and baths, in particular the famous China-Tower of nine stages or storeys.”


39. Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe*, n. 13, p. 41; Redhouse, *Diary*, n. 30. There are numerous references in the shah’s diary to Louis XIV and his palaces.


42. Houtum-Schindler and de Norman, *Diary*, n. 27, p. 35.


57. The architect was J. W. Wild, and the works were supervised by Captain Pearson of the Anglo Indian Telegraph.


59. Z. Celik, *Displaying the Orient* (Berkeley, 1992), fig. 79, p. 121.

60. Orsolle, *Caucase*, n. 47, p. 286.


European fascination with Islamic aesthetics from the Middle Ages to nineteenth-century orientalism is a commonplace in the history of Western and Islamic arts. In this context the relationship between Renaissance Italy and the Muslim Mediterranean world occupies a prominent place. Mamluk art, which is the subject of this article, is known to have had an impact on Venetian craftsmanship in glass, metalwork, and other media. In the study of European-Mamluk relationships, however, no attention has so far been dedicated to the possibility of a reverse process, that is, of a European echo in Mamluk art. The following pages will demonstrate that the Mamluks (1250–1517) were not blind to European arts and crafts, either in the Bahri or in the later Circassian period, which coincided respectively with the European late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. As in the reverse case, however, this interaction did not imply the adoption of aesthetic concepts; rather it remained confined to haphazard individual details.

The earliest opportunity for Mamluk craftsmen to come in contact with European artistic ideas was during the later Crusade period. The hostilities between Crusaders and Muslims did not prevent the urge on both sides, during either the Ayyubid or the Mamluk period, to maintain commercial relations. Although it is generally believed that the confrontation between Muslims and Crusaders did not have a significant cultural or artistic impact on the Muslim world, interest in exotica was not only a European phenomenon. Moreover, as demonstrated by M. Meinecke, heraldry—a characteristic feature of Mamluk art—seems to have emerged under European influence as a result of the encounter with the Crusaders.

The arts and crafts of medieval Europe could not have the same kind of appeal in the Muslim world as did those of China, India, or Byzantium. As demonstrated by the chinoiserie that begin to spread on Mamluk decoration in the first half of the fourteenth century, Mamluk society was receptive to Eastern artifacts, but it did not ignore artifacts from the medieval Latin world. The Mamluks valued some Gothic decorative patterns, as is shown by the numerous spoils carried away from Crusader churches in Syria and Palestine to adorn religious monuments in Cairo. Unlike the pre-Islamic spoils used as building material or for apotropaic purposes, and unlike the taste for chinoiserie, Gothic spoils had the significance of being trophies of war taken from the Christian enemy. It is difficult to assess, however, the exact associations triggered in the mind of the medieval Cairene population at the sight of these spoils. They might have been viewed merely as exotica, with no more political or religious associations than chinoiserie.

CRUSADER SPOILS IN MAMLUK MONUMENTS

Among the Crusader trophies used in Mamluk architecture was the maqsura built by Sultan al-Zahir Baybars at his mosque at HusaynIya (1266–69), which was roofed over its mihrab with the most monumental dome in Cairo at that time. Covering the space of nine bays, the maqsura was made of wood and marble taken from the Crusader fortress of Jaffa, which the sultan had just captured in a decisive battle. Today it is impossible to assess how these spoils characterized the appearance of the maqsura, or what the marble mihrab looked like, since the decoration and the dome disappeared long ago.

Above the entrance to the complex of Sultan Qalawun in Cairo, built in 1284–85, is a window grille of wrought iron, which Creswell identified as of Frankish craftsmanship. This grille could have been removed from a Crusader building and fitted into the window, or it could have been made by a Frankish craftsman in Cairo (fig. 1). Besides featuring a European iron grille, the façade of the complex is itself indebted in design to Norman Sicilian architecture, as are various other features in the interior of this singular building. More than one and a half centuries separate the Mamluk complex from comparable buildings in Sicily, however. This gap makes it difficult to interpret the modalities of this
transfer of patterns, just as is the case with the façade of the mosque of Sultan Hasan and its Rum-Seljuk prototype, which has been discussed by J. M. Rogers.9

The most prominent Gothic spoil in Cairo is the portal brought to Cairo after the decisive Battle of Acre in 1291 and installed at Sultan al-Adil Katbugha’s madrasa (1295), which was later (1304) appropriated and completed by al-Nasir Muhammad (fig. 2). Maqrizi describes the portal as “one of the most beautiful in the world!”10—a surprising statement considering the existence in his time of some glorious Mamluk portals, such as those of Sultan Hasan’s mosque and Qawsun’s palace. Other dispersed spoils can be seen in prominent places on various Mamluk buildings, such as the engaged colonettes with Gothic capitals flanking the niches of the portal recess at the khānqāh of Baybars al-Jashankir.11 Likewise, the madrasa of Sunqur al-Sa’di, built between 1315 and 1321, has a window above the entrance door adorned with two pairs of colonettes with Gothic capitals (figs. 3–4).12 In all these cases the Gothic ornaments are placed at the entrance—that is, in a most visible and prominent location.

Similarly, the mosque of Sultan Hasan (1356–62) displays Gothic spoils in several prominent locations. Two rectangular slabs, of equal size but carved with different patterns, adorn the portal on each side of the entrance recess (figs. 5–7). The pattern on the right panel consists of superimposed buildings, which look like churches and which Herz has interpreted as a “signature” of Christian craftsmen involved in the building of the mosque. The similar slab at the left side, however, shows a different pattern—a meander of
Gothic floral motifs—indicating that these two slabs are of the same origin and must have been removed from another building. The imprecise way with which they have been fitted into the wall of the portal confirms that they were not originally made for their present location. These slabs are not the only exotica to adorn the portal; it also displays a profusion of floral chinoiserie carved within the framing band. Flanking the mihrab niche are another two pairs of Gothic columns (fig. 8), and two others adorn the corners of the muezzin’s platform (dikka) in the main iwan. The prominent location of these structures of Christian European provenance leaves no doubt that they were highly valued. It should be recalled, however, that Mamluk architecture was not very creative in the design of capitals, and that the traditional capitals, taken from pre-Islamic buildings, were mostly of Roman-Byzantine and Coptic styles. (It cannot be excluded, however, that Muslim craftsmen copied pre-Islamic capitals to fill the gaps.) Other than these, so-called bell-shaped capitals, which were already used as capitals and column bases at the mosque of Ibn Tulun, continued to characterize Mamluk columns.
EUROPEANS IN THE BUILDING CRAFT OF AL-NASIR MUHAMMAD

To meet the needs of his building boom, al-Nasir Muhammad is reported to have used Frankish and Armenian prisoners of war. The sultan allowed these prisoners to settle in two neighborhoods in Cairo: in the Citadel and in a quarter of the city called Khazanat al-Bunud. In his *Khita*, Maqrizi writes that Khazanat al-Bunud included Franks, and in the *Suluk* he reports that they were mainly Armenians. These Armenians and other Latin communities must have been captured during the multiple Mamluk raids on the kingdom of Little Armenia or Cilicia from the thirteenth century until 1322, when al-Nasir Muhammad finally integrated this territory into the Mamluk empire. In the course of this last offensive, al-Nasir is reported to have taken a great number of prisoners of war. Armenian cities at that time included large communities of Europeans, which explains Maqrizi’s reference to the *faranj* in this context. These colonies seemed to have enjoyed a privileged status in Cairo, as they were allowed to dwell there with their families and to keep their own taverns and even a church; Maqrizi speaks with great disgust of the taverns and the lifestyle of this community. It is also interesting to note that Ayas, one of al-Nasir Muhammad’s amirs, who started his career as the intendant of the construction works, was a converted Armenian.

When the amir Almalik, who was a *hajji* renowned for his religious zeal, complained to the sultan about the presence of taverns and of repulsive things taking place in the vicinity of his residence, the sultan replied that he should move elsewhere. Following al-Nasir’s death, however, Almalik, as soon as he was promoted to the office of viceroy (*nā‘ib al-saltana*) in 1343, dismantled the quarters of both the Citadel and Khazanat al-Bunud and transferred their inhabitants to the neighborhood of the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in the southern outskirts, where their communities continued to dwell in Maqrizi’s time a century later. Since these colonies were settled by princely initiative and tolerated over a long period, it is likely that they were continuously supplied with new recruits. As late as the second half of the fourteenth century, Europeans captured during naval raids on Alexandria were sent to Cairo to work in the building craft. Such prisoners, however, were not necessarily specialized builders. In any case, the use of European labor did not have a visible impact on the architectural aesthetics of Bahri Mamluk architecture.

The case of the dynasty of master builders called *al-Tūlūn* led me to speculate in an earlier publication about a possible connection with the French southern port city of Toulon. These master builders, who worked for the Mamluk court, are mentioned for the first time during the reign of Sultan Barquq, and they continued to play an important role throughout the entire fifteenth century. Although they were said to originate in the Maghreb, I was unable to find a North-
African toponym “Tulun,” which led me, therefore, to the southern French port-city of Toulon as a possible origin. Another more likely possibility is that they came from the quarter of Ibn Tulun, where Maghrebis and the descendents of the above-mentioned European community dwelt. In any case, the origin of these builders, whether it be North Africa or European, is not apparent in the architecture of their age.

**THE DHAHABIYYA**

Venice might have been the source of inspiration for a major item of Mamluk regalia, the *dhahabiyya*, or golden ship, with which the Mamluk sultans navigated on the Nile to celebrate the opening of the Khalij (Grand Canal) of Cairo on the occasion of the yearly flood.\(^{18}\) The *dhahabiyya* is not mentioned in the early Mamluk period; Maqrizi uses the term *al-harrāqa al-dhahabiyya*, or “the golden boat,”\(^{19}\) for the first time to refer to Sultan al-Ashraf Sha’ban’s royal barge on the occasion of a naval maneuver performed on the Nile in 1367.\(^{20}\) Throughout the fifteenth century the chronicles regularly mention the *dhahabiyya* in the ceremonial context of the sultans’ excursions on the Nile and, more particularly, the festival of the Khalij. According to Ibn Iyas, the boat had as many as sixty oars and belonged to the regalia of the sultanate until Sultan Qaytbay (1468–96) abolished it. In 1513, however, Sultan al-Ghawri (1501–16), who was very dedicated to ceremonial and festivities, revived the tradition by ordering the construction of a barge in the “style of the old boat called *dhahabiyya*.”\(^{21}\) In the years between Qaytbay’s rule and al-Ghawri’s revival of the *dhahabiyya*, Ibn Iyas does not mention this term in the context of the Khalij festival, referring instead to the traditional *harrāqa*. This clearly indicates that the *dhahabiyya* was something distinct from and more lavish than the *harrāqa* or the *‘ashār* referred to in earlier periods.\(^{22}\)

The use of a lavish ceremonial boat for the Khalij festival was an old tradition that predates the Mamluks. The Fatimid caliphs sailed on a boat known as *‘ashār*, which had an octagonal wooden superstructure inlaid with ivory and ebony and surmounted by a gold-and-silver cupola; it was adorned with hangings and gilded wooden lanterns.\(^{23}\) In the twelfth century, ‘Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi described the *‘ashār* as a large and beautiful royal barge. Built with two stories, its upper level was occupied by a comfortable domed chamber painted in many colors, gilded, and equipped with its own latrine. It was rowed by oarsmen below deck.\(^{24}\) The *dhahabiyya*, a golden ship with sixty oars, however, recalls the Venetian ceremonial *Bucintoro*, or Golden Ship, which had forty-two oars and was used by the Doges to celebrate various ceremonies, the most prominent of which was the traditional marriage of Venice with the sea.\(^{25}\) Although this ceremony began in Venice in 1311, the origin of the vessel itself goes back to the tenth century. One of the many etymological interpretations of the name of this ship, which may not be the right one, is that it is consists of *burchio* (a type of boat) and *oro* (gold), which refers to its appearance. Of course, water festivals are a universal phenomenon, and Venice and Cairo each had its own traditions. However, the emergence in the late fourteenth century, at a time of intensive contacts between the Mamluks and Venice, of the term *dhahabiyya* referring to a large golden barge suggests a Venetian inspiration.

**EUROPEANS AT THE LATE MAMLUK COURT**

During the Mamluk period European merchants and consuls were not allowed to dwell in the capital but were allocated *funduqs*, or large compounds, in Alexandria, which continued to be the center of Mamluk-European trade. (They moved freely in Syria, however.)

These regulations seem to have been loosened during the reign of Sultan Qaytbay, who intensified his trade with the Venetians and through them with the Germans and Flemings. Moreover, Qaytbay’s court seems to have included quite a number of Europeans and mamluks of European origin, who could have introduced and even promoted a taste for Renaissance craftsmanship and technology. Art historians have emphasized the Mamluk export of luxury goods to Europe; trade history, however, indicates that the Mamluks imported more luxury goods than they exported, their revenue from foreign trade being rather the transit fee on Indian spices. Qaytbay imported gold-embroidered velvet from Venice; luxurious textiles and gold-encrusted crystals from Europe were among the gifts that delighted al-Ghawri.\(^{26}\)

The Flemish traveler Van Ghistele, who visited Egypt in 1482–83, writes that the sultan’s Great Treasurer was a mamluk from Danzig called Nasr al-Din.\(^{27}\) Mamluk sources indicate that the person who held this position at that time was Khushqadam al-Ahmadi, who was also a vizier and to whom Sakhawi gives the *nisba* “al-Rumi,”\(^{28}\) which at that time referred to Anatolians or persons from the Ottoman empire, thus including the Balkans. Khushqadam therefore might have
been recruited or purchased in Ottoman lands. Van Ghistele also mentions mamluks of Greek, Albanian, Italian, and Vlach origin alongside the more common Circassians and Turks.

Most interestingly, among the Europeans Van Ghistele met in Cairo was a prominent merchant from the Flemish city of Mechelen, whom he calls Francisco Tudesco, his surname indicating a German origin. He was a goldsmith who also dealt with crystals and entertained privileged business relations with the sultan and his wife. He was apparently a liaison for European merchants in Cairo. The Swiss pilgrim Felix Fabri, who came to Egypt with a German group in 1483, also met this German goldsmith from Mechelen.

During his stay in Cairo, Van Ghistele had the opportunity to see the arrival of two European embassies, that of Ferdinand II of Aragon, King of Sicily and Naples, and that of the queen of Cyprus, Catharina Cornaro. Cyprus had been tributary to the Mamluk sultanate ever since the reign of Barsbay, and at the same time was under the tutelage of Venice, Catharina herself being Venetian. According to Van Ghistele, Ferdinand, who was trying to persuade the sultan to help him install his illegitimate son on the throne of Cyprus, sent the sultan a remarkable gift—a shipload of artillery equipment, which included a large array of richly decorated white weapons and armor. Ferdinand’s gift delighted Qaytbay and his courtiers but annoyed the Europeans, who viewed it as an act that undermined the Pope’s ban on the sale of strategic goods to Muslims.

Although unlike the Catalans, Venetians, and Genoese, merchants from Flanders and Germany did not have a funduq in Alexandria, they seem to have been privileged enough to dwell in Cairo and do business at Qaytbay’s court. Fabri also saw at the Mamluk court a German from Basel and many mamluks of Hungarian origin who had been captured as prisoners of war by the Ottomans and sent as gifts to Egypt. He emphasizes the importance of the mamluks of Christian origin at Qaytbay’s court and their eagerness to work for the sultan, to the extent that they would baptize their children so that they could later be recruited as mamluks of Christian origin. This is also confirmed by Arnold von Harff, who in 1497 visited Cairo, where he met mamluks of German origin, and by Anselm Adorno (in 1470–71), who mentions Italian, Greek, Slav, and Albanian mamluks; he moreover writes that Qaytbay himself came from Christian Scythian territory near Russia.

Fabri reports that the Venetian consul in Alexandria had a residence in Cairo where he stayed to oversee the commercial transactions of German merchants. Like Van Ghistele, Fabri mentions the son of Ferdinand II of Aragon, the king of Sicily and Naples, who apparently resided at that time at Qaytbay’s court. Beside the Great Treasurer from Danzig mentioned earlier, other Europeans are reported to have acquired the status of amir during the fifteenth century. A well-documented case is Taghribirdi, the sultan’s dragoman, who was an “amir of ten” during the reigns of Qaytbay and his son Muhammad. Fabri reports that he was a Sicilian Jew who had converted to Christianity before entering Qaytbay’s service and eventually converted to Islam. He had a Greek and an Italian wife. It seems that already in the early fifteenth century the dragoman of the sultan was a converted European Jew: the one who worked for Sultan Barsbay came from Seville. According to the historian Ibn Taghribirdi, the dawādār of Sultan Inal, Amir Sayf al-Din Bardabak (d. 868/1464), was a converted Cypriot, an ifrāj, who had been captured at a young age during Barsbay’s invasion of the island in 1426. Because of his origins and his connections, he was particularly involved with the Mamluk policy of Cyprus.

These cases show that the contacts between the late Mamluk court and Europe were close enough to arouse Mamluk curiosity and interest in the artistic and technological evolution that was taking place in Renaissance Europe. It can be moreover assumed that the European mamluks were likely to maintain contacts with their countries of origin. Italian paintings and engravings depicting Sultan al-Ghawri attest to the presence of Italian artists in the Mamluk empire, perhaps even at the Mamluk court itself. Leonardo da Vinci, who writes in his notebook that he was hired by an amir of Qaytbay in Syria for a mission in East Anatolia, seems to have been involved in an undefined task that was not of an artistic nature.

EVIDENCE OF EUROPEAN CRAFTSMANSHIP IN QAYTBAY’S EMPIRE

There is also physical evidence for Qaytbay’s employing European professionals in military architecture. When Fabri arrived in Alexandria, he saw Qaytbay’s fort, which had just been completed; he attributes it to a German architect from Oppenheim. Qaytbay might have assigned the task of building this fort to a German in view of the recent developments in the technology of warfare, in particular artillery. The threat of the Ottomans, who
had used German artillery in their recent wars, must have prompted Qaytbay to update his fortifications to cope with the new weapons (fig. 9).\(^{43}\)

A remarkable import of European technology under Qaytbay was a mechanical device mentioned in the chronicle of Ibn al-Himsi.\(^{44}\) The historian, who describes in detail the restoration works of the Umayyad mosque of Damascus following the fire of 1479, mentions a hoist used to raise the beams of the ceiling, which he praises as a technological innovation:

The works progressed rapidly thanks to the ingenious mechanical device of an old carpenter from Salhiyya called Muhammad al-Kufti, which consisted of a mast (sārī) and a wheel (dulāb) that could easily raise the beams, so that all the beams of an aisle could be raised in one morning, which was a great blessing that saved a great deal of money.

Later on, when a fire broke out at the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina, Muhammad al-Kufti was summoned there to contribute to the reconstruction with his hoist.\(^{45}\)

It is obvious from this text that such a device, which had no Arabic terminus technicus of its own, was something singular at that time in the Mamluk empire, for only Muhammad al-Kufti was known to possess and use it and was therefore summoned to Medina. The fact that this device was not known elsewhere in the Muslim world seems to be confirmed by its absence in late-fifteenth-century Persian miniatures of the Bihzad school representing construction scenes. However, this type of hoist or treadwheel, which is mentioned by Vitruvius in his chapter on hoisting devices, was commonly used in Europe for the construction of Gothic cathedrals and by the thirteenth century had already been depicted in many miniatures referring to this subject.\(^{46}\) It seems to have been re-devised in 1350 by the Florentine master builder Giovanni di Lapo Ghini. The machine was a giant spool operated by several men who, like hammers, walked within it to wind a rope that, through a system of pulleys, raised the weight attached to its end. Some of these hoists are still in situ at Mont-Saint-Michel, the cathedrals of Beauvais and Salisbury, and some churches in Germany (fig. 10).\(^{47}\) Where Muhammad al-Kufti learned about the device remains a matter of speculation.

During the very short reign of Qaytbay’s son al-Nasir Muhammad (1491), a European craftsman called “Domenico the Caster” (Dūminkū al-Sabbak), most probably a Venetian, produced cannons in Cairo for the amir Aqbari, who was trying to suppress the

![Fig. 9. The fort of Qaytbay in Alexandria.](image)
rebellion of a Mamluk faction that had created a chaotic situation in Cairo at that time. However, the unsuccessful Aqbardi had to run for his life, leaving Domenico to be beheaded by the rebels.48

THE “VENETO-SARACENIC” CASE

Artistic contacts with Venice are well known to art historians in the context of the so-called Veneto-Saracen metal vessels. These vessels, which exist in large numbers in European collections, often, though not always, have European shapes of Venetian, German, or Flemish origin, and surfaces decorated with unconventional arabesques and silver and gold inlays that distinguish them from the mainstream of Islamic metalwork. These features, combined with the frequent occurrence of Muslim craftsmen’s signatures, the most famous being that of Mahmud al-Kurdi, led scholars in the nineteenth century to attribute this production to a Muslim workshop established in Venice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: hence their appellation. This possibility, however, has more lately been dismissed on the grounds that the labor situation in Venice would not have allowed such an intrusion. S. Melikian-Chirvani and James Allan have presented convincing arguments in favor of a Mamluk production during the reign of Qaytbay.49 This can be confirmed by a most decisive argument, so far overlooked, that most signatures engraved on these objects, regardless of their different styles, carry the title mu'allim, unmistakably an Egyptian or Syrian craftsman’s title, not common on metalwork from Iraq, Iran, or Syria (fig. 11).50 Moreover, the rare epigraphic adornments that occur on this group of vessels definitely belong to the late Mamluk repertoire.51 The frequent occurrence of Muslim signatures on “Veneto-Saracen” metalware could have been meant to emphasize the Islamic provenance of this production, perhaps in order to prevent a mistaken attribution to Europe. The European shapes and the new taste displayed in the decoration, however, indicate that there was a Mamluk initiative to modernize and “westernize” the art of metalwork, probably with the motivation of export to Europe. Such an initiative might have taken place in the cosmopolitan environment of Qaytbay’s reign described here.

The hypothesis of a European involvement in late Mamluk craftsmanship might also help explain the origin of an enameled glass lamp bearing the name of Qaytbay, in the Islamic Museum in Cairo.52 This lamp is the only one of its kind attributable to the late fifteenth century, the production of enameled glass having come to an end in the Mamluk empire in the late fourteenth century, at a time when it began to flourish in Venice and Spain. The Qaytbay lamp is evidence of an attempt, albeit not successful, to revive the tradition of Bahri Mamluk enameled glass lamps. The style of the inscriptions and decoration betrays occidental features and appears rather “orientalist.” Stefano Carboni has argued that it could not be Venetian, as commonly believed; he has instead suggested a Catalan production.53 In light of the previous documentation, it can be proposed that the lamp was the product of a Cairene workshop using European expertise. Qaytbay might have hired European craftsmen, such as the German goldsmith and crystal maker from Flanders,54 to promote the art of metalwork, which had declined in quality and quantity, and to revive the production of enameled glass, which had entirely disappeared during

Fig. 10. Reconstructed medieval hoist. Cathédraloscope, Dolde-Bretagne.
the previous century. Such initiative would have been consistent with this sultan’s patronage of the arts.

There is a tension between the picture presented here of the late Mamluk court as an environment propitious for the assimilation of European skills and the image conveyed by Mamluk chroniclers, who rarely mention persons of European origin unless they were monarchs or envoys. Although Ibn Iyas briefly mentions Taghibirdi in his function as dragoman, he does not refer to his origins, nor does Sakhawi list this amir in his biographical encyclopedia. Mamluk authors rarely refer to craftsmen in any case; when they mention indigenous Christian craftsmen, they keep them anonymous. For instance, the Christian master builder who is reported to have built Qaytbay’s mosque in Jerusalem is not named. Neither do Mamluk authors include non-Muslim citizens in their biographical encyclopedias. There is more research to be done on this subject, for which it will be necessary to consult European sources and archives.

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NOTES


THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF A MANUSCRIPT OF THE TRAVEL ACCOUNT OF FRANÇOIS DE LA BOULLAYE LE GOUZ IN THE LIBRARY OF THE ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DEI LINCEI IN ROME

THE MANUSCRIPT

During the preparation of the exhibition Il trionfo sul tempo, manoscritti illustrati dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, I was able to examine a manuscript of the travel account of François de la Boullaye le Gouz (1610–1669).1 This manuscript from the Fondo Corsini—34.K.17, formerly catalogued as Cors. 360—measures 450 x 300 mm and consists of 164 folios. It was among the manuscripts in the exhibition for which I prepared entries in the catalogue.2

Armando Petrucci included this manuscript in his inventory of the Corsini Library.3 I have not, however, found any other references to it, or to other manuscript copies of this text,4 even though printed editions of it appeared in 1653 and 16575 and were included by Anne-Marie Touzard in her article on accounts by French travelers in Persia printed between 1600 and 1730.6

The manuscript does not contain the full travel account, and the European countries described by La Boullaye le Gouz are not included. Further, the incipit (fol. 1r) differs slightly from the printed editions:

Seconde sortie hors le Royaume, du Sieur de la Boul- laye gentilhomme Angeuin, vassal tres fidelle & subiect naturel de sa Majesté très Chrestienne, ou sont descriptes les Religions, forces, & coustumes de diuers pays, ou il a voyagé es parties Orientales; avec la situation des principales villes d’italie, grece, Natolie, haulte et Basse Armenie, georgie, medie, perse, Empire du grand mogol, Royaume de Bijapour, conquestes des portugais, es indes orientales, principauté de Bassara, Kaldee, mesopotamie, Assirie Karamanie, surie, palestine & Egypte.

The same text was copied on a page that was added to the manuscript when it was rebound.

The absence of the European section of the travel account, which appears at the end of the text in the printed editions, is due to the fact that the manuscript relates to the second journey of La Boullaye le Gouz, as the author himself explains in the first folios of the manuscript:

Apres auoir heureusement voyagé par les parties du nord de leurope; en auoir observé les façons de faire, les forces, & Religions ie m’en reuins en france entres Bonne santé par la grace de dieu, & mon Rendévous fut a paris uille capitalle du Royaume, pour y uecoir mes amis & trouver moyen de passer en italie, & autres lieux que ie desirois cernoistre.7

The same introductory pages also give an indication of the date of the journey:

Suiuant la costume de ceux qui veullent voyager ie pris patentes de mons. grenet curé de Saint benoist & mon pasteur, avec attestation de la religion que ie proffesse, cecy estant necessaire pour deux raisons, la premiere que l’on peut mourir & demeurer sans sepulture n’ayant sur soy aucune marque exterieure de la Religion catholique, la seconde pour tesmoigner es lieux ou il y a inquisition estable que iestois catholique et fils de parens catholiques; puis ie dis adieu a tous mes amis tachant a les consoler & leur persuader que ils me verroient bien tost; quoy faict ie pris le coste de dijon & partis / de paris le 26 ja nuier 1647.8

This first part of the manuscript includes several chapters omitted from the printed editions, such as those dedicated to the argument that travel must not be put off because of marriage,9 an ecclesiastic10 or legal career,11 or a military profession.12 A chapter entitled Raisons principales contre les voyages pour m’obliger a ne sortir du Royaume (fol. 8r), precedes the final chapter, Resolution a voyager (fol. 10v). This appears before the real beginning of the book, which commences in the printed editions with the journey from Paris to Rome (fol. 11v). The contents of the printed edition follow that of the manuscript, with some changes and shortening of various sections.
FEDERICO AND LUIGI CAPPONI

From a comparative analysis of the printed edition and the manuscript, it is clear that the printed edition was inspired, directly or indirectly, by the manuscript kept in the Fondo Corsini. The author stressed the relationship in a preface to the printed edition of 1653, in which La Boullaye le Gouz dedicated his work to Cardinal [Luigi] Capponi, who became librarian of the Vatican Library in 1649:

A Monseigneur l’Eminentissime Capponi, Cardinal & Prince de la Sainte Eglise Romaine, premier Prestre, grand Bibliothécaire du Vatican, & Protecteur de la Nation Maronite. Monseigneur, l’avois béorie la Relation de mes Voyages en la Coppie que je laissé à Rome à Vostre Eminence, me persuadant qu’elle ne verroit le jour que dans son cabinet & le mien; ce dessein à mon retour a été change par l’ordre du Roy; sa Majesté me manda de venir en Cour avec mon équipage Persan, ietta les yeux sur l’original, en lût quelques pages, & me tesmoigna qu’il le falloit donner au publicq; la force de telles paroles sur un sujet dont l’inclination est égalle au deuoir de la naissance, m’a fait imprimer sous la protection de Vostre Eminence ce que ie luy avois déjà desdié escript de ma main, pour ne pas destacher des premiers sentimens de viure & mourir. ...Le très humble, & très-obligé serviteur, de la Boullaye Le Gouz. de Paris ce 22. Juillet 1652.13

In fact, La Boullaye first met another member of the Capponi family, the less famous Monsignore Federico Capponi, near Viterbo in 1647:

Le 13me [of March 1647] ayant parti de Viterbe pour Rome, a une lieue de la dicte ville, ie Rencontray vn signeur Romain auec toute sa famille qui s’en alloit a Rome & venoit de florence, d’abord ie le salué aussi bien que quelques autres françois qui estoient de ma compagnie, & ie le dict signeur nous Rentid notre salut auec autant de civilité que sil nous eust cogneus... 14

A Monterose [Monterosi] dix huict milles de Viterbe nous descendismes dãs la mesme hostellerie que ce seigneur Romain, où nous eusmes quelque cœursation, & i’appris qu’on l’appeloit Monsignor Federico Capponi; Il nous pria de luy tenir compagnie en chemin, & me fit plusieurs questions, entr’ autres le sujet de mon voyage en Italie... 15

A visit to the Roman residence of Federico Capponi, which followed this meeting, strengthened the friendship between Federico Capponi and La Boullaye. When La Boullaye returned from his journey to Asia in February 1650, however, Monsignore Federico had been dead for two years. La Boullaye then contacted the more famous Cardinal Luigi Capponi, who was at this time librarian of the Vatican Library and an important person in the Propaganda Fidae.16 The meeting between La Boullaye and Luigi Capponi is briefly described in the manuscript, which closes with La Boullaye’s visit to the residence of the cardinal in Rome.17 It is probably at this time that the manuscript was given as a gift to Capponi, a fact attested to by the drawing on fol. 1v of Ms. 34.K.17, in which La Boullaye is portrayed offering the manuscript to the cardinal (fig. 1).18 In the section preceding the second part of the book but absent from the manuscript, referring to a previous journey undertaken by the author, the printed edition of 1653 gives more information on this meeting.19 Even if the manuscript could have been used by the author for the printed edition, the fact that La Boullaye declares here that he had given a manuscript edition to Cardinal Capponi—ce que ie luy avois déjà desdié escript de ma main—seems to confirm that the direct source for the printed edition was not the manuscript now in the Fondo Corsini but a copy. This conclusion is supported by a comparison of the drawings in the manuscript with the illustrations reproduced by an apparently anonymous engraver in the edition of 1653.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS

There are various differences between the illustrations of the manuscript and those of the printed edition. Several portraits of La Boullaye included in the manuscript, frequently within the illustrations, are absent from the printed edition. On the page facing the frontispiece of the 1653 edition,20 there is a portrait of him in Persian dress, in the caption of which he is given the “Persian” name Ibrahim Beg.21 The manuscript, in contrast, contains a drawing of La Boullaye in oriental dress, offering Cardinal Capponi the manuscript. Even if captioned only with a biblical quotation,22 this clearly represents the offering of the gift to the cardinal (fig. 1).

Another engraving in the printed edition of 1653, which precedes the list of sources that inspired the traveler in the final drafting of his account, portrays La Boullaye le Gouz in Western clothing.23 This illustration does not appear in the manuscript. Other illustrations in the manuscript represent La Boullaye as the traveler and are often captioned in different languages; these are reproduced in the printed edition without his image. For example, the illustration on fol. 102r, which represents La Boullaye in a litter with a man...
carrying a parasol and bears the caption *Don francisco da Boulaye fidalgo frances*, in Portuguese, disappears in the printed text. Another vignette on fol. 111v, representing the traveler with a turban and a lion under the sun, bears the Latin caption *F. legouz dominus de la boullaye peregrinus andegauensis*; in the manuscript this appears on p. 441 without the traveler. Other similar examples occur on fol. 116v, with an illustration of La Boullaye and a Latin caption, *f. de la Boullaye peregrinus Gallus*, and on fol. 117r, with a caption in Portuguese, *Senhor francisco da Boullaye fidalgo frances*. In the manuscript La Boullaye appears in other illustrations depicting various types of trees, such as that on fol. 85r, *Arbre appelé Kasta* with a portrait of the traveler, *De la Boullaye legouz peregrinus Gallus* (fig. 5), and on fol. 143r, where the traveler, his name written in Arabic (Lâbula), appears under a *figure du cedre*. As Ibrahim Beg he reappears on fol. 137r, in an encampment near Mardin (Merdine), and he is depicted on fol. 152v under the column of Pompey, which is compared to an obelisk (fig. 10). Here his image has an English caption—*mestre francis the gouz a frence gentleman traveller of*...
the turquiland—that disappears in the printed edition. A final portrait appears on fol. 154r, where he is portrayed in discussion with Aaron ben Leuj (Aaron ben Levy). This illustration is reproduced on p. 376 of the printed edition (see the list of the illustrations at the end of this article).

The forty-nine illustrations in the manuscript are reduced to thirty-four in the printed text. Sometimes, especially in the case of those dealing with Indian subjects, the illustrations in the printed version are reproduced together in quadripartite or tripartite frames, indicating the editor’s need for economy.

Among the main features of the manuscript are the different styles that characterize the drawings. Several of the illustrations, which are perhaps weaker in terms of style, may be by La Boullaye himself, although this is not clearly attested to in the text.20 Many little vignettes in the margins, such as those of mosques on fol. 25v, or of two tombs (Tombeau d’homme / tombeau de femme) on fol. 26r, are in this hand. Some of these vignettes are reproduced in the printed edition, such as that on fol. 47r (fig. 2), which portrays the head of a Kizilbash (Sophi / Keselbache Rafasi Sakaltrache ou teste rouge heretique barbe rase), which appears on p. 75 of the printed edition with an incorrect caption, Géorgien, together with an image of a standing Persian absent in the manuscript.

A second, more refined hand is that of a “professional” draftsman, who after the completion of the manuscript probably traced the drawings into spaces left blank for the illustrations. This is the artist of the drawing of La Boullaye presenting his work to Cardinal Capponi on fol. 1v (fig. 1), and that portraying La Boullaye, captioned in Portuguese, on fol. 99r.

Even though the illustrations of India and Indian mythology could be very careful copies of miniatures collected by La Boullaye during his travels, it is more probable that they were drawn by an Indian artist. The fact, however, that some other illustrations, including the already-mentioned depiction of the Kizilbash on fol. 47r, can be compared in style and representation to contemporary Safavid miniatures leads to the suspicion that several illustrations were made by copying miniatures.

The printed edition also includes several figures that are not in the manuscript. These show a freer interpretation by the engraver and, as in the case of various castles such as that of Amasya (p. 67, Chasteau d’Amasie), Hasankeyf (p. 72, Chasteau de Hassan Kala), and a Persian castle (p. 77, chasteau de la frontier de Perse), introduce Western typologies that are quite different from the attentive observation of the traveler.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Ms. 34.K.17 was the first draft of the text corrected by La Boullaye himself when he prepared the printed edition, which thus included five pages of bibliographic references absent from the manuscript. The impressive list of sources used—in particular, works of French, Italian, Portuguese, English, and Greek travelers, geographers, and historians27—shows the extensive amount of editing of the first draft of the text, which was perhaps a journal, or in any case was written just after La Boullaye’s return to Europe. The addition of several engravings in the printed edition, for example, the tables of Egyptian hieroglyphics on p. 357, can be seen as the result of this later editing. Other illustrations were added only for the amusement of the reader, as is the case of an engraving on p. 235, entitled Singes, in which monkeys are represented with a comic transcription of their cry: oup oup oup.

LIST OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS IN MS. 34.K.17 OF THE FONDO CORSINI

The list of drawings in Ms. 34.K.17 compiled here notes the important differences between the manuscript and the printed editions and an indication of the different illustrators. As a non-specialist of Indian mythology, I cite the captions of the illustrations of Indian subjects with suggested reconstructions of the subjects based on the captions.28 It is to be hoped that in the future a specialist will work on this specific part of the manuscript.

Captions in the manuscript are given in italics. References to engravings in the 1653 edition that reproduce drawings in the manuscript are enclosed by square brackets.

1. Fol. 1v, La Boullaye le Gouz in oriental dress offering the manuscript to Cardinal Federico Capponi (fig. 1).

2. Fol. 2v, Lélé / megilun. Painted drawing representing Layla and Majnun. [p. 185, with the caption: Lélé / Megilun]

This illustration, made by an oriental artist or, more probably, copied from an oriental miniature, appears in the manuscript with a biblical quotation, despiciens amicum indigens corde est, uit autem prudens tacebit. Proverb. XI. 12, as a sort of prelude to the text. In the printed
The edition, however, it is reproduced in an engraving to illustrate a text that explains the history of Layla and Majnun: “Megilon fut amoureux de Lelé, & n’osa par discretion tenter la chasteté d’une si vertueuse Dame, la passion luy fit abandonner le repos, & la profession ordinaire de sa vie, pour satisfaire son imagination par la pensée de sa Maistresse, se contentant de meriter ce qu’il n’osoit pretendre sans crime: En peu de temps il deuint si maigre, & tellement deffait qu’il auoit plus de ressemblance d’une esquelette, que d’un homme vivant. Lelé de son costé faisait estime de ce caualier, luy demandoit aux rencontres la cause de son mal, & auoit compassion de le voir à telle extremité. Megilon ne trouua point remede à son mal, que l’esperance de la mort, pourueu que Lelé eust connoissance que son merite en auoit esté la cause; il escriuit l’origine de ses amours, & pressé par Lelé de luy donner quelque connoissance de la melancolie, luy presenta un papier où elle leust l’estime qu’il fesoit de sa vertu, souffrit d’estre aymée, & soulagea la passion de Megilon, qui reprist son embonpoint en peu de temps. Les Arabes, & les Persans attribuent cette histoire aux Indiens, & s’en servent d’original pour composer leurs romans, & leurs chansons. Les Ottomans à leur example appellent de ce nom les fols, faisans allusion à cette fable. L’ay mis cette figure pour obliger ceux qui lisent les liures Arabes, ou Persans, parce qu’elle leur est comme à nous les fables des Poëtes” (pp. 185–186).

3. Fol. 22r, Serrail du grand turq. A plan of Topkapi Sarayi in Istanbul. [p. 28, with the caption: Plan du Serrail]

There is a substantial difference between the drawing in the manuscript and the illustration in the text. While both give lengthy descriptions covering all areas of the palace complex, the printed version seems to reflect a typology attested in contemporary literature, while in the manuscript the representation seems to be from a drawing made in loco. In the printed edition there is no mention of the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, or the European quarters of Galata and Pera, which appear in a long list in the manuscript (fol. 22v): “a. Sainte Sophie / b. porte du Serrail / c. premiere cour ou se tient la milice / d. appartement des officiers du Serrail / e. jardin / f. porte de la court du diuan / g. seconde court autrement dicte di diuan / h. chemin du diuan, ou de la porte du grand Seigneur / i. porte du grand Seigneur par ou il entre dans ses appartemens / k. porte du diuan, ou lieu ou se tient le conseil / l. lieu du conseil ou diuan, ou le grand Vizir & mufti president / m. fenestre grillée ou le grand Seigneur entend tout ce qui se fait / n. apartement des ichoglan ou pages du grand turq gardes par des eunuques / o. jardins du grand turq / p. murailles au enclos du serrail / q. maison de plaisance du grand Seigneur ou il se ua recreer / r. arriere cour du diuan ou les amo- glans peuent aller / s. Separation de la cour du diuan d’auec l’arriere court / t. Apartement des amoglas, ou enfans seruants au serrail [strike through pages du grand turq] / u. Apartement de quelques boustangis ou jardiniers / x. appartement des Sultanes ou femmes du grand turq / y. jardin du grand turq / z. autre jardin pour les sultanes / aa. appartement des ichoglan ou...

4. Fol. 23r, The Tripod of Delphi (Yælanlæ sütun) of the hippodrome of Istanbul (in the margins of the page).
This illustration and the description of the Tripod do not appear in the printed edition: “Dans l’hyppodrome deuant la mosquée neufue se noient 3 gros serpents de bronze de 14 pieds de hauteur entrelassés les uns dans les autres, qui estoit vne superstition des anciens grecs croyants par cette figure empesscher les serpents de faire du mal autour de constantinople.”

5. Fol. 25v, Mosquées. A sketch of mosques.


7. Fol. 39r, Mont Gordiaeus. Ararat. [p. 84, Mont Gordiaeus or Ararat]
The illustration appears different in the printed edition, where Noah’s Ark is depicted on the top of Mount Ararat. The printed edition reproduces the long descriptive list of the manuscript: “A. Lieu de l’arche; B. lieu des neiges; C. continuation des hautes montagnes damenie allant iusques au mont taurus du costé de l’est et iusques a Arzerum du costé de l’ouest; D. Lieu des brouillards; E. Euesque armenien assis faisant sa prière; F. voix disant a leuesque que aucun ne montast au dict lieu; G. pied de la montagne.”

The manuscript edition appears more correct than the printed one, where the portrait of the Kizilbash is confused with a “Géorgien.” The mistake could be the result of changes in the text, as in fol. 23r of the manuscript: “Ce mot de turk ou plutost, turkoman ueut dire paisan ou homme de la campagne, & est une injure a vn ottoman persan, ou jusbeg, lesquels souffrent que lon les appelle Mansulmans qui veut dire fidelle a dieu, & distinguent maintenant leur nations.” The same passage in the 1653 printed edition (p. 30) appears as: “Turq, ou Turcoman, signifie paisan, pasteur ou homme de la campagne, & est une inuiire a un Ot- toman Keselbache, ou Iusbeg, lesuelles s’appellent Mansulmans, ou vrayes croyans, & distinguent leurs nations par les chefs qui les ont cōmandez... ” The clear reference to the sakaltrəʃ barbe rase appears in the manuscript (fol. 47r): “Tous les persans & Keselbaches se disent Schaj qui veut dire tenant le party du Schah ou Sahi comme veulent quelques vns qui signifie Veritables, mais sont appelles Raffasi par les ot- tomans, iusbegs, mogols & plusieurs Arabes, qui veut dire heretiques, par ceque les persans sont les seuls de leurs sectes ceque les Roys de perse ont fait pour mettre plus d’Anthipathie entre leurs subiects & les ot- tomans & autre leurs voisins, car si les ottomans estoient Schaj ou de la secte de haly les persans se feroin Sonnis. & ismael Sophi en fit un ordre, & ie diray de plus que Keselbache signifie teste Rouge parceque les Keselbaches & principallement les Sophis portent en teste un Bonnet Rouge a 5 pointes & un turban tourné en Rond qui est le signal pour protester que ils sont de la secte de haly, le tout institué par le susdict ismail Sophi.” A more extensive version of this text appears on pp. 104–5 of the printed text. On the Georgians, La Boullaye writes: “Les Gurgi, ou Georgiens portent les cheueux longs sur le deuant, & se font raser le derriere de la teste, laquelle est couuerte d’un bonnet fourré, & leurs corps d’un habit long...” (printed ed., p. 73). It is interesting to note that the illustration clearly refers to a miniature, following a typology frequently seen in Safavid miniatures.

fol. 62r: “Cette fille est deppeinte auec les habits de mogoglie ou femme blanche des jndes ayant en sa main droite vne coupe qu’elle porte au Roy son pere pour boire & dans sa main gauche un efuantail pour luy faire du uent et chasser les mouches qui est une grande courtoisie aux Indes.” This text is absent in the 1653 printed edition.
10. Fol. 62v, Mogol, mogolgie, femme indistanzi. Painted drawing representing a Mughal noble (Shah Jahan) with a wife and a slave with some beverages. [p. 155, Mogol et Mogolgie]

In this case, too, the text of the printed edition is altered from that of the manuscript, which includes the remark (fol. 62v), “L’on peut uoer dans cette figure les habillement des indes & .la façon différente dauec les autres nations tant du turban, veste, ceintures, que callecons souliers &c.”

11. Fol. 64r, Portrait d’un éléphant du grand Mogol. [p. 187, but now with the caption Vn Parsi]

Fol. 64r: “Portrait dun elephant du grand mogol, lequel en ha plus de deux cent la pluspart venant de l’isle de zeilan, celui qui est dessus est gentil & naturel Indien ayant les oreilles percées & le le chapelet au col, & porte le mesme habit que les mogols ou indistanis.”

In the printed edition of 1653, a chapter on Parsis that does not appear in the manuscript is added.

12. Fol. 74r, Ermand, Schyta, Ram. Painted drawing representing Rama with Sita and their servant Hanuman King of the Monkeys [p. 162 in a quadripartite frame in the upper-left panel, with the caption: Herman / Sctya / Ram]

The illustration is inspired by the epic Rámâyana. Fol. 74v: “dans cette figure Ram est representé avec sa femme Schytha, ayant aupres deux Ermand leur seru-iteur qui leur fait du vent avec un mouchouer; Ram est couronné etant la coutume des indou de couronner tous leurs dieux & saints ne leur pouuans rien mettre de plus noir selon son Age il na rien sur la teste que ses cheveux a la façon des fakires ou reli-que il ha faicts icy Bas estant homme, lon dit que il ha este 2 ans sans dormir ny manger, il est mort Roy des Amazones vers le nord des indes.” This is repeated on p. 167 of the printed edition of 1653.

13. Fol. 77r, Lacman & Ram. Painted drawing representing Rama and his half-brother Lakshmana. [p. 162, same engraving, in the lower-left panel with the caption: Ram Locman] Fol. 77r: “Ram eust un frere appelé Lacman homme de guerre, lequel est un grand Sainct, & fort honoré de tous les indou; Entre les miracles que il ha faicts icy Bas estant homme, lon dit que il ha este 2 ans sans dormir ny manger, il est mort Roy des Amazones vers le nord des indes.” This is repeated on p. 167 of the printed edition of 1653.

14. Fol. 77v, Ganes portier de Dieu. Painted drawing representing Ganesha and a girl with a flabellum. [p. 162, in the same engraving, in the lower-right panel, with the caption: Ganés]

Fol. 77v: “Ganés fut fils de maedou & parouti, desquel les portraicts ce uerront cy apres, ganes est honoré en qualité de portier de Ram, ou de dieu si lon veut, & dans toutes les pagodes dediées a Ram, ou Schytha, il est toujours derriere la porte la hache a la main, assis a lindienne avec 4 Bras, ayant de plus une teste d’éléphant, parceque ayant offensé sa mere parouti elle le maudit, & lui dist va que tu aye la teste d’éléphant, puisque tu es un fils ingrait, mais incontinant ganes se repentit & lui demandant pardon la pria de luy oster sa malediction ce quelle ne voulut faire, seulement lui Respondit elle ie tay desiray vne teste d’éléphant tu lauras, mais la langue te demeurera libre. Ganés est icy deppeint avec une femme qui luy a aporté du fruit & luy faict du vent pour le raffraichir, comme / s’il estoit sensible, ice luy la marie & neues point d’enfans.” An enlarged version appears in the printed edition of 1653 (pp. 168–69).

15. Fol. 78r, Maedou & godo. Painted drawing representing Mahadeva with the servant bull (Sanskrit: gau). [p. 162, in the same engraving, in the upper-right panel, with the caption: Maedou]

Fol. 78r: “Maedou est assis sur sa servante appelé godo aussi de grande saincteté, cestoit un fakir faisant pénitence dans les Bois. Il ha dans sa main droicte vn trident ou Baston ferré a 3 pointes, & dans la main gauche un efiuanteil, ils le despeignent tantost oliusatre tantost plus noir selon son Age il na rien sur la teste que ses cheveux a la façon des fakires ou religieus indou ou payens; vers Bengala il est tenu en qualité de dieu.” About the same in the printed edition of 1653, p. 169.

16. Fol. 78v, Parouti & maedou. Painted drawing representing Parvati and Mahadeva. [p. 170, in a quadripartite frame in the upper-right panel, with the caption: Parouti / Maedou]

Fol. 78v: “Maedou ayant esté tenté par une femme appelée parouti, il la prist a femme puis changea de nom, comme nous dirons dans explication de lautre figure. Les indou sappellent fort souvent de ce nom Maedou prenant les noms de leurs saincts comme les maho-metsans font de leurs prophetes.” Included with the previous text in the printed edition of 1653, p. 169.

17. Fol. 79r, Issourarche & parouti. Painted drawing rep-
resenting Ishvara and Parvati. [engraving of same on p. 170, in the lower-right panel, captioned: Issourache / Parouti]

Fol. 79r: “Maedou sestant marié auec parouti il changea de nom se faisant appeller ISSOURARCHE, il est icy despeint auec sa maistresse qui luy presante vne fleur se disant par la, Vierge; de ce mariage nasquit ganés portier de dieu duquel nous auons mis le portrait cy dessus.”

18. 79v, Seruan honoré vers damaon au Royaume de guzerat (fig. 3, left). Painted drawing representing Shravan Kumar. [p. 173, in a tripartite frame in the lower-right panel, with the caption: Seruan]

Fol. 79v: “Seruan est honoré a damaon [Diu], & lieux circonuoisins de la dicte ville possedée par les portugais, & est mort dans le royaume de guzerat. Il est despeint portant son pere & sa mere extremement vieux a la promenade, & est la simbole de l’honneur & reuereuence que lon doit aux parens. Il est tenu pour un grand sainct des idolatres payens des enuirons de damaon.” The text on p. 174 of the printed edition of 1653 is very similar.

19. Fol. 80r, Kan Kochetna (fig. 3, right). Painted drawing representing Krishna with three gopís, two peacocks, two cows, and a dog [p. 173, in the same engraving, upper panel, with the caption: Kan, ou Kochetna].

Fol. 80r: “Kan ou kochetna est vn ange du ciel lequel est depeint icy auec 4 bras jouant de la flutte, ils le representent en plusieurs postures suivant les miracles que ils luy attribuent, icy se peut voir la figure des Boeufs des indes.” In printed text with some additions, pp. 174–75.

20. Fol. 80v, Kan ou cochetna se rend invisible (fig. 4, left). Painted drawing representing a famous episode of Krishna with the gopís in the Yamuna River [p. 173,
in the same engraving, lower-left panel, with the caption: Kan.
Fol. 80v: “Kan uoyant copagna se lauer luy desroba ses habits, & ceux d’une autre indooie amie de Compagna, & les emporta sans estre veu, car il se rendoit jnuisible quand il ouuloit, puis apres les ayant mis autour des Branches dun Arbre appelé Kasta dont les racines descendent en bas & est sacré chez les gentils, il se mist a iuoir la flute. Ensorthe estant entendu & decouuert par copagna et sa compagnie elles le prient de leur rendre leurs habits. Je croy pour moy que gopagna estoit sa maistresse car ils ne la represente presque ias-mais sans elle.”

21. Fol. 81r, Kan ou kochetna fait esclave le serpent Kaguenay & est supplié par nagen deluy rendre son mary (fig. 4, right). Painted drawing representing Krishna and the nāgini, who prays that he give back her husband, the nāga Kaliya [p. 176, in a quadripartite frame
in the upper-left panel, with the caption: Kan]
Fol. 81r: “Le mesme Kan ou cochetna se trouue aussi plusieurs fois depeint dans sa pagode, assis sur un serpent fort grand ayant auprés de soy. Une femme demy serpent qui lui presente une fleur.”

Fol. 81v: “Kan est encor ici depeint jouant de la flute sousb larbre Kasta ayant auprés de soy sa chère copagna qui le raffraichist parceque il joue de son instrument ou il fost souffler extremement fort.”

23. Fol. 82r, Gopagna Kan. Painted drawing representing Krishna with the Gopika (Radha). [p. 176, in the same engraving, in the lower-right panel, with the caption: Kan/Gopagna]
Fol. 82r: "Est derechef assis dans vn jardin de fleurs en toute liberté avec sa gopagna, ayant vn liure de chan-sons & un chapelet a la main avec 4 bras pour mon-ster sa grandeur."


25. Fol. 83r, Bagotti. Painted drawing representing Bhagavata (Durga, wife of Shiva).
Fol. 83r: "Cette Bagotti est une sainte laquelle eut la force de combatre les geans, les bramanes tiennent que elle nest point morte, elle es montée sur un lyon ayant 8 bras, tesmoignage de grande force & de grande sainteté. Ce aura esté a mon avis quelque autre pucelle d’orleans qui aura combattu pour la liberté de sa patrie & aura reusci."

Fol. 83v: "Les indous ont la plus part de leurs pagodes faictes de pierre, & couuertes de tuilles ou briques; de la figure que sont faictes ces 2 cy dessus."

27. Fol. 85r, Arbre appelé Kasta (fig. 5). Drawing with a tree and La Boullaye le Gouz (with the internal caption De La Boullaye legouz peregrinus gallus). [p. 182, Arbre appelé Kasta en Indou, & Lul en persan, the engraving with the caption under the figure of La Boullaye: on the left, Ibrahim Beg, and on the right, petite pagode]
Fol. 85r: "Les indou honorent non dun culte divin mais Respectueux l’arbre appelé Kasta, le disent cheri des dieux, & racontent que Kan si plaisoit a jouer de la flutte, & d’ordinaire y font quelque petite maisonnette ou petite pagode, ou il tiennent quelque Sainct. Cet arbre commence a croistre des la perse vers le sempergue & est fort commun par toutes les indes, il sestend prodigieusement non en hauteur mais en lar-gueur, car de ses branches naissent des Racines qui peu a peu croissent & viennent iusques en terre se prandre & se grossissent comme le tronq, puis la Branche estant supportée de ce nouueau tronq elle pousse plus loing vne autre branche qui faict le mesme effect que la pre-miere; ien ay representé la figure le mieu qu iay peu, layant tirée sur l’original." Cf. the text on pp. 183–85 of the printed edition of 1653.

28. Fol. 99r, Figure du pallanquin / Don francisco daboulaye fidalgo frances. Portrait of La Boullaye in a litter with a parasol.

The chapter in which this drawing appears is entitled Ciuilites & visites des portugais: on fols. 88v–89r is the following comment: “Lorsque un gentilhomme portugais va faire visite il sort en pallanchin ou a pieds; sil se met en pallanchin il le fait porter ordinaire par 4 ou 6 esclaves de la façon que représente cette figure suivante.” The same text appears in the printed edition of 1653, p. 211.

29. Fol. 102v, Rajpout (Cavalier Rajepouti) (fig. 6). Painted drawing. [p. 217, with the caption: Cavalier Rajepouti]
Fol. 102v: “Cavalier Rajepout servant le roy de bija-pour ou le grand mogol, se laissant venir la barbe pour saccomoder aux mahometans, son habit est a lindiene ayant des perles aux oreilles & son chapelet au col; il ne porte a la guerre pour toutes armes que vne espée courbée & une demie picque se mocquant des persans qui endossent l’arc & le carcois les appelant par brau-adé & mocquerie Batteurs de coton ceque nous disions batteurs de laine; a cause que ceux qui battent le coton aux jndes ou la laine en Europe ont un baton courbé avec un boyau qui ressemble un arc, ces Rajapout ici sont tres vaillants & ne craignent point de venir aux mains avec les persans.” An enlarged version appears on pp. 217–18 of the printed edition of 1653.

30. Fol. 105v, Femme indienne. [p. 141, without caption]
Ms. F. 103r: “Ce portraict represente la femme dun payen ayant le frond & les oreilles peintes & son chapelet au col & des anneaux dor aux bras & aux jambes, elle esleué sur un petit siège de bois ayant auprès de sois deux pots, lun ou elle met de l’eau lautre de l’huile odorifferante, elle a une piece de cambresine sur son corps tellement fine que l’on voit a travers.” About the same text on p. 141 of the printed edition of 1653.

31. Fol. 111v, F. legouz dominous de la boullaye peregrinus andegauensis. Vignette drawing with a tree, La Boullaye in a turban, and a lion under the sun. [p. 441 (wrongly numbered; follows p. 240), without caption or depiction of traveler]
Fol. 111v: “Tous les oiseaux des Indes orientales font leur nids d’une autre façon que les nostres, acause de la plume & de la chaleur, & en lieu de le faire en rond, & ouert par en haut, le font comme vne bouteille & l’attachent a l’extremité des branches de palmier ou autres arbres & l’ourent par en bas y ayant une pet-tite entrée qui puis apres se montre en haut, puis re-
32. Fol. 113r, *Arbre à fleurs*. On the same folio, in a vignette, are a portrait of La Boullaye with the caption *F. Legouz Escuier Seigneur dela boullaye*, and two other vignettes: *Arbre appelé lettiere par les portugais* (lower left), and *autre arbre fait en façon de serpent* (lower right). [In a tripartite plate, p. 255, lower-right panel: *Arbre appelé lettiere par les portugais*, and lower-left panel: *serpentiere*] Fol. 112v: “Les arbres a fleurs sont de plusieurs sortes y en ayant qui donnent de leurs fleurs le jour les autres la nuit.” Under the drawing with the caption *Arbre appelé lettiere par les portugais* (fol. 113v): “Cet arbre est appelé lettiere par les portugais parceque si l’on en osté un rameau, ou une feuille il en sort un laict tres dangereux et marque la partie du corps, ou il touche & fait mal plus de 2 heures; de son tronq il en font la mesme liqeur... .” About the same text on p. 256 of the 1653 printed edition. Under the caption *Arbre fait en façon de serpent*: “Cet arbre ou plusstost plante est faicte de la figure d’un serpent a plusieurs testes, & les serpents sy retirent ordinairement en sorte que il fait tres mauvais dormir auprès.”

34. Fol. 116r, *Figuier d’Adam* [p. 251, in a quadripartite frame in the upper-left panel, with the caption *Figuier d’Adam*]

35. Fol. 116v, *f. de la Boullaye peregrinus gallus*. Portrait of La Boullaye near a *jacque* tree. Another vignette represents a pineapple tree. [p. 251, in the same panel, *Jacques*]

36. Fol. 117r, *Señor francisco da Boullaye fidalgo frances peregrino da India Oriental*. La Boullaye near a pepper tree. [p. 251, the same in the upper-right panel, with caption *Poivrier, & Arek*]

37. Fol. 133r, *Ruines de la tour de Babillone*. Drawing with a ziggurat identified as the tower of Babylon. [p. 312, *fragments de la tour de Babylone*]

Fol. 133r: “La dicte tour laquelle est situé dans une campagne rase entre l’euphrate & le tigre est toute pleine par dedans, ayant plus forme d’une montagne que d’une tour ella a encore aujourd’hui demi-quadar de lieue de tour, & Dans le lieue moins large 300 pas de...”
tour, la pluie la beaucoup diminée. Dans sa fabrique il y a 6 puis 7 rangs de briques, faictes de terre grasse ou argille & epaisse cuittes au soleil; puis derechef 6 & 7 iusques au haut, & entre les 6 & 7, il y a dela paille de 13 doigts depass, laquelle est encor’aussi jaune & fraîche que lorsque lon luy a mise. Chaque brique a un pied de Roy en quarre, & 6 doigts d’espais & la liason des briques peut venir a un doigt iay conté 50 de ces ordres de 6 & 7 briques en sorte que la tour peut venir a 206 pieds 1 doigt de hauteur.” The text in the 1653 printed edition is quite different (pp. 312–15).

38. Fol. 133v, Figure ancienne de la tour de Babillone (fig. 8). Another reproduction of the same building, 39 [p. 315, Figure de la Tour de Babylone comme elle estoit au commencement suivant le sentiment de l’auteur]
See 37, above.


40. Fol. 137r, Merdine. The town of Mardin with an encampment in the lower part and a tent of the odabas-chi. Near him is the sournagi and Ibrahim Beg (= La Boullaye), and a horse with the caption cheval attaché à
la façon des caravans. [p. 323, Merdine; lower part with Tente de Souruaghi Mosa: iannissaires revoltez and Ibra-him Beg]

The episode to which the drawing refers is described by the author on fols. 137v–138r: “Le Souruagi Mosa ou Moyse qui commandoit tout le camp comme le plus vieux capitaine fut inuesti dans sa tente par un gros de iannissaires, lesquels s’estoient reuoltés & armés de leur sabres, & ganjards qui commencèrent a l’appeler, & luy estant uenu a la porte de sa tente ils luy dire ces parrolles: ola ola capitaine mosa nous ne scavons ou nous allons a malte ou a candie, & nous sommes obeissans mais nous voulons estre payés de nostre solde, nous te disons tu a pris de pacha de Moussol & du pacha de cette ville de Merdine, le Kahrache des giaours, & tu as plus de 30000 escus [in the 1653 printed edition, p. 324, the sum is 50,000] dans tes ballots que penserons nous nourrissons nos cheuaux si nous n’auons ceque le sultan nous dois donner, tu scais nous sommes des vieux seferris ou guerriers de Sultan Morat, & nous ne partons point que nous nayont de largent, que dis tu. A quoy le cap-

Fig. 8. Fol. 133v, Ms. 34.K.17, Fondo Corsini. (Photo: courtesy of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei)
itaine moyse homme extremement bien fait & autre fois compagnon de Sultan Morat, leur respondit en cette facon; freres et fidelles a Dieu jay pris l’argent que le sultan nous a ordonné pour nostre route & l’ay soubs ma tente, & ne vous l’ay point coulu departir que a Diarbeker duquel nous sommes egloignes que de 3 journées, parceque j’en doibs encor plus recevoir que ie n’en ay; ie vous dis, que ie ne croyas que quelque gros d’Ispahis nous estoit venu attaquer lorsque i’ay entendu du bruit dans le champ & que ie uous ay veu en armes; puis se mettant a rire les asseura que ils auroient leur solde a Diarbeker & leur dist derechef s’estant un peu esmeu, ie n’avois iamais les Ianissaires diuisez entr’eux depuis 50 ans que il fuis de ce corps les simples soldats ayans toujours honoré leurs capitaines & les capitaines maintenu leurs soldats & ie scay que / sultan osman & Sultan ibrahim ont esté tues par les iannissaires... Mais la verité estoit comme iay peu apprendre que le souruagi Mosa ne uouloit payer la milice affin de ne perdre point de temps & aduancer toujours pays, aussi que les jannissaires suiuissent de force, de peur de perdre leur solde qui estoit agir en prudent Capitaine, & politique Ottoman.”

41. Fol. 143r, Figure du cedre. With a portrait of La Boullyaye and a caption in Arabic, Lábula.

42. Fol. 148r, Idoles des anciens egyptiens. Vignette with Egyptian statues.

Fol. 148r: “Mons. Le consul du Kaire me fit present de deux de ces idolles dont voici la figure lun ayant une veste doiseaux & le corps d’homme, l’autre de cheual ou bœuf & le corps de femme.”

43. Fols. 148v–149r, Miracle du monde ou piramides d’Egypte. Representation of Egypt with the Pyramids...
Fig. 10. Fol. 152v, Ms. 34.K.17, Fondo Corsini. (Photo: courtesy of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei)
and a figure of a sphinx on the right; and Memphis (memphis) and Cairo (grand kaire) on the left (fig. 9).

[On p. 359, the drawing is reproduced in a different arrangement, without Cairo and Memphis but with some small pyramids and the caption mumies in the upper part; sphinge at bottom left, and pyramides d'Egypte at bottom right]

A long caption, shortened in the printed edition of 1653 (p. 359), appears on fol. 148v–148r: “A. l'ancienne ville de memphis ou estoient les anciens philosophes deux visités par pytagore & platon, appelée maintenant le vieux kaire ou se voyent encore les ruines des murailles basties par agdon roy d'egypte qui lui fit porter le nom de sa fille memphis/ B. Lieu ou jesus christ a habité estant fuy en Egypte avec sa mere & saint joesph/ C. Chasteau du grand kaire/ D. Mosquée/ E. Chemins des pyramides qui sont esloignées 3 lieües du kaire/ f. Kalis, ou branche du Nil que lon fait passer au kaire lorsque le nil est haut en couplant la digue/ g. chateau dans une isle ou le pacha est lorsque il doy couper le Kalis se faisant fête de 3 jours & la ville faisant un beau present au pacha/ h. Mumies ou sont plusieurs pyramides distantes 2 lieues des pyramides de pharaon/ j. Idole appelée abelahon taillé dans le roq ayant 17 pieds de l'oreille au menton ie croy que c'est la sculpture de quelque roy d'egypte de lantiquité, il est esloigné quelque 4000 pas de la grande piramide [in the plate on p. 319 of the 1653 printed edition, Ablehon correspond à la pointe de l'obélisque].

44. Fol. 149v, vignette of Les chambres qui sont dans les pyramids d'Egypte. With caption A. dessus de la porte / B. entrée de la première allée allant du midy de 3 pieds 6 pouces de haut & 3 pieds e 3 pouces de large, la dicte.

45. Fol. 151v, figure du puits de Ioseph. A noria. [p. 353, Figure du puits de Joseph ayant costez entaillez dans le roq de cette façon]

46. Fol. 152v, Mestre francis the gouz a frence gentlemen traveller of the turquiland. Pompey’s column and an obelisk, with a portrait of La Boullaye. On the obelisk: Aiguille remplie de hierogliphes de 50 pieds de haut & de 12 pieds en chaque de son costé allant toujours en diminuant jusque a la pointe; on the top of the column: Colomne de pompee de 100 pieds de haut avec le pred destail (fig. 10). [p. 374, representation of the same, with two captions: Colomne de Pompee et Aiguille Hieroglyphique]

47. Fol. 153v, Jardins d’Alexandrie. Arbre qui porte la casse.

48. Fol. 154r, Ibrahim Beg et Aaron ben Levj. [p. 376, Ibrahim Beg and Aaron ben Levy]

1653 printed edition, p. 375: “Je ne dois ommitre que dans Alexandrie il y a une quantité de Juifs, lesquels comme par toute l'Egypte, y font la meilleure partie du negoce, & comme ie n'ay voyagé que pour pratiquer les plus habiles gens des lieux où le sort m'a porté i'ay eu plusieurs conferences avec les Rabis de Smirne d'Hispahaam, Alep & le kaire, ie frequentois en Alexandre un Docteur appellé Aaron Ben Ley, qui signifie Aaron fils de Leuey natif de Barbarie de parens Portugais, homme scquant, & de grande probité lequel s'en alloit à Constantinople sur l'un des garrions du Sultan & attendoit son passage en Alexandrie, ie luy pus dire adieu à mon depart d'Egypte & ne veux oublier vn dialogue de la Religion des Chrestiens & des juifs que nous eusmes à nostre separation.”

49. Fol. 157v, Rodhes.

Notes:

1. I thank Dr. Francesca Manzari, who first brought this manuscript to my notice. I have not adapted the transcription of the text of the manuscript to modern French orthography, but rather have reproduced the text as it appears.


Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 14r–15v), which is also reported in the printed edition, provides further information on his meeting with Federico Capponi.

5. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 3v.
6. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 5v.
7. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 7r.
8. Ms. 34.K.17, fols. 11v–12r.
9. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 3v.
10. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 4r.
11. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 7v.
12. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 5v.
13. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 3v.
14. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 4v.
15. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 5v.
16. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 6v.
17. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 6v.
18. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 7v.
19. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 8v.
20. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 9v.
21. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 10v.
22. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 11v.
23. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 12v.
24. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 13v.
25. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 14v.
26. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 15v.
27. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 16v.
28. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 17v.
29. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 18v.
30. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 19v.
31. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 20v.
32. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 21v.
33. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 22v.
34. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 23v.
35. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 24v.
36. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 25v.
37. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 26v.
38. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 27v.
39. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 28v.
40. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 29v.
41. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 30v.
42. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 31v.
43. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 32v.
44. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 33v.
45. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 34v.
46. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 35v.
47. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 36v.
48. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 37v.
49. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 38v.
50. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 39v.
51. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 40v.
52. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 41v.
53. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 42v.
54. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 43v.
55. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 44v.
56. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 45v.
57. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 46v.
58. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 47v.
59. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 48v.
60. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 49v.
61. Ms. 34.K.17, fol. 50v.
A decade or so ago, an extraordinary glass object appeared on the art market in London and eventually found its way to Sotheby’s as a suitable article for sale. In the form of a rhyton, it appeared to be made of two sections of greenish and bluish glass, with additional trails of colored glass. The trumpet-shaped body curved upwards and terminated in a zoomorphic head, with an almond-shaped aperture, tiny eyes, and twin loops from which were suspended glass earrings (fig. 1).

The rim of the vessel was capped with a ring of transparent blue glass, and below the rim were turquoise trails laid in grooved rings. The trumpet-shaped body was also ribbed with parallel grooves terminating in petal-shaped panels, between each of which were clear glass oval pellets colored dark blue, set in similarly shaped grooves. Further down, three more trails of glass encircled the vessel, two of them joined by oval turquoise blobs. The tapering rhyton had further rings of pale blue glass and, at the point where it curved upwards, a ring of blue glass with a rough network of turquoise trails. Just below the zoomorphic head was a single ring of brown glass, and on the lower curved surface of the rhyton was a pinched-glass, double testicular foot on which the glass could balance.

What could the rhyton have been used for? As it was open at both ends, it would hardly have been practical as a drinking vessel, and with some mirth various suggestions were made: that it was a musical instrument, or even perhaps an ear trumpet. It does, in fact, perform both functions perfectly. As for its origin, although
there seemed to be no exact parallel, many comparisons could be made with vessels of similar form and decoration. Vessels of this type have their origin in late Roman glass, and indeed the general form of this rhyton was similar to glass drinking horns manufactured in the Rhineland between the third and seventh centuries.¹

As for the almond-shaped head, this repeats the shape of early Islamic glass ewers, for instance, one from the Serçe Liman wreck (ca. 1025),² and another in the Kuwait National Museum, which also has zigzag trailed decoration.³ Another rhyton, said to be from Nishapur, has a globular body and a very similar head with two ears, but without the eyes and earrings.⁴ An even simpler rhyton in the form of a bird again has a similar head.⁵ A tiny glass figurine of a man in the Benaki Museum has two similar ears;⁶ and a glass animal head has two dark blue applied eyes.⁷ A plain glass horn with a loop handle and spiral trailed decoration has already been recorded.⁸ And a bottle or ewer in the Cohn collection, with a flattened globular body and a long thin neck, has blue glass ears.⁹ Finally, a drinking horn in the Corning Museum of Glass, decorated in luster, is thought to be Islamic, of Egyptian origin and ninth-to-eleventh-century date.¹⁰

At first glance, this piece appeared to be exceptionally accomplished. The zoomorphic section would seem to have been made separately, of a slightly more bluish glass, and secured over the end of the body by a turquoise zigzag trailed ring. In order to apply the trails and pellets over the ground sections, the glass must first have been allowed to cool so that it could be cut and then reheated for the final application of the details. Indeed, the rhyton was so puzzling that it was an obvious candidate for scientific analysis.¹²

### SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

The reason for chemically analyzing different parts of the object was to identify the major, minor, and trace elements in the glass, and to infer thereby the raw materials used to make it. If the two principal components of the object were found to have different compositions, it could be argued that they were made at different times; analysis of the decorative glass would provide additional compositional information that could be related to the history of the object and to the sequence in which it was assembled.

Four micro-samples of glass were removed from various components of the object, and mounted in epoxy resin in preparation for chemical analysis using an electron microprobe.¹³ The samples were taken from:

1. the translucent green wide end of the horn
2. the blue trail applied to the wide end of the horn
3. the pale green narrow end
4. the opaque turquoise trail applied to the join between the two components

The compositional results are given in Table 1.

The first three samples (Table 1, analyses 1–3) are of a soda-lime-silica composition, and the fourth of a lead oxide-soda-lime-silica composition. The wide green end of the horn appears to be slightly weathered and is in a somewhat more deteriorated state than the narrow end. It contains elevated levels of alumina, magnesia, and potassium oxide. Although the published data at the time of the analysis provided few matches (see Table 1, analysis 1),¹⁴ there are now a sufficiently large number to place the glass. One can infer from the composition that the glass was fused from a plant ash and sand. Although it contains a slightly high soda level, the composition is, in fact, very similar to an Islamic one in use between the ninth and eleventh centuries.¹⁵ The blue trailing on the wide end of the horn also contains an elevated alumina level (Table 1, analysis 2). The high alumina in the blue glass could conceivably indicate an Egyptian origin for the cobalt used, because the use of Egyptian cobalt (alum) would have introduced aluminium into the glass melt. However, bearing in mind that the same alumina level is present in the green glass body (analysis 1) to which the blue trail has been applied, a more likely explanation is that it too was fused from an alumina containing sand. The relative levels of iron (a mineralogical impurity in sand) and manganese oxides are also consistent with the levels found in Islamic glasses dating to between the ninth and the eleventh centuries.

The chemical composition of the pale green narrow end of the object is significantly different from that of the wide end (Table 1, analysis 3). Although it too is of the soda-lime-silica type, this glass, in comparison to those used to make the wider end of the horn, is characterized by relatively low alumina and a relatively high level of magnesia; these two compositional characteris-
Chemical composition of the glasses in the "horn" (weight percent oxide)

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ND = not detected

Typical levels of detection in p.p.m. (95.5% probability level):

- Na₂O 760
- K₂O 250
- CaO 170
- Fe₂O₃ 340
- CuO 1200
- PbO 200

Table 1.

The opaque turquoise glass trail, which straddles the join between the two components of the object, is also of an Islamic composition (Table 1, analysis 4). It contains elevated levels of lead and tin, indicating that the white opacifier used was crystals of tin oxide; the turquoise color is produced by cupric oxide. These compositional characteristics are typical of other Islamic opaque turquoise glasses and enamels. Because the glass contains 24.5% lead oxide, the balance of components is correspondingly lower. Nevertheless it contains a relatively low alumina and relatively high magnesia and potassium oxide levels. Like analysis 3, it also contains significantly lower soda levels than were found in the analysis of the glass making up the wider end of the horn.

The chemical compositions can therefore be divided into two sets of two: numbers 1 and 2 from the wide end of the horn, and numbers 3 and 4 from the narrow end. Overall, it is evident that the two components of the horn, with their different pairs of compositions, were made using different raw materials and therefore perhaps in different places. Both ends were made using Islamic glass, but slightly different alkali and distinctly different silica sources were used to make each end.

**CONCLUSION**

From the scientific analysis, one could only conclude that the object was an ancient composite artifact incorporating two sections, possibly of different origin. Further inspection revealed other intriguing details and discrepancies (fig. 2).

At the wide end, the green matrix and the blue trail are of genuine glass. Turquoise trails at the wide end, however, are plastic. And a blob of this substance can be observed at the beginning of the outer trail. The glass has been broken and mended, with cracks through the turquoise trails to suggest an antique fracture. The almond-shaped blobs and the undulating trail are of translucent green glass painted with blue; this paint is easily scratched off with a fingernail. The blue trail and the turquoise blobs joining the first to the second section are similarly modern.

The second section itself is of glass with bubbles in it, separated from the third section of similar design composition by a trail of translucent pale blue glass. The double foot on which the horn can rest is made of transparent green glass painted blue.

The final section is joined by a trail of turquoise glass having an Islamic character, which was analyzed, and a blue glass trail. The zoomorphic head has eyes and earrings of blue glass, and a brown glass ring round its neck.

Allowing for modern accretions, from what older...
glasses could the object have been manufactured? A late-eighth- or early-ninth-century glass horn with trailed-on decoration was excavated from one of the palace complexes at al-Raqqa, Syria (according to personal communication from the late Michael Meinecke). The trumpet-shaped section is a genuine Islamic product or, just possibly, formed part of a Venetian sixteenth-century goblet of a type known to have been exported to the Near East; Venetian glassmakers imported plant ashes from the Levant. The zoomorphic head, which at first glance might appear the most suspect component of all, is a genuinely Islamic element, part of a vessel that originally had a flattened globular body, the parallel having been noted at the beginning of this article.

Finally, whoever the anonymous craftsman who conjured up this object may be, he needs to be congratulated for the sophistication of his concept and the allusion to enough genuine art-historical sources to produce an early Islamic rhyton. But alas, as demonstrated, as a unique object the "rhyton" is a write-off.

**NOTES**

3. Ghada H. Qaddumi, Variety in Unity (Kuwait, 1987), p. 110, LNS 81 G.
12. This was undertaken by Prof. Julian Henderson when he was at the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and Art History, Oxford; he has contributed the following section.


18. Mahboubian Collection, no. 1109.
PETRO MOURA CARVALHO

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MUGHAL FURNITURE?
THE ROLE OF THE IMPERIAL WORKSHOPS, THE DECORATIVE
MOTIFS USED, AND THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN MODELS

The imperial Mughal artistic ateliers were among the
most productive of their time. Relatively large numbers
of illustrated manuscripts, textiles, jewels, arms, and
more fragile objects in glass and jade have survived and
are the subjects of an increasing number of studies.
Mughal woodwork, however, is not known, or has yet
to be identified. The same is true of Mughal furniture.
Other than a few pieces classified as such in the 1930s, and
two others in 1982, no wooden furniture has been
identified. This apparent lack of surviving furniture
cannot be explained by the damaging monsoon cli-
mate of the subcontinent or by the Islamic traditions
followed by the Mughals, for there is documentary and
material evidence indicating that not only did their
workshops produce woodwork, but at their court they
used furniture both Western and Islamic. Furthermore,
Mughal woodworkers also made use of the rich Mughal
decorative repertoire to embellish their products, in
the same fashion as did their colleagues working in
other artistic industries. The purpose of this essay is to
discuss the basis for these claims and to identify types
of furniture and decorative motifs that may have been
created or reproduced at the Mughal court.

It is commonly thought that the Islamic world has lit-
tle in the way of furniture because timber was not widely
available in many regions and had to be imported. In
the nomadic traditions of the area, there was indeed
little use for furniture in the Western sense. Neverthe-
less, the Islamic world did make use of furniture, espe-
cially at the privileged levels of society. Various styles
of thrones and footstools, low tables, and boxes and
caskets of several types were employed in the differ-
ent Islamic courts. Such pieces were often produced
in a variety of media, but their study has been widely
neglected. One reason for this may be the scarcity of
extant examples. Only a few well-known secular pieces,
such as thrones and boxes or caskets, as well as vari-
ous pieces of “religious” woodwork including rahlas and
minbars, have also survived.

Like other Islamic dynasties, the Mughals made use
of different types of wooden furniture for religious and
secular purposes, but these were very seldom described.
One exception is a type of cabinet in the tent of Aurang-
zeb, seen in 1665 by François Bernier.

They also contain what are called karguais or cabinets, the
little doors of which are secured with silver padlocks. You
may form some idea of them by picturing to yourself two
small squares of our folding screens, the one placed on
the other, and both tied round with a silken cord in such
a manner that the extremities of the sides of the upper
square incline towards each other so as to form a kind
of dome. There is this difference, however, between the
karguais and our screens, that all their sides are composed
of very thin and light deal boards painted and gilt on
the outside, and embellished around with gold and silk
fringe. The inside is lined with scarlet, flowered satin, or
brocade.

According to Brand and Lowry, during Akbar’s reign
“works of wood...were produced in the imperial
ateliers.” One can assume, for obvious reasons, the
correctness of this statement. It is well known that a
great number of workshops, or kahrkhas, were cre-
ated and maintained by Akbar. Abu ‘l-Fazl is clear in
this respect:

There are more than one hundred offices and workshops,
each resembling a city, or rather a little kingdom; and
by the unremitting attention of His Majesty, they are
conducted with regularity, and are constantly increasing,
their improvement being accompanied by additional care
and supervision on the part of His Majesty.

Regrettably, Abu ‘l Fazl is less clear as to the exact
purpose of these many offices and workshops. Fur-
thermore, although a great deal has now been written
about most fields of artistic production, notably those
related to the arts of the book, information concerning
the probable existence of imperial workshops dealing
with woodwork is still extremely scarce.
Another author who also wrote about the royal ateliers of the Mughals was Father Antonio Monserrate, a Jesuit who lived in Fatehpur Sikri. According to him, “Studios and work-rooms for the finer and more reputable arts, such as painting, goldsmith work, tapestry-making, carpet- and curtain-making, and the manufacture of arms” were located not far from Akbar’s palace at Fatehpur Sikri. Other ateliers that produced horses attached to it was “to be taken all to pieces, by the emperor as a “Frankish carriage, which had four English East Indies Company to Jahangir—described chaplain of Sir Thomas Roe, the coach given by the emperor Akbar ordered a “velvet throne of the Por-
cer was responsible for the production of prized pieces of furniture, as those made for the Mughal emperors certainly would have been.

It must have been from one of these workshops that the emperor Akbar ordered a “velvet throne of the Portuguese type carried with him on a journey, [which he] very frequently uses,” as noted by Monserrate in about 1580. It was most probably from the same workshop that Akbar also “ordered a rich cabinet to be made,” in which to keep the “volumes of the Royal Bible, in four languages,” i.e., the Plantin Polyglot Bible, presented to him by the first Jesuit mission to the Mughal court in 1580. Records such as these reveal that Akbar had surrounded himself with artisans capable of satisfying his demands in the different artistic fields. His heir, Jahangir, also invested vast resources in the royal ateliers, which were capable of copying works in different media, including wood. According to Edward Terry, chaplain of Sir Thomas Roe, the coach given by the English East Indies Company to Jahangir—described by the emperor as a “Frankish carriage, which had four horses attached to it” —was “to be taken all to pieces, and to have another made by it, for they are a people that will make any new thing by a pattern.”

These are examples of European types of woodwork reproduced at the court, but others must have existed, as a number of miniatures reveal. The love of realism, a characteristic of the Mughal scriptorium, meant that the most diverse objects, whether common or precious, were depicted as naturalistically as possible. Among the objects often illustrated many are intrin-
sically Mughal, while others are clearly alien, including Chinese porcelain, Venetian glass, and often Persian rugs; they are, again, the best proof of the Mughals’ cosmopolitan taste and their genuine interest in exotic rarities, which also extended to Western furniture, as is possible to observe in contemporary miniatures.

One of the most interesting consequences of the conquest of Surat in 1573 by Akbar was the encounter of two cultures, European and Mughal. This episode began a lengthy cross-cultural relationship that first included the Portuguese and, later on, various Western powers. In fact, soon after this—around 1580—a piece of furniture of European origin appears in a miniature entitled Birth of a Prince, now in the Russian National Library, St. Petersburg. This has the same basic composition as another painting in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Birth of Jahangir. Most relevant to the present discussion is the chair in which the highest-ranking person, possibly the queen mother, sits in the two compositions. In each case the chair depicted, which must be understood as a throne, shows a distinctly European form similar to examples surviving in Western and Goan collections. It is probable that the chair-throne commissioned by Akbar had the same basic structure as these examples.

Chairs are not the only Western furniture that reached the Mughal court. Another intrinsically European type is the cabinet, widely used in Europe during the High Renaissance to store precious documents, objects, or money. By the seventeenth century cabinets had become standard items of furniture in well-to-do houses. This fashion was also observed in the Estado da Índia, the Portuguese State of India, and a conspicuously large number of these cabinets have survived.

Some no doubt became the property of Mughal patrons, as at least three miniatures in the so-called Late Shah Jahan Album attest. In these examples, cabinets are depicted in the borders of miniatures, while the central compositions are portraits of the noble-
men who apparently owned them. In the earliest miniu-
ture (ca. 1640–50), a cabinet is used to store daggers (fig. 1), while in the latest miniature (ca. 1650–58), also in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, a servant is depicted storing the jewelry of his master. The two pieces reproduced present distinct features, and can be related to contemporary models. Similarly, the cabinet seen in the border of Shah Jahan’s portrait in the Los Angeles County Museum is being used to store precious objects, such as jewels and daggers. These three mini-
atures are further proof that the upper classes of the Mughal hierarchy made use of European types of furniture, including cabinets, which stood on the floor because of the customary absence of tables.

However, Mughal rulers occasionally used tables of
what happened to the mughal furniture?

Fig. 1. Portrait of Mota Raja. Border figures attributed to Payag. From the *Late Shah Jahan Album*, ca. 1640–50. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, 7B.34. (Photo: courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin)
an unambiguously European type, as two well-known miniatures show. In the earlier, *Jahangir Welcoming Shah Abbas* (fig. 2),32 datable to ca. 1618 and now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, a table with a square top and a central support in the form of a baluster vase is reproduced, while the slightly later (ca. 1630) *Young Prince with Sages in a Garden*, in Dublin, depicts a second table with a similar top but a more curious central column (fig. 3).33 This type of table was in use mainly in Italy and other European countries from the late sixteenth century onwards.34

No surviving pieces of furniture from Akbar’s imperial workshops have been identified. When Abu ’l-Fazl discusses thrones as insignia of royalty, he states that they were “made of gold, silver, etc.,”35 and makes no specific reference to wood. However, it can be assumed that the frames of these and later thrones were made of wood,36 although probably not of very high quality,
as they were intended to be plated with precious metal. As Upton and Ackerman stated in 1938, “The wooden substructures are quite ordinary and will hardly bear a critical close inspection. They [the imperial Persian and Indo-Persian thrones] are rather achievements of the jeweller’s art.”37 The best example of these jeweled pieces of furniture must have been the so-called Peacock Throne, made for Shah Jahan.

The presence of foreigners at the court influenced the Mughal arts at different levels. Often the foreigners presented emperors with artifacts and novelties. Although European commodities offered by Europeans tend to be given more attention by Western scholars, the Mughal emperors also received a vast range of furniture from other regions. This was particularly the case in later periods, especially during the reign
of Aurangzeb. According to Manucci, the emperor received, for instance, “a small throne in appearance like a litter, a piece of Japanese work” from the Dutch ambassador,38 while Bernier states that an Uzbek ambassador presented him with a palanquin and a traveling throne of Chinese or Japanese origin.39 Nevertheless, from contemporary accounts, it seems that Western offerings were among the most appreciated. It is well known that occasionally the emperors received European artifacts from their officials; Jahangir, for instance, records that a “little crystal box of Frank work, made with great taste” was given to him by a local.40 Interestingly, Western artists were also engaged in the production of pieces of furniture for the Mughals. Jahangir describes in his Memoirs the moment when he received from one of his officials, “a throne of gold and silver, much ornamented and decorated…. This throne had been made by a skilful European of the name of Humammand (skilful),41 who had no rival in the arts of a goldsmith and a jeweller, and in all sorts of skill.” 42

Despite the apparent lack of specific documentary sources and material evidence, one of the most splendid early Mughal buildings provides the best proof of the superior technical skills of Akbar’s woodworkers and decorators. The remarkable canopy in the interior of the white marble tomb of Shaykh Salim al-Din Chishti (d. 1571–72), located in the courtyard of the Jamk Masjid at Fatehpur Sikri and thought to have been finished in the early years of Jahangir’s reign, ca. 1606, has survived to this day in remarkable condition. Its columns and canopy are decorated with mother-of-pearl and ebony marquetry (fig. 4), but its structure is of wood. This particular decorative technique has its origins in Gujarat.43 Akbar, who in his kitabkhana had artists of various origins working together, is likely to have employed specialized workmen from that region in order to produce the internal decoration of the tomb of this highly revered figure. That the material that decorates the exterior of the tomb is white marble—traditionally employed on Gujarati Jain monuments—also serves to confirm the craftsmen’s origin. If this assumption is correct, then it is also probable that the same artisans produced at the court pieces of furniture decorated in this technique.

It seems unquestionable that this type of decoration was highly appreciated at the Mughal court, given the importance of Shaykh Salim al-Din Chishti. Furthermore, pieces decorated in this fashion were also used as gifts at the highest levels. In 1528–29, for instance, Babur (r. 1526–30), the founder of the Mughal empire, presented to one of his sons a “stool worked in mother-o’pearl.”44 Decades later, in 1595, Father Pierre du Jar-

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Fig. 4. Canopy, mother-of-pearl and ebony marquetry. Interior of the tomb of Shaykh Salim al-Din Chishti, Fatehpur Sikri, ca. 1606. (Photo: P. Moura Carvalho)

Fig. 5. Abu Bakr escapes from the prison to Khurasan after killing his guards (detail). Sketched and painted by Diaw Jeu Gujarati, Timarnma, late 16th c., Library of Bankipore. (Photo: after Bakhsh, Descriptive List, vol. 1, p. 9)
ric states that Sultan Murad when in Gujarat sent his father, the emperor Akbar, “some beautiful ornaments made of nacre.”

Miniatures further link this type of production with the Mughals. Visible in a little-known illustration of a *Tāmūrnāma* of the Akbar period, now in the Library of Bankipore, India, is a chest decorated with what is probably a multitude of mother-of-pearl scales (fig. 5). Its artist, one “Diaw Jeu Gujarati,” took great care in the context in which he placed it: in a scene where a noble person, Abu Bakr, is leaving his prison in a great hurry while some of his servants pack his baggage and others carry it. In the upper right corner of the miniature, a man on his knees passes what must be a mother-of-pearl chest to another servant; meanwhile a third, who has previously taken it from the interior of the palace, watches apprehensively. The author of the miniature was, as his name indicates, from Gujarat, a region known for producing objects decorated with mother-of-pearl, which explains the inclusion of a valuable chest in a manuscript illustration.

This type of box, rectangular and with a gabled lid, must have been quite prized, for similarly shaped boxes of different sizes were exported to Europe, where relatively numerous examples datable from the early sixteenth century onwards survive. Many of them were used as reliquaries, like the large example in the Cathedral of Lisbon containing the relics of St. Vincent, the patron saint of Lisbon (fig. 6), the proportions and dimensions of which are comparable to those of the chest depicted in the Bankipore miniature, suggesting that they were of the same type. The Lisbon piece, like many others, was enriched, possibly in Goa, with Renaissance silver mounts, thus accounting for its European appearance.

A final link permits us to establish that this type of furniture was indeed used by the Mughals. The interiors of many of these chests are decorated, over red (lac?) backgrounds, with gilt arabesques forming medallions, similar to those reproduced, for example, on the external surfaces of several chests in a miniature, datable to about 1570 and now in the Freer Gallery of Art, from the *Hamzanāma*.51
THE SHARING OF IMAGERY

Relations between the artists of the kitābkhāna and the artisans of the Mughal kārkhānas have yet to be fully studied. The sharing of imagery was a popular practice in Mughal India, with the same decorative motifs often inspiring the embellishment of manuscripts, textiles, and other types of art. The examination of specific pieces allows us to conclude that the furniture industry was also influenced by courtly fashions. Indeed, certain pieces invite extensive comparisons with royal works of art, thus indicating a connection between courtly models and specific production centers.

The sharing of imagery occurs not only with long-established decorative themes but also with others rather more complex and unusual. The motif of a simurgh attacking a gaja-simha is an excellent example of this. It has been reproduced practically unmodified in the Boston Akbari pictorial carpet, in two miniatures—one in the British Museum and the other in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London—and on at least one cabinet—a large example in a Portuguese private collection. The gaja-simha (literally, elephant-lion) is a composite winged creature with the body of a lion and the head of an elephant, beasts that in Hindu mythology are synonymous with strength and sovereignty. The reason for the attack by the simurgh—also known as a rukh, a bird of Islamic origin that supposedly could also carry an elephant while flying—must be connected with some sort of competition between it and the composite creature, which is depicted holding seven elephants in its claws, tail, trunk, and teeth.

Less unusual is a group consisting mostly of cabinets of various forms, the decoration of which includes traditional themes of the Mughal repertoire, including mythical beasts such as the simurgh and human figures dressed after the Mughal and Portuguese fashions. The latter are mostly depicted hunting, engaged in conversation, dancing, or playing musical instruments. Color is frequently used; different woods as well as ivory inlays are often stained with red or green pigment.

The fact that some of these pieces are also decorated with khātam-bandī work has led several authors to attribute them to Sind. Although this origin is widely accepted, the sources for the figural decoration available to the craftsmen are usually not discussed. The relatively large number of extant examples and the variable quality of the inlay work suggest that the models must have been widely available and were not exclusive to the Mughal court craftsmen. A large number were exported to Europe, where many survive, especially in Portugal.

In fact, their probable models were accessible to a rather large audience, as they still are. The panels in mosaics of cut glazed tiles that decorate some of the walls of the Fort of Lahore (and possibly other contemporary public buildings) may have been the inspiration behind the inlaid motifs employed in this type of furniture. These tile mosaics were first published in 1920 by Vogel, who reproduced, with numbers, over a hundred panels; since then scholars have largely ignored them. The (re)construction of the fort, originally from the Ghurid period, was begun by Akbar and completed by Shah Jahan. The early phase of the work, however, was concluded in about 1625 under Jahangir; the architect was 'Abd al-Karim Ma'mur Khan, who is also thought to have been responsible for the mosaic panels.

Among the main decorative themes are scenes with humans hunting various animals (Vogel's no. 30); felines chasing deer (nos. 41, 43, 93, 95); birds of prey pursuing other birds (no. 79); processions of humans and animals (nos. 28, 46, 94); elephant fights (nos. 1, 7, 13, 35, 47) and elephant riders (no. 14); riders on horseback (no. 29); confronted horsemen (nos. 3, 11); winged cherubs' heads (no. 86); flying cranes (nos. 16, 22, 61, 96, 100); a figure of a European (?) wearing a short jacket, wide trousers, and a hat with a plume (no. 78), and of foreigners in other costumes (nos. 76, 77); two gladiators fighting with swords and shields (no. 37); a huqqa-smoker (no. 113); servants with fly whisks (no. 101), with an added dish of pomegranates and vase of flowers (no. 50), or candlestick (no. 53).

These panels relate to popular entertainments at the Mughal court—animal fights and hunts—often described by Abu 'l-Fazl and European travelers. Many of these subjects also inspired the decoration of furniture. The largest known piece decorated in such fashion (fig. 7), a cabinet-on-stand now in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon, perfectly illustrates this consonance in decorative themes. It is made up of two rectangular sections of similar dimensions, the top a cabinet appearing...
to have sixteen drawers, and the lower an armoire with two hinged doors. The fronts of the drawers and doors are inlaid with similar subjects: scenes of humans hunting various animals (drawers 9, 12, 14, and 15 and the lower parts of the doors); felines hunting deer (lower areas of the doors); elephant fights (drawer 10); riders (drawers 5 and 8 and lower areas of the doors); confronted horsemen (drawers 5 and 8); confronted animals (drawers 10, 11, 13, and 16 and doors); flying birds (doors); figures of Europeans (lower areas of the doors) and locals (drawers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7); and servants holding various objects (drawers 1 and 4).

Other decorative themes observed on the Lahore tile mosaics that are not reproduced on the Lisbon cabinet but appear on related pieces include winged cherubs' heads, gladiators, birds of prey pursuing other birds, etc.

Besides the main consonance of decorative themes, other factors permit us to relate the Lahore tiles to this type of inlaid furniture. Notably, both are mosaics, pre-
senting a fragmented surface. Both also convey a feeling of *horror vacui*; the empty spaces are always filled with stems and flowers.

Another important shared aspect is the spatial organization, which tends to symmetry, often resulting in the creation of mirror images with an imaginary central axis. This is commonly observed within single mosaic panels (e.g., fig. 8) and on drawers and doors alike (fig. 7). Whenever a scene is asymmetrical, the craftsmen responsible for both the furniture and the mosaics made use of a studied stratagem, thus guaranteeing an essential harmony. They achieved this balance through the creation of pendants, the scenes of which are reversed in relation to each other. The two mirror images are then placed side-by-side on the wall or, in the case of the furniture, following a previously established plan (fig. 7). A few pieces of furniture are decorated with asymmetrical scenes: a rare example, now in the al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait, reveals a lack of balance that has been avoided in the majority.

Another relevant link between the two types of work is the use of color. Like the Lisbon cabinet-on-stand and the Kuwait cabinet, many other pieces ornamented in this way are inlaid with stained woods and ivory. The colors used—red and green—do not correspond to those of the mosaics—mostly blues and yellows, but also greens and reds—but they account for the livelier appearance of these pieces.

A final link between the decoration on the tilework and that on the inlaid furniture is a rather bizarre loss of proportion in the depiction of the motifs, visible in only a small number of cases. While in most examples the motifs are reproduced to scale—a human figure is smaller than a horse, and a horse is smaller than an elephant—craftsmen occasionally appear to have forgotten this simple principle. Panel no. 34 (fig. 9), depicting two human figures of different sizes, one as tall as the elephant, is an example. The same happens in a few pieces of furniture: the pendant scenes that decorate drawers 9 and 12 of the Lisbon cabinet-on-stand are the only ones where this irregularity is observable; in this case, the hunters are taller than the elephants.

The tile mosaics therefore provide a unique and hitherto unnoticed link between Mughal art and furniture usually classified as Indo-Portuguese. It is thus probable that such furniture was in fact produced both for Mughal and for export markets, as is the case with furniture decorated with mother-of-pearl.

Fig. 8. Tile mosaics, Fort of Lahore, ca. 1625. (Photo: after Vogel, *Tile-Mosaics of the Lahore Fort*, no. 11, pl. 15)
The absence of inscriptions on Mughal art objects makes it more difficult to assign them specifically to either an artist or a production center. As suggested here, it is probable that some pieces of furniture were decorated with motifs borrowed from other media; in fact, the maker of a cabinet does not necessarily have to be its designer. This is particularly relevant to furniture decorated in the so-called floral style used by craftsmen working in the various court industries. Observing the design differences and inlay work in various pieces, one can conclude that this intrinsically Mughal style was current in various production centers. When discussing a chest decorated in this style now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Markel suggested that “wooden chests and writing cabinets were made in Western India and the Deccan…[and] their conception was influenced by the demands of Portuguese traders.” He adds that this particular piece, dated by him to the second half of the seventeenth century, “was probably intended for the Mogul court.” The decoration of its upper section and sides may be directly compared with, for instance, that of inlaid or carved marble dados at the Red Fort at Agra, as well as of carpets; several rows of alternating flowering plants are symmetrically arranged, and all are oriented in the same direction and are within a border with a complex design of blossoms and scrolling vines.

The decoration of an extremely small group of cabinets, including one now in the Khalili Collection, London (fig. 10), epitomizes what must be considered the highest achievements of the Indian inlay workers. These pieces usually have large dimensions and feature either two vertically hinged doors or fall fronts, both types open to reveal several tiers of drawers, the fronts of which are decorated with inlaid repeats consisting of one or two floral sprays of different kinds. Surprisingly, nothing of the design fluency, contours, or expressiveness of Shah Jahan-period flowers has been lost in the transfer of these motifs to ivory inlays.

As mentioned before, there is no documentary evidence for court cabinet-makers, but considering the high quality of the inlay work and the complexity of the decorative motifs on this and similarly decorated pieces made by craftsmen of superior technical skill, one wonders whether pieces such as these were not produced at the court. The small number of examples that constitute this particular group and their close affinity to one another suggest that they may all have been made in the same workshop during a limited period of time not much later than the death of Shah Jahan in 1666.

In conclusion, documentary and material evidence shows that the Mughals did make use of furniture, of not only traditional Islamic but also Western forms, including chair-thrones and cabinets. Furthermore, there are reasons to believe that the imperial workshops were also engaged in the production of wood furniture, which was often embellished using the same decorative repertoire employed in courtly art. Motifs like the simurgh attacking a gaja-simha and others in the “floral style” strongly suggest that woodworkers had close contacts with other, more prestigious, artistic industries. Much
of the ivory-inlaid decoration found in furniture usually classified as Indo-Portuguese is inspired by traditional Mughal themes, such as hunting and courtly activities. Not surprisingly, the likely models for these were Mughal; the tile mosaics of the Fort in Lahore may well be their prototypes.

It seems that the supposed paucity of extant Mughal furniture is related to prejudice—for instance, the belief that Muslims do not use furniture—and to overly general classification. The Mughals definitely appreciated pieces decorated with mother-of-pearl, as well as those inlaid with ivory, as much as the Europeans did. Although most such pieces are now classified as Indo-Portuguese, it is possible that some were made as a result of Mughal commissions, substantiating once again Mughal taste for novelties of foreign origin.

The Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic Art
London

NOTES

1. An exception is a carved panel exhibited as having possibly belonged to a Mughal or Rajput throne. See R. Skelton et al., The Indian Heritage: Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule, cat. of an exh. at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Apr. 21–Aug. 22, 1982 (London, 1982), cat. no. 543.
3. Both are decorated with “Gujarati lacquer” inlaid with mother-of-pearl. For illustrations and comments, see Skelton, The Indian Heritage, cat. nos. 549 and 550. However, in 1985 a related piece, a qalamdan dated to 1587, was classified as “sultanate” (S. C. Welch, India: Art and Culture, 1300–1900, cat. of an exh. at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York [New York, 1985], cat. no. 82).
4. A chair on loan to the Nationalmuseum, inv. no. UU sn, and a chest in the Nationalmuseum, NM Ksh 277/1907, both in Stockholm, are classified since the 1930s as late-sixteenth-century Mughal works (V. Slomann, “The Indian Period of European Furniture,” The Burlington Magazine, pt. 1, 65, 378 [Sept. 1934]: 113–26), but there does not appear to be any basis to this assumption. Its author made several other doubtful attributions in a series of articles that were hotly disputed at the time; lamentably these pieces—of possible German origin—are still considered to be “among the few wooden objects of

More recently, in La route des Indes: les Indes et l'Europe, échanges artistiques et héritage commun, 1650–1850, cat. of an exh. at Musée d’Aquitaine and Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Bordeaux, Dec. 11, 1998–Mar. 14, 1999 (Paris, 1998), cat. nos. 39 and 41, both pieces were published as North Indian products made for the Swedish market. The reason for such misunderstandings appears to be based exclusively on Slomann’s assumptions, for none of the authors have added any new information or attempted to justify their attributions. Slomann compared the inlaid motifs observed on both pieces to pietra dura work at the hammām of the Red Fort, Delhi. According to him, the pieces of furniture should be dated to around 1580, yet the hammām dates to the Shah Jahan period.


7. Including, for example, the throne presented by Shah ‘Abbas to Tsar Boris Godunov in 1604, now in the Armory of the Kremlin, Moscow; or the so-called Peacock Throne of the early nineteenth century, in the Treasury of National Jewels, Tehran.


10. Among the several surviving and dated examples is the minbar of Qaramoun, 1299–1300, in the Great Mosque of Aleppo.


14. Abu ‘l-Fazl lists eight kinds of wood generally used as building material but makes no references to their specific uses (A’in-i Akbari, vol. 1, pp. 232–33).


16. Apparently during Akbar’s reign the number of workshops was increased to thirty-six, located in different parts of the empire. (See J. Mittal, “Indian Painters as Designers of Decorative Art Objects in the Mughal Period,” in Facets of Indian Art, a Symposium Held at the Victoria and Albert Museum on 26, 27, 28 April and 1 May 1982, ed. R. Skelton et al. [London, 1986], pp. 243–52, n. 21.)

17. Monserrate, Commentary, p. 199.


19. There are several known cases of the emperors themselves urging their craftsmen and artists to copy European works of art as accurately as possible; Jahangir even boasted to Sir Thomas Roe of his subjects’ skill in copying European paintings (W. Foster, ed., The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615–1619, as Narrated in His Journal and Correspondence [London, 1899; repr. Nendeln, 1967], p. 214). This desire to imitate was not restricted to miniature paintings, but was extended to other fields. In 1580, when Akbar received the first Jesuit mission in Fatehpur Sikri, he had some of the objects that the fathers had brought from Goa, such as gold and ivory crucifixes and a gold reliquary, copied for his own personal use (Brand and Lowry, Akbar's India, p. 99). This talent for copying seems to have continued in later periods; Bernier, in 1665, also praises it: “Sometimes they imitate so perfectly articles of European manufacture that the difference between the original and the copy can hardly be discerned” (Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 254).


24. Beach, Grand Mogul, p. 63, suggested that the enthroned woman could be Hamida Banu Begum, Akbar’s mother.

25. Forms of chairs were of an importance that is now beyond our grasp (for more on the subject, see Moura Carvalho, “Goa’s Pioneering Role,” p. 72) and were often used as official gifts. In 1605, for example, the Portuguese offered to Shah ‘Abbas a chair described as “made of gold and enamel” (P. Moura Carvalho, “A Safavid Cope for the Augustinians: Their Role as Political Ambassadors and in the Diffusion of Western Art Models in Persia,” Oriental Art 47, 5: 18–26, p. 24).

26. An example is illustrated in Moura Carvalho, “Goa’s Pioneering Role,” p. 77.

27. The Estado da India consisted of every territory under Portuguese control, not only in Asia but also on the East African Coast, and included a network of establishments located along the coasts of the Indian subcontinent, the Bay of Bengal, Macao, and countries such as Persia, Japan, and Ceylon. From 1530 until 1961, its capital was in Goa, the seat of the vicerey/governor and the archbishop.

28. Apparently inlaid with interlaced circles, the most common pattern in Indo-Portuguese furniture.
Payag, from the *Late Shah Jahan Album*, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, lib. no. 7B.34.

30. Portrait of Rastam Khan, ca. 1650–58, border figures attributed to Payag, from the *Late Shah Jahan Album*, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, lib. no. 7B.35. Illustrated in L. Leach, Mughal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library, 2 vols. (London, 1995), vol. 1, p. 437. In the same border is also visible a second servant using a chest to store weapons.


32. Jahangir Welcoming Shah 'Abbas, possibly by Abu 'l Hasan, ca. 1618, from the St. Petersburg Album, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 42.16A.

33. A Young Prince with Sages in a Garden, inscribed "the work of Bichitr," ca. 1630, from the *Minto Album*, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, ms. 7, no. 7.

34. For a late-sixteenth-century Tuscan example, see W. T. Gregory, *Vecchi Mobili Italiani* (Milan, 1953; repr. 1985), fig. 54.


36. Mughal emperors, following a Timurid tradition, also made use of stone thrones, the best extant example of which is Shah Jahan's throne in the Red Fort, Delhi. But these are wide, low platforms without arms.

37. Upton and Ackerman, "Furniture," p. 2658.


41. Thought to be "Augustin of Bordeaux" (Mittal, "Indian Painters," n. 6).


48. The exact origin of this particular form is unknown, but by the tenth and eleventh centuries, under the Liao dynasty (907–1125), it was already being reproduced in China. Later, during the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), boxes of this type continued to be produced as sutra containers. High-quality lacquered and inlaid boxes were made in Korea during the Koryo period (918–1392) for the same purpose. The form also traveled to Islamic lands, as illustrated by the carved wooden box made in Central Asia for Ulugh Beg between ca. 1420 and 1449, now in the Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, inv. no. 2/1846.

49. Museu do Tesouro da Sé, Lisbon, no inventory number.

50. Seen, for example, in the small casket in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, F30c10.


52. Not only are they shown holding the same number of animals, but the position of the figures and their proportions and general characteristics present a striking resemblance, indicating that they probably had a common source, which may have been the royal workshops.


56. Although the origin of the motif is unknown, it was clearly acknowledged by the Indians before the arrival of the Mughals. A composite creature with the head of an elephant and the body of a lion (without wings) is now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 07.8; carved from a single elephant tusk in Orissa during the thirteenth century, it is supposedly one of the four legs of a throne.


59. An even more complex interpretation of the theme consists of a simurgh holding four other elephants while catching a *gaja-simha*. This latter motif does not appear on furniture, and it is also less frequently reproduced in other materials. It can be seen, for example, in a Patna school (?) miniature of the eighteenth century, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 26.51.


61. The technique for staining ivory used by the Mughals is known to us through the *Majmū' al-ṣanā'ī‘*, a "Collection of Recipes" copied several times. According to its unknown author, the ivory pieces "should be immersed in a solution of the dye dissolved in curd"; to stain ivory in green and red, the two colors normally employed in the decoration of furniture, artisans used, respectively, verdigris and lac. (Y. Porter, "A Curious Book of Recipes," *Marg 47*, 1 (1995): 81–83, pp. 81–82).

62. A micro-mosaic work of Iranian origin, known in India as *sardeli*.


WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MUGHAL FURNITURE?

66. Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon, inv. no. 1312 Mov.
67. Although the decoration suggests sixteen drawers, there are, in fact, only twelve, for some are double: the fronts of four drawers are decorated as if they were two. In order to facilitate this discussion, however, they are referred to as if there were sixteen (counted from 1 to 16, left to right and top to bottom).
68. More unusual are pieces decorated with peris, or Persian fairies/angels, which appear on several panels at the fort (nos. 15, 40, 42, 58, 80) and are also reproduced in at least one cabinet, a small example attributed to a seventeenth-century Sind workshop, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv. no. 1598–1903. In contrast, single dragons or dragons fighting with simurghs, also depicted on the tiles (nos. 26, 92), are rarely employed in the decoration of furniture.
70. Besides the decoration of the doors, this organization is observed on drawers 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 16.
72. Comparison of drawer 1 with 4, 2 with 3, and 9 with 12 shows how non-symmetrical scenes become balanced and form mirror images with their pendants. There is a single and inexplicable exception to this rule: drawers 10 with 11. (The drawers cannot be arranged in a different way because some of them are either horizontally or vertically double.)
74. Possibly because of technical problems in staining woods and ivory with colors other than red and green.
75. Vogel, *Tile-Mosaics*, no. 34, pl. 33.
76. Designated as such for their shapes, mounts and/or decorative motifs showing strong European influence, introduced initially by the Portuguese.
80. Such as a carpet with a floral pattern, ca. 1650, made in northern India (Lahore or Kashmir). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1970.321. For an illustration, see Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, fig. 93.
82. Another example is in the Museu de Arte Sacra, Funchal, inv. no. 1418.
This paper is concerned with folios from a dispersed Persian manuscript of the *Nuzhat-nāma-i Ālā’ī* (the Ālā’ī Book of Pleasure) by Shahmardan b. Abī ‘l-Khayr Rāzī (fl. second half of the eleventh to early twelfth century), probably datable to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and possibly attributable to Qazwīn. My acquaintance with this manuscript, leaves of which are held in at least seven different collections in Europe and the United States, goes back to 1989, when I first examined the ones in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. What was immediately clear at the time was that the generally accepted, if sometimes tentatively expressed, attributions—or perhaps, rather, the potential attributions—were incorrect: although dealing with animals and plants, these folios form part of neither a Qazwīnī *‘Aja‘īb al-makhluqāt* nor a *Manāfī* text, nor do they belong to some vague natural history or unknown genre of herbal and bestiary. But it was not until 1991, when I was able to do some research on the *Nuzhat-nāma* manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, that I arrived, as did Barbara Schmitz in relation to the leaves in the Pierpont Morgan Library, at the correct identification of the text.¹

In her catalogue entry for the Morgan leaves, Schmitz also lists folios dispersed in other collections, but she does not include among them those in the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. What follows will therefore give pride of place to a presentation of the Freer folios (figs. 1–6), which to my knowledge have not been dealt with or published before. It will also present the folio in the Harvard University Art Museums, which was removed from its mount especially for research and photography so that I could study its verso side, which contains the picture of the peacock (figs. 7–8). The other folios, in particular those in the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection (figs. 9–14) and a selection of those in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (figs. 15–18) will be taken into consideration when discussing date and provenance.

Included as an appendix is a catalogue of the material so far identified as belonging to the manuscript. This is meant to be preliminary to a more extensive study that will also include a translation of the text contained in the various folios. It is nevertheless pertinent to mention at this stage that there are strong textual similarities between these *Nuzhat-nāma* folios and the corresponding sections of the well-known M.500 in the Pierpont Morgan Library, which has been considered to be an Ibn Bakhthīshū’ *Manāfī al-hayawān*, produced in Maragha and dated between 1295 and 1299. This manuscript had always puzzled me as it has a cycle of miniatures quite distinct from those in the other manuscripts of the Ibn Bakhthīshū’ tradition, and the interference of a different literary source is also evident. In the introduction of the manuscript (fol. 3r) it is stated that the text is a translation from Arabic into Persian of the “Book of the Usefulness of Animals” (*Kitāb manāfī al-hayawān*) and it is therefore understandable how it has come to be classified as an Ibn Bakhthīshū’ bestiary. Further, the textural similarity of the *manāfī* (usefulness) section of the text with that of the Ibn Bakhthīshū’ manuscripts provides evidence to support the association, as the translations below demonstrate. But despite this it is now clear, even if further investigation is required before the textural affiliations can be firmly established, that much of the text is not in the tradition of Ibn Bakhthīshū’ but, as may also be seen from the sample translated below, is rather to be related to the *Nuzhat-nāma*.²

**THE MANUSCRIPT**

So far I have been able to identify and study nineteen folios, which contain thirty-three miniatures. Some of these folios were in the possession of Demotte,³ although it is not known whether he held the complete manuscript.

Dispersed in the collections listed in the Appendix, the folios are all consistent in size and type of paper,
and the miniatures present a consistent style of painting throughout, all obviously having been executed by the same painter (or possibly by a team working in the same atelier).

The script is a clear Persian naskh, in black ink with red rubrics. The date of the folios, on the other hand, is unclear, and the various suggestions for it—all relying, whether implicitly or explicitly, on stylistic comparisons—are reviewed below.

**AUTHOR AND TEXT**

The *Nuzhat-nāma* ʿAlāʾi is an encyclopedic Persian work written early in the twelfth century. Its title derives from the fact that its dedicatee, Abu Kalijar Garshasp, the Kakuyid prince of Yazd, had the *laqab* ʿAlaʾ al-Dawla. Of its author, Shahmardan b. Abī ʿl-Khayr Razi, what little is known has been gleaned from this and his other surviving work, the much earlier Rawdat al-munajjimitin, written in 466 (1074). On the basis of their dates Lazard has suggested that Shahmardan may have been born ca. 440 (1048–49). Both works, written in periods of leisure, reflect the author’s scientific bent, and the *Nuzhat-nāma* in particular reveals a wide-ranging interest in natural phenomena. From the precision of his observations in various localities, it may be deduced that he probably lived mainly in central and northern Iran, and it was while in Jurjan and Astarabad that he composed a number of works including the *Nuzhat-nāma*. The connection with Rayy suggested by the name Razi is reinforced by the fact that Shahmardan’s teacher, Abī ʿl-Hasan Nasawi, was active there, and he also appears to have been familiar with Khuzistan and Basra. At least in later life he held the post of secretary (dabīr), possibly with financial responsibilities. The date of his death is not known.

An edition of the text has been published, and Pertsch has given a full contents list in his account of a manuscript in the library in Gotha. The *Nuzhat-nāma* is largely based on, or adapted from, an earlier Arabic work by Shahmardan himself, who states that during an “idle” stay in Jurjan and Astarabad he composed a number of works, including an (Arabic) Kitāb al-badāʾiʾ that he then reworked, with sundry alterations and abbreviations but also with significant additions, to produce a more widely accessible Persian text.

For the date that it was composed, we have in the first place evidence provided by the dedication, given in the introduction (muqaddima), to Abu Kalijar Garshasp, son of ʿAli, King of Mazandaran, son of Faramarz, son of ʿAbd al-Dawla Muhammad, son of Dushmanziyar. Pertsch concluded that the *Nuzhat-nāma* should be dated to around the middle of the eleventh century; but since the grandfather of the dedicatee, Faramarz, ruled between 433 and 443 (1041–51), his father ʿAli between 469 and 488 (1076–95), and Abu Kalijar Garshasp himself between 488 and about 513 (1076–1119), it must be dated somewhat later. This was confirmed by internal evidence spotted by Storey, who concluded that it could not have been composed before 475 (1082–83) or 477 (1084–85), while Blochet and Minovi opined that it “must have been written about 490 [1096].” An even later date was proposed by Zabihallah Saba, on the grounds that the work draws on a book written by Abu ʿIyāq Isfizari, who was still alive in 506. The crucial information that Shahmardan refers to this author as “the late Abu Ḥatim Isfizari” is supplied by Lazard. It may therefore be concluded that the *Nuzhat-nāma* should be dated somewhere between 506 (1112) and the end of Abu Kalijar Garshasp’s reign in 513 (1119).

In his introduction, Shahmardan itemizes the contents of the ensuing twelve sections (maqālāt), many with subdivisions (fasl), in considerable detail. They are grouped into two large blocks (qism), the first of which, echoing but also enlarging upon his summary account of the contents of his Kitāb al-badāʾiʾ as “characteristics, uses, and various other sciences” (khāvās va tābāʾi va mānāsī va chand ʾilm-i dīgar), is described as dealing with “the characteristics, uses, and natures of man and the animals: carnivores, wild animals and beasts, birds, reptiles and insects; trees, plants, stones, gems, and substances” (dar khāvās va mānāsī va tābāʾi-i mardum va havāyān nāz az sībā va vuhūsh va bahāʾim va tuyūr va havām m va hasharāt va ashjār va nabāt va ahjār va jāvāhir va aṣād).

The dispersed folios so far identified all relate to this first block, and specifically to Sections 2 (quadrupeds, wild animals, and beasts), 3 (birds), 4 (reptiles and insects), and 5 (trees, seeds, and plants). Presumably, therefore, there were originally at the very least folios relating not only to the remaining contents of these sections but also to Section 1, on man. With regard to the parts following Section 5, nothing has yet come to light to indicate that the known folios were part of a manuscript of the complete work rather than just a segment thereof, but comparison with other illustrated manuscripts of the *Nuzhat-nāma* suggests that this is...
THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE IBN BAKHTISHU’ TRADITION

Given the nature of the part of the text contained on the dispersed folios, it is not surprising that, despite the absence from it of material on trees and plants, links with the Ibn Bakhtishu’ na’t/manāfī’ tradition have been assumed, for the presentation of each animal follows a similar pattern: a description of its characteristics followed by a listing of the medicinal properties of various organs. Furthermore, evident textual similarities occur. In the description of the crane (kulang), for example, we find, even if reversed, the same two themes that are treated in the Kitāb na’t al-hayawān in the British Library, the way the cranes take turns in keeping watch, and their equally egalitarian method of successively taking the lead as they fly in file. However, inspection of their respective medicinal (manāfī’) sections reveals a radical lack of congruence. Thus only one organ of the crane—the gallbladder— is mentioned by Shahmardan, while in the Na’t we find an account of the various uses to which the brain, marrow, right eye, gizzard, testicles, and droppings can be put.

The contrast is, admittedly, not always so marked: to take a simple instance, in both accounts of the duck its blood is thought to alleviate bladder pain. But such agreement need reflect no more than the general diffusion of a particular medical notion; as far as the relationship between texts is concerned it is the differences that are more significant, and, as we have seen with the crane, these can be extreme. To take a further example, we may compare the respective accounts given of the pheasant (tagarv), a bird that appears on one of the Freer folios. The edited text of the Nuzhat-nāma, which is frequently at variance with that on the Freer folios, has a compound heading: “francolin” (durrāj) and “pheasant.” In the Ibn Bakhtishu’ Kitāb manāfī’ al-hayawān in the Escorial Library, the francolin receives a mention within the text on the pheasant, but there is no suggestion of a resemblance between the two, and the separate section on the francolin also has nothing in common with the compound account in the Nuzhat-nāma. For purposes of textual comparison the corresponding material in the so-called Ibn Bakhtishu’ Kitāb manāfī’ al-hayawān in the Pierpont Morgan Library has been interposed between these two passages (that of the Nuzhat-nāma having been translated from the fuller edited text):

Nuzhat-nāma (verso side of folio in the Harvard Museum; Edition [see n. 4], pp. 158–59):

The francolin and the pheasant (durrāj va tagarv). When the weather is fine and the wind is blowing from the north it grows fat, but with the south wind it becomes thin and in a poor state because its wings become so heavy that it cannot fly. When it does fly it emits a cry as if it is weary. The francolin has a crop and a broad, large stomach. In flight the francolin, pheasant, and partridge do not circle. They lay eggs on the ground and do not build nests. The chick that hatches from the egg, like the young of the chicken, puts its head to the ground, pecks grain, and finds its own food. The pheasant and the francolin are similar to each other and have a special characteristic, which is that before an earthquake happens they emit a cry, after which the earthquake takes place.

Pierpont Morgan Library Manāfī’ (in Persian), fol. 65r:

On the francolin (durrāj), its characteristics and uses. When the weather is fine and the wind blows from the north the pheasant (tagarv) and the francolin grow fat, but when the wind is from the south they become lean and ill, the reason being that the south wind makes their wings become so feeble that they cannot fly. The francolin, pheasant, and partridge lay eggs on the ground and do not make nests. When they hatch from the egg, like chickens they eat from the ground and obtain their own food. The pheasant and the francolin are similar to each other in nature. They have the characteristic that when there is going to be an earthquake they emit a call and a cry for help, after which the earthquake takes place. Among their uses are: their meat is similar to partridge—it constipates when eaten roasted. When their fat is dripped into the ear with seed oil, the pain is alleviated. Their eggs have the same properties as partridge eggs.

Escorial Manāfī’ (in Arabic), fol. 79r:

The pheasant (tadruj). The characteristic of this bird is cowardice. It does not rise high enough in flight to be seen, but rather conceals itself among trees, thorns, and thickets. It hatches numerous eggs like the chicken and partridge. [Its meat] is similar to chicken. Its eggs come next to francolin and partridge eggs for usefulness and excellent nutritive qualities.

Escorial Manāfī’ (in Arabic), fol. 75r:

The francolin (durrāj). Among its characteristics is that it
loves greenery and water and therefore seeks out orchards and meadows. It forms couples like the dove, and the male broods upon the eggs with the female and guards them in the most thickly grown places, so that no animal can reach them. It has a beautiful voice. Its meat is similar to partridge meat, although it is wetter. Its characteristic is that it constipates, especially if eaten roasted. If its fat is melted together with pandanus oil and some of it is dripped into an ear that is aching, it alleviates the pain. The francolin’s eggs are like partridge eggs for wholesomeness and nutritive value.

The description given by Shahmardan is thus longer than and quite different from that in the Escorial manuscript and the other Arabic Ibn Bakhtishu’ manuscripts. However, neither account dwells on the medicinal aspect, in relation to which it remains to be observed that despite the divergences noted above, there can also be found instances of striking convergence that go far beyond the possibly accidental agreement about the properties of duck blood. For example, in their treatment of the uses of the crow (kalâgh), both the British Library Na’ît and the Nuzhat-nâma begin with a complicated preparation described in almost identical terms, while most of its applications are also the same: a crow is fed bread until its feathers fall out; it is then slaughtered and put in a vessel, its head plastered with mud, and buried in dung for forty-one days. When it is taken out there are black and white worms: these are left to die, and then three of each are taken and pounded with sesame oil. The resulting concoction is used to treat facial paralysis (only in the Na’ît) and leprosy, and if it is applied to the head the hair will never turn white, while if it is drunk it will cause the hair of the head to fall out and never grow again. For all this, clearly, there must be a common source. But thereafter the texts diverge again: the Na’ît continues with another application of the whole bird and then proceeds to list the uses of its meat, blood, three unidentified parts, head, gallbladder, tongue, and eggs, while the Nuzhat-nâma proceeds to deal with its eggs, blood, gallbladder, excrement, eye, fat, tongue, and heart; although there are some elements in common, the treatments discussed are generally different. It is, in short, clear that however much still needs to be done to sort out the tangled relationships between these and other related texts, the Nuzhat-nâma cannot be regarded as forming part of a linear Ibn Bakhtishu’ tradition.

As we can see from the translated passages above, the Morgan Manâfî is much closer to the Nuzhat-nâma than to the Ibn Bakhtishu’ book on animals. Not only are the two animals treated together in the Morgan manuscript and in the Nuzhat-nâma and separately in the Escorial (and the other) Ibn Bakhtishu’ manuscripts, but the na’t (characteristics) section is almost identical in both the Morgan manuscript and the Nuzhat-nâma and quite different from that in the Escorial manuscript. But that the relationship is nevertheless a complex one is shown by the fact that, unlike the Nuzhat-nâma, the Morgan Manâfî includes a manâfî section that closely resembles the one for the francolin in the Escorial manuscript.

This is a pattern that seems to recur for most animals, and the conclusion I must come to is that although, as already stated, there is a strong influx of Nuzhat-nâma material in the Morgan manuscript, there is also a significant amount of material relatable to the Ibn Bakhtishu’ book on animals. This material is found in the manâfî sections, and we know (from explicit statements in the Kitâb na’t al-hayawân in the British Library) that it is specifically these that come from Ibn Bakhtishu’, in contrast to the na’t sections, which relate to an Aristotelian tradition. It is probably because of this that the Morgan manuscript is identified in the introduction as a translation from Arabic into Persian of the “Book of the Usefulness of Animals.”

THE DATE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The miniatures of the dispersed folios have been attributed to different centers and dated from the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century. A fourteenth-century dating was proposed by Ettinghausen in 1959 and subsequently by Esin Atl, but they are outnumbered by the scholars advocating a fifteenth-century dating. These include Marteau and Vever, who suggested an attribution to Iran during the Timurid period, and called the work a treatise of “histoire naturelle”; Blochot, who attributed the miniatures in Boston specifically to Tabriz, thought that they were from a Qazwini ‘Ajâ’îb al-makhliqât, and dated them to about 1460; Riefstahl, who attributed a folio now in the Pierpont Morgan Library to Tabriz, ca. 1480, and thought it was from a Qazwini ‘Ajâ’îb al-makhliqât; and Coomaraswamy, who thought the folios in Boston were probably from a Manâfî al-hayawân of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. A sixteenth-century dating—indeed, a specifically late-sixteenth-century dating—was proposed for the folios in the Pozzi Collection by Robinson, who attributed them to a provincial Qazwin school.
and thought that they were part of a Qazwini ‘Ajū‘ib al-makhlūqāt. More recently the same attribution and date (1575–85) have been given (with the right identification of the text) by Schmitz, who cites in support comparisons with a Tuhfat al-gharâ‘ib attributed to Qazwin and dated Shawwal 984 (December–January 1576–77). It is precisely such comparative evidence that needs now to be reviewed, beginning with the script and going on to a more detailed consideration of stylistic and motivic data.

THE SCRIPT

It is worth making the initial point that whereas miniatures may be studied in some detail for dating purposes, the nature of the surrounding script is liable to be neglected. In the present case we should at least note the contrast between the Qazwini manuscript referred to by Schmitz, which is in a fully developed nasta‘liq, and our manuscript, which is in naskh. For this to have any implications for the dating of the latter, though, we would need to be able to do more than simply refer to the chronological frame supplied by the approximately datable shift from one to the other, even if appeal to this has on occasion been made, at least implicitly. There are, for example, two illustrated Nuzhat-nāma manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, of which one (probably produced in Isfahan), in nasta‘liq, is dated 1007 (1599). The other is in naskh, and it is primarily on the basis of “the character of the script” that Blochet and Minovi arrive at a suggested date of ca. 1400. But for a Persian manuscript, it is in fact hazardous to rely on the use of naskh alone to support a dating to the earlier rather than the later part of the fourteenth-to-sixteenth-century period. The problem is that although the use of nasta‘liq for Persian manuscripts may well have become the norm by the sixteenth century, there are cases, such as a copy of Kashfi’s Anwār-i suhaylī, dated 13 Safar 1002 (November 8, 1593) and possibly produced in Qazwin or Isfahan, that demonstrate the continued use of naskh in the late sixteenth century. In the present case, therefore, the simple identity of the script yields at best a weak probability. But this is not to say that the nature of the script deserves to be disregarded: it is to be hoped that future research, at least beyond the stable calligraphic orthodoxies maintained for the copying of the Qur’an, will be able to establish for each major script style objective criteria enabling some chronological distinctions to be made. Until then, in order to narrow the time scale with any confidence, we must appeal to other types of evidence, to be derived most obviously from a comparative study of stylistic features and techniques of representation.

THE MINIATURES

Although in most cases the grounds for the datings offered above are not made explicit, it can safely be assumed that they largely rely on specific features, whether of motif or technique, for which parallels can be found elsewhere. Thus to support a fourteenth-century dating one might adduce similarities with features of animal and plant illustrations in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Arabic manuscripts—for example, the use of gold to mark some parts of the body, or, more vaguely, certain landscape elements that can be paralleled in Kalīla wa Dimna and Qazwini manuscripts of the Jala‘īrid and Muzaffarid periods. (It may be noted that the Nuzhat-nāma manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library dated to around 1400 by Blochet and Minovi on the basis of script also exhibits features relatable to Jala‘īrid material, but it is difficult to regard it as relevant to the present discussion, for its miniatures are quite different in style from those of our dispersed folios.) Likewise, the fifteenth-century dating preferred by most authorities could have been prompted by certain similarities in the depiction of animals to be seen, for example—as Schmitz has already pointed out—in a Qazwini Tuhfat al-gharâ‘ib of the second third of Rabi‘ II 897 (mid-February 1492) in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. As for the late-sixteenth-century attribution, Robinson does not give explanations or cite comparative material, but Schmitz cites another Qazwini Tuhfat al-gharâ‘ib in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, in this instance dated Shawwal 984 (December–January 1576–77) and attributed to Qazwin, on the grounds that the landscape features are similar. However, although there is a generic similarity to some of the flowers and plants, the parallels are not very close, and other features such as clouds and, more importantly, the animals themselves, are rather different. Similarly, it would be misleading to support a fifteenth-century dating by referring to the presence of the motif of small, running clouds that occurs during the Timurid period without noting that in our miniatures the clouds no longer have the marked spiral-and-ribbon quality that associates them closely with Chinese models.

It will be clear from this review that, as was only to be expected, certain points of reference can be found
for features present in the *Nuzhat-nāma* miniatures in a variety of manuscripts produced during the fourteenth-to-sixteenth-century period. But as the whole concept of these manuscripts is different, so is the composition of their miniatures, and the comparisons they provide are frequently confined to secondary features, with the result that they are seldom conclusive, offering as they do general resemblances confined for the most part to stock iconographical elements such as bunches of grass and flowers. There are consequently no common features sufficiently striking to point unequivocally to a particular time and place, and a major element of the importance of the miniatures in these dispersed folios resides precisely in the fact that they embody a particular stylistic synthesis that has no very close relatives surviving elsewhere. The need, therefore, is not to suggest a dating on the basis of individual features, and especially not ones marginal to the composition as a whole, but as far as possible to draw strands together and give greater weight to core elements and accordingly to pay particular attention to the composition and depiction of the animals and plants—especially the flowers—and the palette used.

Viewed in this light, the few elements that can be related to scientific Arabic and Persian painting of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (for example, the idea of marking out parts of the body in gold, and the fact that the page and the miniatures are not framed), and the few landscape features that can be paralleled in Timurid material (in particular the bunches of leaves and round flowers), assume less importance than the fact that the general rendering of the animals, trees, and flowers is far more vivacious and naturalistic than any we find during the Timurid or earlier periods, in which there is marked stylization. This is true of the postures and movements of the animals as well as of the attention to detail in the depiction of their bodies, fur, plumage, eyes, mouths, etc.

The repertoire of flowers is rich. In addition to rocks and little flowers with single bigger round ones in the middle—a motif that begins to appear in the fifteenth century—we have carnations, irises, mallows, anemones, violets, poppies, and buds of various kinds, still enclosed in their light brown or green spiky leaves (see figs. 10 and 16). Some of these, such as the iris and the mallow, already appear in the repertoire of the fifteenth century, but those in our folios are fleshier and more naturalistically rendered, suggesting perhaps an acquaintance with, or an indirect influence from, European botanical studies.

Such a possibility is reinforced by the fact that some of our miniatures include the characteristic botanical motifs of insects or butterflies flying above flowers—motifs usually positioned at an upper corner, as in the miniature of the pheasant in the Freer (fig. 2), the ass and the wild ass in the collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan (figs. 13, 14), the unicorn in the Metropolitan Museum, and the buffalo in the Morgan Library. In three cases—the goat in the Morgan, the mountain cow/stag in the Prince Sadruddin Collection (fig. 12), and the bull in the Metropolitan (fig. 16)—we find two insects, one a fly or bee and the other a butterfly in profile.

Further pointers towards a later date are provided by the palette and the brush strokes. The palette is quite rich, with a predominance of colors that one would associate with the late Safavid period, in particular orange and purple. The small running clouds in the upper part of the miniatures are rendered mostly in gold but also in purple, and the insects, when present, are also in gold. Although animals and plants are often partially outlined with black ink, major parts of the miniatures, especially leaves and flowers, have been drawn without a contour. The brush strokes are free, with a juxtaposition of thicker and thinner strokes and more watery strokes in the same color used to create depth and suggest differences in thickness. Although the animals are usually without contour lines, some of their parts have been outlined in black, a practice typical of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

For the animal depictions comparative material from this period is provided, for example, by the lion on a folio attributed to Qazwini or Mashhad, ca. 1560, in the Harvard University Art Museums, or even the lion on a famous album page by Sadiqi Beg of ca. 1605 (also in the Harvard Museums). which has a similar posture, muscular body, open mouth outlined in black—which in our folio (fig. 15) does not seem to have been added later—dangling tongue, and expressive eye. The shape and design of the tail of the peacock in the Harvard folio is reminiscent of other peacocks’ tails, such as the one depicted in a Qazwini ‘Ajū’īb al-makhluqāt in the John Rylands Library dated 12 Dhū ‘l-Hijja 1041 (June 30, 1632). Similarly, the “two rocks and flowers” motif in our manuscript is fully developed in material that comes from the period of the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century, exemplified by the Sadiqi Beg Anvār-i suhaylī of 1593, in which there is a parallel repertoire of flowers, at times treated in a rather similar way. In the Sadiqi Beg manuscript similarities can...
also be discerned in such animal features as the multicolor plumage of certain birds represented in motion, the expressive eyes of horses and donkeys and their characteristic dropped lower jaws, and the shape and stance in the depiction of the bull. Other elements of the manuscript, however, are quite different; clouds and rocks, for example, retain a much closer affinity with a Chinese manner of rendering. Perhaps nearer, in terms of the “two rocks and flowers” motif and the treatment of the horses with “made up” eyes and lower jaws opened at almost right angles to their heads, is the Shāhnāma of ca. 1604 in the British Library.35

As for the flower-and-insect motif, we really have to turn to seventeenth-century material to find parallels, albeit in tinted drawings or border designs rather than in fully colored paintings. A relatively early instance is the early-seventeenth-century drawing in the British Library of a youth digging,34 which has a flying bird and an insect—possibly a butterfly—at the upper left of the page. An almost identical butterfly is found twice in a tinted drawing, also datable to the early seventeenth century, in the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection (M. 273); its subject is an artist seated with his drawing board. Later in the century flowers and flower-and-insect motifs are rendered in a way that is much closer to European models, as in a Dioscorides De Materia Medica in St. Petersburg35 (a Persian translation by Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad Radwi) dated Jumada II 1068 (March 1658) and probably produced in Isfahan. This contains a variety of depictions of plants and flowers in accordance with the Dioscorides text; the source for these is more evidently to be located in botanical drawings.36

The conclusion to be derived from such discussion is that the Nuzhat-nāma miniatures are likely to represent either a late-sixteenth-century production, or, more probably, one of the early seventeenth century. We need more miniatures from our dispersed manuscript to come to any firmer judgment; particularly desirable would be a human figure, which might help resolve the problems of attribution, not only of date but also of place.

Although an attribution to Qazwin seems plausible, the rather individual nature of the miniatures makes it impossible, as the above discussion demonstrates, to find conclusive parallels, so that other centers of production cannot be excluded. There are illustrated manuscripts of this period attributed to Shiraz, for example, and manuscripts of a scientific nature dating from the late sixteenth century that have been attributed to Baghdad, such as a Qazwini ʿAjūʿīb al-makhluqāt in the Institute of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg (D 370), dated 988 (1580).37 However, given the present limited state of knowledge, a review of the evidence for manuscript production in Baghdad or other provincial centers might conceivably produce a list of more or less plausible alternatives to Qazwin but could hardly point to the particular milieu in which the Nuzhat-nāma was produced, the task being exacerbated by the difficulties posed by the surviving miniatures, which, apart from being of good quality in terms of drawing, details, spatial arrangement, and colors, are so far unparalleled and unique.

THE FREER FOLIOS (FIGS. 1–6)

There are three folios, two of them fragmentary, in the Freer Gallery; they feature six miniatures in total: two of birds and four of plants. Their general characteristics, also common to all the other dispersed folios, include unframed text areas and miniatures and paper of relatively thick, creamy woof but with visible chain lines, of a good but rather coarse quality common in the Safavid period. The margins have been trimmed. The text is in black ink with red rubrics for the names of the animals or plants.

The complete folio (inv. no. 47.21) has a miniature depicting the duck (murghāb) on the recto (fig. 1) and one of the pheasant (tazār) on the verso (fig. 2). The page measures 24.4 cm (height) x 16 cm (width) (for all measurements henceforth, height precedes width). The text block is 18.5 x 10.8 cm; there are sixteen lines of text on both recto and verso. The miniature of the duck on the recto is 4.8 x 10.5 cm; that of the pheasant on the verso is 4.8 x 10.8 cm.

The text concerning the duck (murghāb) begins at the fourteenth line, the preceding material belonging to the section on the cock and hen. The text for the duck continues on the verso, where, at the fifth line, the pheasant (tazār) is introduced. The text for the pheasant covers seven lines, and then the swallow (khuttāf) is introduced, but we do not have a miniature for this bird.

The duck is multicolored and is set in a pool with its wings spread, as if splashing about in the water. The color of the water is silver, which now appears gray, and the waves are indicated by thin black lines. The curved outline of the pool is surrounded by earth and grass on which are rocks and flowers. In the upper background there are small gold and purple clouds. The colors are
Fig. 1. Duck (murghābī), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 47.21 (recto). Page 24.4 x 16 cm, miniature 4.8 x 10.5 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)
Fig. 2. Pheasant (tazav), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 47.21 (verso). Note the flying insect in the right upper corner. Miniature 4.8 x 10.8 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)
Fig. 3. Fragmentary folio with fig trees (anjir), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 37.38 (recto). Page 9.5 x 11.5 cm, miniature 5.5 x 10.8 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)

Fig. 4. Fragmentary folio with mulberry trees (tūd) and olive tree (zaytūn) from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 37.38 (verso). Miniatures 4 x 10.2 cm, 3.8 x 10.5 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)
Fig. 5. Fragmentary folio with text concerning the grapevine (razangūr), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 37.39 (recto). Page 6.5 x 11.8 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)

Fig. 6. Fragmentary folio with apple tree (sīb), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Freer Gallery of Art, 37.39 (verso). Miniature 4.5 x 9.8 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC)
still bright, with a palette that includes violet, green in various shades, orange, red, black, yellow, silver, and gold.

The pheasant is also multicolored; it is positioned with its wings spread as if it had just landed on the ground. The miniature includes rocks from which flowers sprout on either side; little clouds and a flying insect appear at the top right. The comments made about the colors for the representation of the duck are also valid here; the colors of that miniature have left a slight discoloration on this side of the folio.

The two fragmentary folios (inv. nos. 37.38 and 37.39) feature pictures of trees. They are now remargined and mounted together. It is interesting to note as a general characteristic that the trees, like the animals, have black outlines only in certain areas, in their case usually parts of the trunks, where there are only little black touches here and there, while there are none on the leaves. Also noteworthy in the tree pictures is the absence of gold. The trees have spreading crowns and branches that descend almost to the ground. Each tree is differentiated in its foliage and the shape of its fruit, and in some cases (as with the flowers) the rendition is fairly naturalistic.

37.38r (fig. 3): The recto side of this fragmentary folio shows one line of text, then a representation of two fig trees (anjur) side by side, and then three lines of text. There are no red rubrics. The trees have brown trunks and green leaves. The one on the left has pale green fruit; the one on the right has darker leaves and dark purple fruit. Beneath them is a strip of grass with red poppies; the grass is rendered as single blades, not outlined. Measurements of the page are 9.5 x 11.5 cm. The miniature measures 5.5 x 10.8 cm.

37.38v (fig. 4): The verso of the fragment has one line of text below which two mulberry trees (tūd) are depicted side by side. They have brown trunks, green leaves (the one on the left being darker), and red fruit. Below this illustration is another line of text containing, in red, the title of the olive tree, zaytūn. The tree depicted beneath has a brown trunk with green and appropriately lanceolate leaves. The page measures 9.5 x 11.5 cm; the top miniature is 4 x 10.2 cm; the bottom is 3.8 x 10.5 cm.

37.39r (fig. 5): On this recto side of the smaller fragment are seven lines of text, no red rubrics, and no miniatures. However, the text is concerned with the grapevine (razangūr). Stains of the fruit depicted in the illustration on the verso are visible on this side. The fragment measures 6.5 x 11.8 cm.

37.39v (fig. 6): Apple tree (ṣīb). On this verso is one line of text, below which is the miniature of the apple tree and, following that, a second line of text. There are no red rubrics. The tree has a brown trunk with some black outlines, green leaves, and apples that are red, cream-colored, or a combination of red and cream. A strip of grass appears only in the area around the trunk and two flowers. The miniature measures 4.5 x 9.8 cm.

THE HARVARD FOLIO (FIGS. 7–8)

The page measures 24.5 x 16 cm. The text area and the miniatures are not framed (as is also true of all the other folios). On the recto the text area is 18.5 x 11 cm with 16 lines of text; the miniature of the crow measures 4 x 10.6 cm. The text area of the verso is 18.7 x 11 cm, with 15 lines of text; the miniature of the peacock measures 5 x 10.5 cm. For the paper and color palette of these miniatures, see comments about the Freer folios above. On the verso, the page has been repaired on the left side.

Recto, 1919.0129.0002 (fig. 7): the text is concerned throughout with the crow (kalāgh) and surrounds the image of the crow, which is placed below the first three lines of text.

Verso, 1919.0129.0001 (fig. 8): the treatment of the crow continues for nine lines and into the tenth, where the text on the general characteristics of the peacock begins, introduced by the title ta’ūs in red. The image of the peacock is at the bottom of the page. There is a much later inscription in the upper margin, which seems to be a poetic verse unrelated to the text of the manuscript.

The Crow is depicted as a black and gray bird; touches of gold are added around its eye, on the clouds, on a couple of stones, and occasionally on the bigger flowers.

The miniature of the peacock is colorful, and the bird is depicted in the act of feeding, with its right leg raised and its head bending towards the ground. The area of its breast is slightly damaged. There are touches of gold on the clouds, on the eyes of the peacock’s tail, and on the rocks and flowers.
Fig 7. Crow (kalāgh), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Harvard University Art Museums, 1919.0129.0002 (recto). Page 24.5 x 16 cm, miniature 4 x 10.6 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, MA, Bequest of Hervey E. Wetzel)
Fig. 8. Peacock (tāʿūs), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Harvard University Art Museums, 1919.0129.0001 (verso). Miniature 5 x 10.5 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, MA, Bequest of Hervey E. Wetzel)
APPENDIX I:
PRELIMINARY LIST OF EXTANT FOLIOS

Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC: three folios (two fragmentary), six miniatures (figs. 1–6)

47.21
recto: duck, murghábí
verso: pheasant, tazarv

37.38 (fragmentary)
recto: two fig trees, anjúr
verso: two mulberry trees, tūd, and the olive tree, zaytún

37.39 (fragmentary)
recto: text of grapevine, razangür, no miniature
verso: apple tree, sib

Harvard University Art Museums, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Cambridge, MA: one folio, two miniatures (figs. 7–8)
recto (inv. no. 1919.0129.0002): crow, kalágh
verso (inv. no. 1919.0129.0001): peacock, tā'ús


Collection of Prince Sadrurridn Aga Khan: five folios, six miniatures (figs. 9–14)

Ir. M. 16
recto: miniature of the mountain goat, buz kühî (fig. 9)
verso: continuation of text on the mountain goat and then title for the camel (shutur), but no miniature

Ir. M. 16/A
recto: miniature of the owl, jughd (fig. 10)
verso: miniature of the kite, zaghan (followed by title of the crow, kalágh) (fig. 11)

Ir. M. 16/B
recto: text with title of the mountain cow/stag, gāv kühî
verso: miniature of a mountain cow/stag and continuation of text (fig. 12)

Ir. M. 16/C
recto: text with title of the ass, khar
verso: miniature of the ass and continuation of text (fig. 13)

Ir. M. 16/D
recto: title and miniature of the wild ass, khar-i vaḥshî (fig. 14)
verso: text on the wild ass, and then title of the bull, gāv.


Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: four folios (one fragmentary), nine miniatures (figs. 15–18)

13.160.7
recto: miniature of the bull, gāv (fig. 16)
verso: text of the bull

13.160.8
recto: miniature of the lion, shūr (fig 15)
verso: text of the lion

13.160.9
recto: three plants: hesperis tristis (?), mansúr; iris, sūsan; anemone, āzaryūn (fig. 17)
verso: two plants: purple amaranth, bustān afrūz; watermelon, kharbuza (fig. 18)

1975.192.11
recto: unicorn, jarúsh
verso: steinbok, tāmūr


Pierpont Morgan Library, New York: two folios, three miniatures

M.790.1
recto: buffalo, gāv mish
verso: ram, gusfand

M.790.2
recto: continuation of text on the ram and title of the goat, buz
verso: miniature of the goat, buz

Fig. 9. Mountain goat (*buz kühi*), from the dispersed *Nuzhat-nāma*, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16 (recto). Page 24.5 x 16.2 cm, miniature 5.7 x 11.2 cm. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 10. Owl (jughd), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16/A (recto). Note the buds surrounded by spiky leaves. Page 24.5 x 16.2 cm, miniature 5.5 x 10.5 cm. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 11. Kite (zaghan), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16/A (verso). Miniature 4.5 x 10.7 cm. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 12. Mountain cow/stag (gäu kühf), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nāma, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16/B (verso). Page 24.5 x 15.6 cm, miniature 6.4 x 10.8 cm. Note the flying insect and butterfly in the upper right and left corners. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 13. Ass (khar), from the dispersed *Nuzhat-nama*, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16/C (verso). Page 24.5 x 15.8 cm, miniature 5.7 x 10.7 cm. Note the flying insect in the upper left corner. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 14. Wild ass (khar-i va¥shº), from the dispersed Nuzhat-nºma, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, Ir. M. 16/D (recto). Page 24.5 x 16 cm, miniature 5 x 10.8 cm. (Photo: courtesy of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection)
Fig. 15. Fragmentary folio, lion (šîr), from the dispersed *Nuzhat-nāma*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.160.8 (recto). Page 7.6 x 10.5 cm. (Photo: courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

Fig. 16. Bull (gāv), from the dispersed *Nuzhat-nāma*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.160.7 (recto). Page 24.6 x 16 cm, miniature 6.3 x 11 cm. Note the flying insect and butterfly in the upper right and left corners. (Photo: courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)
at the University Art Gallery, Binghamton, NY, April 6–May 4, 1975 (Binghamton, NY, 1975), no. 82.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: two folios, three miniatures
14.540
recto: text on the tortoise and then title and text of the frog, bazagh; the frog not represented
verso: title and miniature of the lizard, sūsmār
14.541
recto: ostrich, shuturmurgh
verso: crane, kulang


Collection of Jean Pozzi, Musée d’art et d’histoire, Geneva: two folios, four miniatures
Inv. 1971–107/496
recto: title and miniature of the chameleon, hirbā, then title of the scorpion, kashdum
verso: miniature of the scorpion, kashdum
Inv. 1971–107/423
recto: miniature of the muskrat, *fa’rat al-mushk*
verso: salamander, *samandar*


APPENDIX II:
THE PRESENT FOLIOS AND WHAT IS MISSING

We thus have a total of nineteen folios with thirty-three miniatures. If the manuscript was originally complete, there must have been many other folios and miniatures, which, based on complete manuscripts such as those in the Gotha and Chester Beatty Libraries mentioned above, would have covered many more animals, plants, minerals, etc.

There are four miniatures among those published by Marteau and Vever of which the present whereabouts are unknown to me.\(^{38}\) The authors reproduce only the miniatures, not the whole pages; without the text, there is consequently no possibility of identification or of knowing whether the miniatures belong to separate folios. Represented are a trotting ass or onager among rocks and flowers; a group of birds on the branches of a bush or low tree; a bird with long plumage at the back; and vines with grape clusters on their branches, the trunks being sustained by slim columns with pediments and flat capitals that support a square, possibly wooden, structure through which the branching vines entwine. Only for this last miniature can we determine its place: it should be on a folio that is in sequence with (either preceding or following) the fragmentary one in the Freer (37.39 recto), which in fact deals with the grapevine (*razangūr*).

Sequence of the present folios

Several of the nineteen folios so far identified clump together into groups. The following list gives them in the order in which they occur within the edited text of the *Nuzhat-nama* and indicates the number of subjects that intervene between them. The class of animals best represented is the quadrupeds. Following the first section (*maqālat*) of the first part (*qism*), on man, these make up the second section, and begin with the lion. This quadruped and twelve others are represented in the surviving miniatures, as follows:

- Lion, *shīr* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, henceforth MMA)
- Wild Ass, *khar-i vašshū* (PSAK)
- Bull, *gūv* (MMA)
- Mountain cow, *gūv kūhī* (PSAK)
- Buffalo, *gūv mūsh* (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, henceforth Morgan)
- Ram, *gusfand* (Morgan)
- Goat, *buz* (Morgan)
- Mountain goat/ibex, *buz kūhī* (PSAK) The text of this folio continues with the title and beginning of the account of the next entry, the camel, *shūtur*, but with no miniature. There are then a further 14 missing items.
- Muskrat, *fa’rat mushk* (Pozzi Collection, Musée d’art et d’histoire, Geneva, henceforth Pozzi)
- Salamander, *samandar* (Pozzi)
- Unicorn, *jarūsh* (MMA)
- Steinbok, *tūmūr* (MMA)
- The third section is devoted to birds, of which the first four are missing. We then have:
- Ostrich, *shūtur-murgh* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, henceforth Boston)
- Crane, *kulang* (Boston)
- Owl, *jughd* (PSAK)
- Kite, *zaghan* (PSAK)
- Duck, *murghābī* (Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, henceforth Freer)
- Pheasant, *tāzarv* (Freer) The text of this folio continues with the title and beginning of the account of the next entry, the swallow, *khuttāf*, but with no miniature. There are then a further five missing items.
- The fourth section is devoted to reptiles and insects, of which the first twenty-two are missing. We then have:
The fifth section is devoted to plants and trees, with the surviving folios coming from the first three chapters (bāb). In the first chapter the first item is missing. We then have:

Text on the grapevine, razangūr, but with no miniature (Freer)
Apple tree, sīb (Freer)
(Six missing items)
Fig tree, anjūr (Freer)
Mulberry tree, tūd (Freer)
Olive tree, zaytūn (Freer)
(Four missing items)
In the second chapter the first six items are missing. We then have:

Hesperis tristis, mansūr (MMA)
Iris, sūsān (MMA)
Anemone, āzāryūn (MMA)
Purple amaranth, bustān afrāz (MMA)
In the third chapter we have just the first of twenty-two items:
Watermelon, kharbuza (MMA)

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NOTES

Author’s note: I should like to thank all the colleagues and friends who have facilitated my research on these folios and discussed various issues related to the study of them. In particular I thank Gülbüş Nécipoğlu, Mary McWilliams, and Jennifer Allen, who assisted me during my research on the folio in the Harvard University Art Museums. This folio was mounted so that its verso side was not visible, but it was dismounted while I was there so that I might have the opportunity to study it in its entirety. My thanks also go to Massumeh Farhad of the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; William Voelkle of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York; Julia Bailey, formerly of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Stefano Bononi of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Moya Carey and Diane Frascani for assistance on the folios in the Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection; Sandy Morton, with whom I had initially discussed problems of the sources of the Morgan Manāfī; Wheeler Thackston, with whom I discussed the text of the folio in Boston as well as other issues related to textual tradition and script; and Sunil Sharma, with whom I discussed at length the text of the folio at Harvard as well as the Nuzhat-nāma text in general. Finally, I am very grateful to Sheila Canby, of the British Museum, London, with whom I had interesting discussions about the style and possible date of these folios, and who has generously shared her knowledge of Safavid painting with me.

4. G. Lazard, “Un amateur de sciences au Vème siècle de l’hégire,” Shahmardān de Rai,” in Mélanges d’orientalisme offerts à Henri Massé (Tehran, 1963), pp. 219–28. It is on this article that the present biographical paragraph is based.
10. Storey, Persian Literature, vol. 2, pt. 3, pp. 348–49: “it must have been written after 475/1082–3 (or 477/1084–5 according to the text quoted in the Majlīs catalogue, p. 492/9), since that is the date which he assigns (with a query) to an event witnessed by him at Kashan (Nuzhat nama, Muqâlah X, Bāb I, last fols.).”
without supporting evidence. Rypka does, however, usefully
cite two prose summaries: the first...was collected by Rustam
Lariyani...; the second was written by Piruzan, ‘the teacher,’
at his command of his Kakuyid Amir between 1040 and 1050.
About seventy years later Shahmardan reproduced Piruzan’s
version in abridged form in his Nuzhat-nama (1120).”

14. The conclusion that the
Nuzhat-nāma was to be dated early
in the sixth century AH, and not later than 515 (1119), had
already been reached by A. N. Compagnoni, “Hakim Esfa-
zar,” Université de Téhéran, Revue de la Faculté des lettres 5, 1–2


16. The other six sections deal with (7) the elements, space, and
time, etc. (8) arithmetic, astronomy, logic, astrology, seals, etc.
(9) physiology (10) meteors (ājār-i ‘ulu’ti) (11) dream inter-
pretation (12) chemistry, dyeing, polishing, perfumes, etc.
These are followed by a concluding anvām (on the creation
of man, animals, and the soul). For two examples of illustrated
Nuzhat-nāma manuscripts that include parts of these sections,
see New York Public Library, Spencer Ms. 50, in B. Schmitz,
Islamic Manuscripts in The New York Public Library (New York
and Oxford, 1992), cat. no. IL3; and Chester Beatty Library, Per
255, dated 1007/1599 (but with illustrations possibly added at
a later stage, ca. 1620), in Arberry, Chester Beatty Library, vol. 3,
p. 31.

17. See A. Contadini, “The Ibn Baktššī Bestiary Tradition: The
Text and Its Sources,” in Medicina nei Secoli: Arte e Scienza 6, 2


19. Ibn Baktššī, Kitāb na‘t al-hayawān, North Jazira(?), ca. 1220,
London, British Library, Or. 2784. See A. Contadini, “The Kitāb
na‘t al-hayawān (Book on the Characteristics of Animals),
British Library, Or. 2784, and the ‘Ibn Baktššī’ Illustrated Besti-

20. It is possible that the Na‘t also includes a use for the
gallbladder, for there is one unnamed body part that is used, like
the gallbladder in the Nuzhat-nāma, to treat laqwa, a form of facial
paralysis. But if so that is as far as the resemblance goes, for
the methods of preparation and treatment are different.

21. San Lorenzo del Escorial, Biblioteca Real, Ar. 898, fol. 79r.
See A. Contadini, “The Kitāb manāfī al-hayawān in the Esco-

22. See A. Contadini, “A Bestiary Tale: Text and Image of the Uni-
corn in the Kitāb na‘t al-hayawān (British Library, Or. 2784),”

23. This can be found in the museum notes of the Freer Gal-
ery.

24. In the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, MS Mixt
324. See D. Duda, Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabeln
der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Islamische Handschriften I,
Persische Handschriften, Österreichische Akademie der Wissen-

25. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Per 115 and Per 255 respec-
tively. See Arberry, Chester Beatty Library, vol. 1, pp. 32–33 for
Per 115, and vol. 3, p. 31 for Per 255. Although the manuscript
is dated 1007 (1599), the miniatures seem to have been added
at a later date, as they conform to a style associated with mate-
rial of ca. 1620.

26. The manuscript is in the collection of Prince Sadrudin Aga
Khan, M. 40, and it has been suggested that Sadiqi Beg was
the painter. See A. Welch, Artists for the Shah (New Haven and
London, 1976), chap. 3, pp. 41–99 for Sadiqi Beg and in par-
ticular for the Anvār-i suhaylī, color pl. 12, figs. 46, 49, and
50–53.

27. Schmitz, Islamic and Indian Manuscripts, no. 13, p. 48, where
the manuscript is wrongly dated 1485 and referred to as N.F.
153, rather than N.F. 155. For this manuscript (N.F. 155), see
Duda, Die illuminierten Handschriften, pp. 76–82, figs. 102–6.

28. As, for example, in fol. 102r (“Majnun throws himself at his
mother’s feet”), from a copy of the Khamsa of Nizami of ca.
1470 in the Veyer collection; see G. D. Lowry (with S. Nemazee),
A Jeweler’s Eye: Islamic Arts of the Book from the Veyer Collec-
tion (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), col. pl. 42,
p. 147.

29. In some cases, however, there is a thin pinkish or reddish out-
line underneath.

30. See M. Shreve Simpson, Arab and Persian Painting in the Fogg

31. Ibid., no. 33, p. 91.

32. Ryl Pers 3. See B. W. Robinson, Persian Paintings in the John

33. Ms. 966: Ethé 372. See B. W. Robinson, Persian Paintings in the
India Office Library (London, 1976), nos. 1005–67, in particu-
lar no. 1013.

212.

35. D 143 in the Institute of Oriental Studies. See Y. A. Petrosonian,
ed., De Bagdad à Ispahan: manuscrits islamiques de la filiale de
Saint-Pétersbourg de l’Institut d’études orientales, Académie des sci-
ces de Russie, cat. of an exh. at the Musée du Petit Palais, Oct.

36. See, in particular, the irises on fol. 36r, lilies and butterfly
on fol. 36v, and poppies on fol. 48r, reproduced in color in Petrosonian, Bagdad à Ispahan, color pls. on pp. 231, 232, and
235 respectively.

37. See B. Moor and E. A. Rezvan, “Al-Qazwini’s ’Aya’b al-Makhlūqat
wa Ghara’ib al-Mawsudat: Manuscript D 370,” in Manuscripta Ori-
produced in Baghdad under the Ottomans at the end of the
sixteenth and in the early seventeenth century, see R. Milstein,
Miniature Painting in Ottoman Baghdad (Costa Mesa, 1990).

38. Marteau and Vever, Miniatures persanes, vol. 2, pls. 67, 69, 70,
72.
The study of later ceramics in the world of Islam has been sadly neglected, although Michael Rogers has often approached this undervalued field with sensitive curiosity, especially in his *Islamic Art and Design, 1500–1700* of 1983. For this reason it seems appropriate to offer him the study of a large Safavid dish decorated with trees and flowers, as his fascination with gardening is well known. This dish (figs. 1 and 2) is in a private collection.

Before examining this late Safavid dish in detail, some general remarks about the larger field of Islamic ceramics may be of interest, as it is surprising how few researchers in the twentieth century have been attracted by these ceramics. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the field was indeed nebulous. Late Persian wares were simply called “Ottoman.” When sea access to Asia was made easier and faster by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and foreign artifacts became readily available, amateurs in greater numbers started collecting them but with little knowledge of their historical background. In the early 1870s Murdoch Smith was the first to assist the Kensington Museum, later renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum, in the acquisition of Persian applied arts and, in particular, Persian ceramics. Since then, sadly, connoisseurship of Safavid ceramics has progressed little beyond the appreciation of techniques and exotic themes.

Despite the efforts of such enthusiasts as A. U. Pope in his *Survey of Persian Art* of 1938, or of Jean Soustiel in *La céramique islamique* of 1985, the best references for the large field of Persian pottery are still to be found in Arthur Lane’s two pioneering books, published in 1947 and 1957. The works of ethnographers such as H. E. Wulff in 1966 and M. Centlivres-Demont in 1971, as well as J. Allan and his team working on the 1300 text of Abu ’l Qasim, published in 1973, have clarified technical problems. Other specialists, such as C. Wilkinson in his work on the excavations of Nishapur, have...
published either archaeological material or good-looking collections, usually supplied with abundant bibliographies yet adding few new insights. Exceptions are the 1989 publication of *Iznik Ceramics* by Atasoy and Raby, who present most facets of Ottoman ceramics, and Yves Porter’s latest publications, which extend the understanding of the Persian potter’s skills and his ability to explore new techniques.1

Perhaps the reason for this lack of interest in ceramics—as opposed to architecture and the arts of the book—is the absence of a broad vision in the field or the knowledge of neighboring cultures. Other cultures have often influenced creativity in the world of Islam, a world that stands geographically at the crossroads of Europe, Central Asia, China, and the Indian subcontinent. The crosscurrents of Safavid ceramic fashion were therefore created not only by the influence of Persian rulers and the affluent merchant society that controlled and sponsored the work of potteries, but also by the products imported from the worlds beyond their frontiers, in particular textiles and ceramics including true porcelain.

Consequently the involvement of the potter beyond body-making, firing, and copying the shapes of glass and metalware is often overlooked. Over the centuries too little attention has been paid to the craftsman’s confrontation with the miraculous body of porcelain with or without decoration, or to the immense variety of foreign brocades and golden textiles that reached suqs and bazaars. These have been reflected down the ages in such innovations as tin glazing, stone paste, patterns on slip-painted wares, *lajvardina* coloring, and, last but not least, the large decorative repertoire echoing Chinese blue-and-white export wares known in the seventeenth century as Kraak wares. Exports under the early Qing rulers such as Kangxi (1662–1722) prolonged the influence on the Persian potter of Chinese export porcelains with a new if less attractive style that was intended for the European market rather than for Asian dealers. By the turn of the century Persian trade itself may have become less important, since the political and economic situation was more and more unstable at the hands of weak shahs and opportunistic viziers. After the discovery of porcelain in 1710 at the court of Saxony, the new technique of transfer printing, invented in 1755 by John Sadler of Liverpool, made European decorated ceramics cheap and accessible to a large public. It was then the turn of European factories to compete with Far Eastern products on the Persian market, where it was almost cheaper to buy European dinner services than to reproduce Chinese contemporary porcelains. These factors would explain the possible dating of the dish under discussion to the turn of the century, before the fall of Isfahan to the Afghans in 1722 and the above-mentioned ceramic developments in Europe.

The dish is 49 cm across and 9.5 cm high; the width of the outer base ring is 26 cm, while that of the inner ring is 14.2 cm. Eight spur marks of uneven sizes indi-

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cate a firing position on spurs that isolated the whole base from the floor of the kiln. The base ring slants slightly inwards and is 2 cm high. There is a large blue mark, 3 cm square, within a double line in the middle of the base, but it is difficult to decipher the writing inside it because of the bubbles of the glaze (fig. 3). A series of four irregular bands with added decoration undulates over both the flange and the well. The flange is 4.5 cm wide, and the well 5.5 cm deep. The center, including the white ring encircled by two double lines, is 33 cm wide. Its non-geometric decoration, designed to be viewed from only one direction, consists of three levels. The lowest level is emphasized by the same type of elongated, undulating band that appears on the flange and well. Two separate curved bands indicate the central level, which is divided by a tree rising from the lowest level. A semicircular band marks the top level. Each of the lines and curves stressing the three levels has a solid upper part with a lighter wash, accentuated by irregular light striping, running below.

The exterior of the dish has a classic scroll under the flange and a scroll of twelve blooms with various leaves, more or less connected with each other, on the side (fig. 4). A white band leads to the base ring, which is encircled by the usual double line with a single one above it. The dimensions of the dish are rather unusual, but there are other large dishes dated towards the end of the seventeenth century, such as the British Museum dish with a central cypress, 40.5 cm wide, dated 1088 (1677–78); the David Collection dish with five suns, 36 cm wide, dated 1084 (1673), and another British Museum dish with three flower repeats, 43.8 cm wide, dated 1109 (1697–98). Yet none of these pieces has a composition or design similar to that of the dish under discussion. Let us then consider other features and find out whether they already exist on other dishes.

With over five hundred blue-and-white ceramics, the collection of Safavid wares at the Victoria and Albert Museum may be used as the largest body of reference, although more questions than answers may result, as has been the case in the study of other pieces related to the latter part of Safavid rule (until 1722).

There are several ways to approach unrecorded ceramics, especially when they do not fit into any known category. Some features are immediately recognizable, such as the double ring base and the use of spurs, eight in the case of this dish, which allow the base to be completely glazed (fig. 2). These are late features in Safavid ceramics. Earlier seventeenth-century dishes are usually fired on their unglazed base rings; the double base ring, perhaps a feature by which the center of a large
dished is prevented from sagging, may well be due to potters noticing such a feature elsewhere, possibly on some Arita dishes, but more likely on Chinese export wares such as famille verte, which appear in China towards the end of the seventeenth century. There is a slight difference in that the inner ring base on a Chinese dish is closer to the outer ring.

Also noticeable on the dish under consideration is the pooling of the pale green-tinted non-lead glaze, which creates irregular blotches and makes the square signature illegible (fig. 3). Such a casual finish is seldom seen in the early Safavid period but is increasingly apparent after the middle of the seventeenth century. The color of the painting, too, is a far cry from the standard cobalt blue. Besides the fairly faint blue wash, black is used for outlines and contrasting shades. This is provided by a mineral designated by Wulff as siyāh-qalam, which contains 85% chromite, 10% manganese, and 5% magnesium silicate. Porter suggests that it is the same mineral that Abu 'l-Qasim calls muzzarad. The overall effect is that of a grayish decoration that varies from greenish to almost black. This shade seems to have been popular for a short time towards the end of the Safavid period. In the early part of the eighteenth century European ceramics used a similar greyish shade known as grisaille, which was also copied in China.

The dense overall decoration, freehand as usual, consists of a series of underlined small tableaux that have been positioned to fill every available space. Undulating bands are the key feature, and both flange and well have been painted separately, as is often the case on large dishes, but share four of these bands stretching around the center, none of them the same length. Small bands of this type, suggesting landscape contours in a less emphatic manner, are first seen on Chinese export wares, probably by the mid-sixteenth century. A century later, during the so-called Transitional Period between the end of the Ming dynasty in 1643 and the stabilizing of the Qing dynasty about forty years later, large dishes made for export feature emphatic horizontal bands indicating depth of field, which appear most often on flanges and wells. The best example of this style of decoration is in the Princessehof Museum in Leeuwarden (K190); others are to be seen in Istanbul (TKS 1611 and 1612). The Persian potter quickly seized on this form to display his skill at adapting a strong visual motif (fig. 5). With the band of pale wash often wider than the dark band, it seemed necessary to fill the former with some light striping. On the dish under consideration, a number of vegetal motifs have been gathered along the sinuous line in seemingly haphazard fashion, and the gnarled, barren tree has two holes in

Fig. 5. Dish, width 45 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, 2811–1876/146.
its trunk as if it were a hollow Chinese rock. Various balustrades of Chinese origin but without lotus finials appear at different angles, some similar to ladders. These are used as fillers in the same way as are rounded, striped rocks. “Autumn” lotus leaves, inspired by both Chinese and Vietnamese wares (fig. 8, c and e),\(^4\) lotus flowers, and Kraak-style serrated leaves sprinkled with small dots mingle with clusters of cactus leaves and pairs of leafy branches. These various themes are also found in a group of dishes and bowls (e.g., fig. 6) classified under the heading “Strange Roots” in Persia and China, my catalogue of Safavid ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum.\(^5\) This group consists of eight fairly large dishes, three deep bowls, and one ewer. Six of the pieces are decorated with undulating wide bands, in their case called tree trunks since the wash between the fine lines is marked with small dashes resembling traces of bark. The bands are of one color only and are used as dividers, whereas in the dish under consideration, the two-tone bands make better sense, since they act as firm bases, especially in the center of the dish. But here the strange roots have disappeared from the repertoire. On the other hand, three prancing gazelles—a further theme that does not appear on dishes in the “Strange Roots” group—have been added, possibly to fill the last blanks in the middle of the composition. Two confronted gazelles stand to the left of a central tree and a single prancing gazelle to the right, their long ears erect. On their own, without any vegetation, such gazelles appear on smaller dishes of the same period (Persia and China, no. 280, and here, fig. 7). Deer of this type are similarly represented on numerous Kraak dishes and are also very popular on small dishes of an earlier period (Persia and China, nos. 191–93).

In the middle of the dish under consideration, the sprays of flowers are painted as large as the trees (fig. 8, a–d): the painter has considered the two motifs to be of equal importance. The same proportions have been applied to the four lotus-and-leaf compositions as to the fanciful trees, with the exception of the central and lower ones. Some leaves, such as those with three points, recall Kraak originals, whereas others with
thick borders and veining could be an innovation. The leafy double branches come straight from early Kangxi motifs as painted on the familiar “aster” dishes (TKS no. 2208). The cypresses are possibly the only realistic trees in the whole composition. On the flange other trees with drooping fronds recall similar types on earlier dishes; those with gnarled trunks come close to the barren specimens depicted on Chinese Kraak and “transitional” dishes (TKS no. 1612). On the other hand, although the rounded elements of its boughs call to mind such designs on mid-sixteenth-century Chinese dishes whose lake scenes include islands, boats, and similar trees (TKS no. 854), the central tree, with its large branches reaching over the top band, has been given an enlarged space. Further use of the same convention occurs on a “transitional” blue-and-white brush pot in a private collection (fig. 9, a–c). A print from a selection of the San-ts’ai t’u-hui, published in Nanking around 1610, shows a similar type of tree.\(^6\)

The other large tree occupies most of the lower half of the center (fig. 10). (A very small version of it may be seen on the flange, slightly to the left of center.) It has no hole in its trunk, whereas the central tree above it has two large ones. In addition, its leaves (and those of the smaller version on the flange) are the only reserve-painted parts of the dish. White and almost star-shaped, they are scattered against the dark foliage.

To this day, there appears to be no other example of leaves painted in this style. The strong contrast between light and dark areas resembles a design suitable for a textile pattern or the decoration of some lacquered panel where the gold motif contrasts with the black ground. It is tempting to think in terms of Japanese textiles or the writing cabinets brought from Japan by the Dutch East India Company to be copied in Surat or carried to Europe (fig. 8, f). As with blue-and-white Far Eastern ceramics both Chinese and Japanese, other goods were reaching Persia on their westward voyage, but unfortunately lacquer would not have survived the dry climate of the Iranian plateau.
A LATE SAFAVID DISH: A CLUSTER OF EXOTIC TREES AND FOLIAGE

Fig. 10. Detail of lower half of the Safavid dish.

Fig. 8. Details: a, b, d. flowers on the Safavid dish; c. “autumn” lotus leaf on Safavid dish; e. lotus flower and “autumn” lotus leaf on a Vietnamese dish, sixteenth century, Princesshof Museum, Leeuwarden, ÖKS 1961.4; f. branches and leaves on a drawer of a Japanese lacquer cabinet, British Museum, JA1977.4–6.1. (Drawings: by author)

Fig. 9. Details: a. from center of a Chinese dish, second half sixteenth century, Fundação Medeiros e Almeida, 235cer.; b. from a Chinese brush pot, ca. 1643, private collection; c. central tree from the Safavid dish. (Drawings: by author)
Perhaps the most striking feature of the dish is the density of its painting. No empty area has been left to provide visual breathing space. Besides spare twigs and sprays of spots, heavy aligned bars with dots have been added between foliage and rocks and by the right-hand deer (fig. 10). As is the case with other Safavid painting on ceramics, the decoration has been applied freehand by the painter. Like the majolica painter, the Persian artist had to plan his composition carefully and rely on a steady hand in order to avoid any blemishes, since he could not correct mistakes. Although the painting of this dish shows great fluency of the brush, the artist’s freehand approximation has resulted in four irregular lengths for the bands on the flange and well. Yet this does not seem to upset the balance of the composition, even though the lower right band is much shorter than the others. The further strange partitioning of the center forces the viewer to look more closely and eventually to realize that the central tree has overreached its space so that its upper branches have been painted over the top band.

Spending time analyzing this unusual Persian dish has made it possible to appreciate that motifs at first sight bizarre and unexpected can be shown to have been used in different contexts and on different shapes. Such analysis requires the handling of a vast number of pots, as well as some knowledge of European and Far Eastern ceramics and other artifacts. The collection of Safavid blue-and-white ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum is unique and has all the elements needed to form a clearer picture of the Persian potter’s production under the Safavid shahs. Yet even during the lifetime of Murdoch Smith it was neglected and in desperate need of study. Rescuing such works of art from oblivion appears to be the duty of art historians and many other specialists. In the late 1960s Michael Rogers talked about the need to rescue the Seljuqs, and this certainly inspired researchers over the next decades. Could it be that the same inspiration is required for the study of Safavid ceramics, now that a first step has been taken with the Victoria and Albert Museum catalogue? There are still many shadowy areas, but it is hoped that further work will be undertaken to navigate one of the great crosscurrents of influence across Eurasia. This is a notion that Michael Rogers has always encouraged, and it should be kept at the forefront of any scholarly research.

**Geneva, Switzerland**

**NOTES**


6. Reproduced by John A. Goodall in *Heaven and Earth: Album Leaves from a Ming Encyclopedia, San-t’ai t’u-hui, 1610*, annot. J. Goodall (London, 1979), fig. 120.
Many pages, perhaps too many, have been written about Oriental carpets. The historical and archival research I have carried out over the last few years, albeit with no systematic approach, has provided some results and permitted us to make some progress. For instance, now we are sure that at the beginning of the sixteenth century Venice had a sort of monopoly on the imports of such items in Europe, as is confirmed by the famous story of the carpets that Lord Wolsey, chancellor of King Henry VIII, requested and obtained in Venice in 1520. We are also well aware that such artifacts were handled by the Venetian Jewish community, which consisted of three Università: the German and Italian (Ashkenazi) Università; the western one, known as the ponentina, comprising Jews who had emigrated from Spain and Portugal following the Edict of Expulsion of 1492, and the levantina viandante, or subjects of the Ottoman Empire, the wise and foresightful policy of which encouraged Jewish emigration from lands under sultanate control. The scattering of the Jewish archives during the Second World War has been extremely detrimental to historical studies. Nevertheless some facts can be clearly settled: the most important Jewish community, in relation to carpets, was the German-Italian one, which had acquired certain privileges by being the oldest community allowed to stay in the Ghetto. Either in the Ghetto or in the immediate neighborhood, the Serenissima government allowed the Jews to work as physicians, bankers, and bric-a-brac sellers. It was precisely the arte della strazzaria, or rag trade (pompously defined as being the noblest and oldest art in the world), as decreed in the medieval mariegola (statute), that made it possible for Jews to trade in carpets. However, the selling of carpets in Venice is only the final point: the beginning and all the intervening mediations still remain rather obscure. Until recently, for example, we assumed that the carpets seen in Carpaccio’s Saint Ursula cycle, displayed in the Accademia in Venice, were of Anatolian production, but instead they could be of Spanish manufacture, brought to the Serenissima by rich Jewish merchants forced to emigrate from Spain after 1492 and possibly seen by the artist, who worked during the interesting period between 1495 and 1498. Of course this is only a supposition and needs to be supported by evidence, which is very difficult if not impossible to find.

I think it might be useful, having sifted through such a vast number of archival papers, to write something about the main subject of this research: carpets. The inventories were not particularly helpful, apart from stating that lots of carpets could be found in Venice, but that the carpet trade was never a major business. The influx of carpets seems to have been continuous but sporadic, and they were often traded as luxury items and thus treated as such. Apart from state gifts, the carpets entering Venice were ordinary, although very large (the carpet I found in the School of Saint Rocco, measuring almost 10 x 4 meters, provides important evidence of this) and were transported to Venice by sea. Last but not least, I think that even though Venetian regulations were quite strict, a certain amount of smuggling must be assumed.

Within this summary panorama I think that the unpublished document that I am discussing in this short paper, excerpts of which can be found in the appendix in Italian transcription, could be of interest for the history of carpets. It allows us to have a clearer idea of the situation of the period in question and provides us with a few curiosities. The text deals with a lawsuit—obviously related to carpets—between the Venetian merchant Francesco da Prioli (or Priuli), acting as agent for several firms and living in Alexandria, and the heirs (the so-called Commissaria) of Piero da Molin, an important trader in Venice. The document contains extracts of the case (petitions, bills, answers) and also the copies of some letters sent from Alexandria to Venice. These letters are not exclusively related to carpets, but are concerned with all kinds of trade—spices as well as other goods such as coral that were transported from both ports. The application to the court by Priuli is
carpets, and I am going to Cairo tomorrow and will do
Pesaro, and that “I sent 50 ducats to Cairo to make his
writes that he received 100 ducats from Leonardo da
the trade in all sorts of goods in Alexandria. Priuli
by-day reporting (nowadays we call it “monitoring”) of
ing to an internal chronology that has been only par-
them,13 not dated but probably written in 1542 (accord-
this lawsuit are included in the long commercial letters
Contarina contests the bills sent by her former agent.
verdigris chest about which Priuli has been silent for a
priuli personally supervises the manufacture of the carpets, which are made in
shops in Cairo, and ironically, after qualifying the mat-
ter as “a silly question,” he asks for sausages as payment! Later on, in the same letter, he writes again about car-
pets: “I think Your Magnificence’s large carpet is fin-
ished, and I think I will bring it with me to the store, and it will be much more beautiful than the one I sent to my brother, because as I have recently said I have now become a master and in this way will make every effort to send you the floor carpets and the benches too, but in the name of God it is necessary that Your Magnificence send me some money, because these people are very poor, and without the glue of money it is not possible to work, as it is expensive to maintain a man in Cairo, to give them 2 ducats a loom per week, and I have four looms, which in the name of God is better than 1 ducat each day / but Your Magnificence will please send me the floor carpets and the benches: “I think Your Magnificence’s large carpet is finished, and I think I will bring it with me to the store, and it will be much more beautiful than the one I sent to my brother, because as I have recently said I have now become a master and in this way will make every effort to send you the floor carpets and the benches too, but in the name of God it is necessary that Your Magnificence send me some money, because these people are very poor, and without the glue of money it is not possible to work, as it is expensive to maintain a man in Cairo, to give them 2 ducats a loom per week, and I have four looms, which in the name of God is better than 1 ducat each day / but Your Magnificence will please send me the money as here we are very strict with money, but I am waiting for it to arrive as soon as possible.”16 This is an interesting quotation, which offers some useful information: Priuli is the sponsor of four looms in Cairo, for which he claims to pay two duc-
ats each per week, referring to the fact that the previ-
ous price, one ducat per loom per day, was much more expensive. Furthermore he writes again (October 20):
“With regard to the carpets of Messr. Leonardo da
Pesaro, I have on the loom one table carpet that is sim-
ilar to the one I sent home [probably as a sample], which should be around 6 b.a. [bracci] and will be very beautiful, and on your behalf I will get a loom working, and I hope to send through Marco de Rines [not legi-
ble] part of them, if not all of them, after they have
been sold, and they will be of a better quality than those I sent to Your Magnificence because each day I learn a lot [...] and for the bedroom I will order a very fine square stool-carpet, and I hope to send part of them through Marco de Rines. In a letter of 1543 (written in Alexandria on October 23) Priuli reports that the cargo in the care of the aforementioned Marco de Rines comprises “8 bench-carpets, which I hope will satisfy both Your Magnificence and him [Leonardo da Pesaro], as in the name of God they are very fine and maybe the finest that Your Magnificence has seen up to now, and just now I am waiting for your table-carpet, which could also be with this shipment but doubtless will be with Vincenzo dalla Man, because I have seen them almost finished in Cairo and they will be very fine, which will satisfy Messr. Leonardo." Priuli then confirms once more that his share should be paid with “many sausages.” The delay in the shipment of the carpet is at this point so great that Priuli, in a letter dated June 12, 1544, writes: “Besides all other things I have not forgotten the large carpet of Your Magnificence, nor have I served another person, and please be sure that the one I am making for you will not be for somebody else, but if it was not shipped it is only due to the present epidemic.” Goods—including carpets—coming from distant countries were always subject to cleaning at the lazzaretto, especially if there were sanitary problems in the place of provenance. Later on in the same letter, Priuli again writes about carpets: “I have consigned in the hands of the master two large table-carpets, which in my opinion Your Magnificence should like: of them one that Your Magnificence will choose is in your charge, and the other please sell under my account when it is convenient, because I know that for these items it is better to wait for those who want them instead of running after people, but it is worth having them seen.” Therefore Priuli has a clear idea that carpets are a rather peculiar kind of merchandise, and that their sale cannot be immediate. He continues: “I also consigned 10 small bench-carpets that I consider to be very beautiful and cheerful, and they are for Messr. Leonardo da Pesaro, who can choose as many of them as he likes, and of the remaining I would that Your Magnificence sell them under my name. Also the small table-carpet, which I consigned to the aforementioned master, is in the charge of Messr. Leonardo da Pesaro following the instructions of Your Magnificence. I think that with the present ones and those of Marco de Rines, Messr. Leonardo should be well satisfied, because the bench-carpets I bought in Cairo cost 13 ducats apiece; and with taxes and tips [not legible] that I pay here is 1 ducat the pair; the large table-carpets already bought have a price of 40 ducats each, and with taxes and tips around 4 or 4 ½, which I must pay here; the middle-size carpet costs me with all expenses between 21 ducats and 30; I cannot tell Your Magnificence their price, as I do not have the bills from Cairo, as one master of these carpets has gone bankrupt and has taken 60 ducats from me, which I do not think will be possible to regain, but for the moment I am not sending the bills for these carpets.” Here the most interesting point regards the costs of carpets; assuming that one loom costs two ducats per week (but I suppose that the actual price could be considerably lower), we can expect that work of several months is required to complete a large carpet. Then we have to consider the risk of the business, which is exposed to failure and the loss of capital, such as the sixty ducats that Priuli thinks he cannot regain. His letter of July 19 continues: “I think regarding carpets I have satisfied Your Magnificence and also Pesaro, and more will be discharged with the next ship so that Your Magnificence’s needs will be satisfied, and in the name of God I pray you to use me for everything you desire, and I will not spare myself regarding Your Magnificence as with my brothers, and in carpets I think I can more than satisfy Your Magnificence, but sometimes it is not possible to do it quickly, as these masters are devils and I must pay them in advance and then pray them to work, and in the name of God one of them has gone bankrupt and has taken 70 v.ni [veneziani], which I despair to recover.” In the following letter (April 19, 1545) nothing is written about carpets, while there is a long and careful examination of the price of coral and a complaint about some Jewish merchants who have arrived on the market. On March 5, 1546 Priuli writes to Venice asking for money that he expects as credit for the carpets, having many necessities for “these devil customs.” On June 5, 1547 Priuli, as he has done in the previous two years, solicits money and the payment of bills for goods sent to Europe; he notes that the competition is even stronger than before, as “we see in that ship things of these Jews” (he mentions capers, textiles, silk textiles, metals, amber, and also some sword blades), with the result that with the goods already in hand the only thing to be done is “to sell them in Cairo at sale prices.” Priuli is clearly alarmed by the fact that the Jews seem to work at the behest of Venetian merchants; these are his words: “These Jews wanted to give me the bill in the name of your Messr. Hieronimo, but I did not accept it, and I
wish to see what they are doing and what is going to happen in the future; then I promise to show to you everything, as I did not want to be the first one to ride a donkey, and in the name of God it is too shameful that we must behave in such a way, and I cannot think how afraid they are in Venice of such beasts. I also wish to argue with them in front of the local Pasha, but ours from Venice disagree with this and it is best for me to keep quiet in spite of myself and that’s all there is to it.”

This very frank and bitter way of speaking is then softened by a new request for accounts (and money), accompanied by the promise to return the favor: “I beseech Your Magnificence to take a bit of care of my affairs because in the name of God your requests are in my heart as in my eyes.” Later on Priuli makes clear that the situation is very bad for everybody except the French (“with their cheap textiles”) and the reason is “the circulation of Jews who bring goods here and sell them at such a good price that for our stores it is always a holiday.” Carpets, especially large ones, are no longer made, but are mentioned as shipped, and money is asked as payment.

The letters from Priuli are well written and full of interesting details: in a six-page message dated 1542 (with several updates) he refers to textiles from Bassano, a thousand boxes of ashes, thirty barrels of capers, and three 

```plaintext
secafazi (roughly, “packets”) of ostrich feathers, plus “a small box of diamonds of small carats, 56 carats, which I am shipping with the master Annibal of Naples.”
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Still very frequent is the mention of coral—“charge of corals, three Barbareques and two Provencal”—which always seems to be in high demand and have an enormous market. Everything does not always run smoothly: “I wanted to charge the silk package of Your Magnificence, and these damned customs people trick me regarding the right of the fraction”; complaining about rates is constant: “These customs want money and then [more] money, and the ship Dolphina alone costs me more than 600 ducats before customs tax / this smaller ship costs about 200, and for Marco de Rines the same quantity, which amounts to one thousand ducats in no time [...] and I will make a virtue of necessity.” Among the information we find in the letters are the names of some galley masters—Marco de Rines, Zanetto da Cattaro, Vincenzo dalla Man, Stefano di Antonio, the Curcumeli—and the names of ships, the most popular being “Dolphina.” In the previously quoted letter written on June 12, 1544, among the items mentioned we find textiles of different kinds (“from Bassano,” and “from Marostica,” and “silk material”), quicksilver, cinnabar, and coarse amber. The cargo of a competing French ship is described as follows: “quicksilver, 600 barrels; cinnabar, 200; paper, 600; bales of every type of textiles and carise, 500; bales of coral, 10 boxes; gorami (leather), 10 bags; verdigris, 4 bales; oil, 3 barrels; honey, 10 caratelli; bags of nuts, 100; as well as coarse amber, peppers, different kinds of textiles, and cinnamon and other spices, primarily mace.

I would like to conclude with an interesting point about the period in which the relations between Francesco da Priuli and the da Molin family (including Madonna Contarina) were fairly good; in a letter dating to October 23, 1543, Priuli writes “Your majestic wife will be served of the hens by Marco de Rines,” and then, “Regarding the hens for Your Magnificence, at the moment is impossible to find them, but the first ones we see will certainly be yours, and we shall send them with the first ship...” Again on June 12, 1544, he writes, “...As to the hens for the wife of Your Magnificence, in the name of God there are none because of the present disease, but the first we find will be yours.” And finally, on July 19, 1544: “The hens for your majestic wife are coming...and we will send them with the present galley.”

Università degli Studi di Udine

APPENDIX

MS PD 509/C–10
Fasc. IV (cancelled III)

Domanda Ms. franc.o di Prioli di conto di tappedi

25 settembre 1555
Mandai di Alexandria qui in Venetia io franc.o di Prioli fodl mag.co ms michiel al q. cl.mi ms piero da molin tappedi chiairini si da tauola come da scagno et da cassa et doi pezzi di tappedi da terra di mia raggion p.che quelli sua mag.ia dovrossi finir et mandarmi li raporti et cussi sua mag.tia li habbia et receuti, ma da quella mai ho potuto in alcun tempo haver conti alcuni non mancho da poi la sua morte dalla sua Commissaria et volendo io franc.o predito realizar il mio legittimo [...] el m.co ms Diego Damolin fo suo fratello e la mag.ca m.a cont.na contarini fo sua consorte come comissarj di esso q. Cl.mo ms. piero vi dimando io franc.o predicto che fra quel più breve termine che a v.tre m.ma sig.ria mag.ci sig.ri Judici di petition parera mi debano
haver datto et consignatto justi distinti et particolari conti del contratto di ditti tapedi con nomi cognomi di p.sone qualita et quantita di misure et ogni altra cosa che insimilibus et consueto eche transcritte dicto termine et non obediendo resti in duc 200 per parte danni [...] 

Resposta della Commissaria in ordine alla domanda delli tapedi

9 ottobrio 1555
il Mag.co ms. franc.o di prioli fo del m.co ms. michiel qual ha deliberato si ul farsi actor come tenir in continua liti la comissaria del q. ms. piero da molin p. non pagar quello di che lui era debitor si ha ultimo loco immaginato di dar una dimanda contra essa comissaria p. laqul asserisce haver mandato ad esso q. molino tapedi chagiarini si da taula come da scagno et da cassa et due pezi di tapedi da terra di sua raggione accio che quelli dovesse finire et in conclusione domanda come distintto et particolare del (?) esito et tratto di essi tapedi et come in quella delaquel si habbia impugnato relation alla qual io Contarina [...] et commissaria di ditto q. cl.mo ms. piero rispondendo l'ordine tamen dico che l'artificio del ditto ms. franc.o è troppo grande et indegno di esser usato contra poueri pupilli che succedono nella ragion di morti onon voler dichiarar di che tempo mando questi asserti tapedi cum che nave navilij et il n° di quelli da taula da schagno et da cassa p.cio che volendo proceder alla real cum ditta comissia dovera di plano dichiarar il tutto che dal canto di quella non manchera di risponder in (?) a essasua domanda et la justitia al'hora servantis servandis et sup. certa et clara fondera el judicio et non sopra queste asserite mutilate et non volendo sua mag.tia dechiarar la sig.ria v.tra m.ci sig.ri jud.ci di petion [petition] (?) mia responson absolutione essa comissaria condanando lo adversario nelle spese di quelli Ditto die 9 octobris Jacob Zottarello

1555 Dechiaration del p'uli della sua domanda delli tappeti

P. ogni attacco fa per li commissari del q. mag.co ms. Piero da Molin per metter tempo di mezo et non voler quello porta il dover ns che possa conseguir quello che di rason mi aspetta havendo io prodotto domanda per laqual dimando conto di essa commissaria di li tapedi Cajarini si da taula come da scagno et da cassa et doi pezi di tapedi da terra di mia raggion della quali io ho dimandato conto distintto et particular alla qual mia risposta si nomina fantasmi dicendo che intrando in ragion de' morti et che debbo dichiarar di che tempo mandai questi tapedi con che nave navilij et il numero di quelli / cosa invero che dispiaceva alla giustizia queste piccole cavillation / perché loro hanno li libri conti et scritture del q. cl.mo ms. piero dalli quali chiaramente vedono et intendono il tutto / perché io non voglio star a contendere (?) andate con essa comissaria per la presente mia addition ad essa mia domanda / dico et dichiaro il tempo della nave la quantita et qualita di esse sonno nella infisscrito scrittura che con la presente mia riporto in omnibus et per omnia ad essa mia dimanda Detta die 25 februarii 1555

Dechiaration delli tapedi mandati in più tempi al m.co ms. Piero da molin

1541
Naua patron Tomaso Marcopulo. Tapedi n° 4 da cassa grandi
(margin: appar nel conto dato a Ms da Molin)

1542
Naua patron Marco de Rines. Tapedi da cassa grandi n° 4
(margin: appar nel ditto conto)

1542
Naua patron Simon de Zuane. Tapedi 4 quadri da scagno
Tapedi 4 da cassa grandi
(margin: appar nel d.to conto che uno tapedo da scagno sia p. [?])

1542
Naua patron Vincenzo dalla Man. Tapedi da cassa n° 6 grandi quadri da scagno n° 1 da terra pezzi n° 2

1544
Naua patron Stefano di Antonio. Tappedi da cassa n° 12 grandi
Grandi da Tauola n° 2 per [ducati] 12 l'uno da taula mezani n° 1 " " " 6 quadri da scagno n° 2 n° 42
(margin: p. lettera del 12 zugo 1544 [...] n° 13) Detta die 21 februarij 1555

Quantunque si vegga chiaro et palese, che l’aio et la intention del M.co M. Fr.co de Priuli Ecc.mi S. Giudici di petition non attenda ad altro che a suscitar nove lite alla commissaria del q. M. p.ro da Molin, non p. altro fine et oggetto che per ritenersi in se quello che gia tanto tempo doveva haver pagatto, nondimeno voglio et debbo sperar io Cont.na relitta et commissaria del ditto q. p.ro che un giorno finalmente scoperti dalla giustizia gli andamenti di q.sto gentilhomo li poveri miei pupilli serano integrati del suo anchor che con infinite spese et travagli lo siano per far’. tra la q.al angiuiste oppinioni di esso M.co Prioli; essendovi una domanda data sotto di. 25 sett.o p.xo passato p. la qual in (?) conteso rechiese conto de tappeti, che dice hauer mandati al d.to q. M. Piero; alla qual sotto di 9 ott.o fu dato resposto rechhiedendo che douesse dechiarar li tempi, li numeri, et li nauilij con li qa.li dice haver man.to detti tappeti; il qual M. fr.co alli 21 febraro ha presen[ta]to una dechiaratione dice domandar conto de tappedi n° 42 come in quella; Alla qual rispondendo io cont.na p.ditta / Dico molto maravigli- armi che q.sto gentilhomo si faccia lecito dir q.ste cose, che non sono vere, come ben sà lui medesmo, p.che se ha mandato alc.i tappeti al d.to Ms. P.ro / q.lii ha mandati ad instants et per conto di M. P.ro et del L.do di ca da Pesaro, per conto del qual tappeti ha ric. et di ragione di esso M.co e di Ms. L.do bona quantita di dan.ri, come lui non haverà ardir di negar: Però cessi di hormai molestar et inquietar essa coma p.ciò che sara laude sua; dalla q.al sua domanda additione et dechiaratione, domando io Cont.na pre.ditta esser absolta et lui con.to nelle spese salvi [...] et salvo in addendi et minutoli

Fasc. II

P.cesso con la heredità del q. Ms. Hier.mo da Molin

Datta die 23 augusti 1555

Havendo il q. mag.co ms. hier.mo da molin fo del Cl.mo marin havuto grandissima quantità di beni de raggion de mi franc.o di prioli fo del mag.co ms. Michiel / et quelli manizzato et disposite como li ha parso / et p. suo conto proprio in suo modo dal anno 1543. Adì 13 del setembrio mi fece credito la L 129ji3 di grossi et mandarmi esso conto fino in aless.a / se ben si detto conto li è che molti et infiniti errori / partide indebite delle qual suis loco et [...] mi riservo à usar della raggion mia / ma per nunc essendo venuto in questa cita et ritrovato che esso mag.co ms. hier.mo è passato di questa vitta volendo recuperar tanto mio zusto credito / ho legtime fato citar lì heredi propinquii et commissarij sel ne fusse di esso q. mag.co hier.mo cit. / datta notizia al mag.co ms. domenego suo fratello / et alla mag.ca madona marina fu consorte del cl.mo ms. piero da molin a fillio suo ut [...] Et dimando che li ditti heredi ut supra citati siano sententiati in duc.ti cinquecento per parte et abon conto di li infradicti L. 129ji3 di grossi ut impartita superius vocata in expensis con riservation quorumcumque [...]
preditta / uno conto distinto giusto et particolare di tutte le robe et mercantie mandateli per il ditto ms. hier.mo per Alexandria di ragione et per conto di esso ms. hier.mo et p. lui ms. franc.o riceute / il qual conto sia con tempi, nomi, cognomi, pesi, misure, quantità et qualitá et altrettanto in similibus consuete / al iter resti sentenziato in duc.ti 200 p. parte di suo dano et nelle spese salvis etc.

volendo noj cont.na relictà et commissaria del q. m.co ms. piero da molino guber.or della heredita del q. ms. hier.mo da molin suo fra.ll.e et Domenico da molin parimente governador de ditta heredita , responde con poche parole alla domanda data p. il m.co ms. franc.o di prioli fo del m.co ms michiel di ditta eredita fatto di 23 agosto passato nella qual si dimandava che ditta heredita sia sentenziata in d.ti 500 p. parte di un resto de certo conto che lui dice esserli sta assignato per el ditto q. ms. hier.mo da molin fino del 1543 ut in [?] diciano esser cosa ingiusta per sua mag.a voglia in questo modo proceder senza che lui dia conto delle molte robe et mercantie che lui ha avuto dal ditto q. ms. hier.mo et ragion di esso q. ms. hier.mo p.che lui ha in se non sol quel che dimanda, ma molto piú come la justitia v.trà ecc.mi sig.ri giudici di petitione vedera

9 settembre 1555
Se li governatori del q. mag.co ms. Piero da molin volesseno dir la verità et maxime il mag.co ms. Dome
nego da Molin / non haveria lassato scriver in una sua asserita domanda per converso contra di un francesco di priuli / perche io fin hora non mi ho curato di molestare la heredità del q. mag.co ms. Hieronimo da molin per causa de un conto assignatomi in presso q. ms. Jeronimo fino l’anno 1543 / sapendo sua mag.ia quante et quanto volte jo lho pregato et richiédìtò che mi volesse far la satisfaction qual sempre con le sue parole mi hazzorerto in hoggi in dimane / hora con una occasïon et hora con unaltra / che possedendoli benj di esso q. mag.co ms Hieronimo per loro non fa di [?] / Pero ho convenuto dipresentare la dimanda per principale di tanto mio giusto credito / Alla qual […] et non pagar la perdiuta per una sua asserita et ingiusta domanda / nella qual sustiene che io ho avuto robbe mandatemi per conto et ragion di propria et dito q. ms. Hieronimo in Alessandria et per me riceveti delle qual doveva assignarli conto / Cosa invero aliena dalla verità / che io di ragion propria del ditto q. ms Jeronimo fo mai habbi recepto cosa alcuna / Excetto che el panno, qual mi mando accio ci facessi tanti tapedi che importava assai piú di quello voleva ditto panno et cusi li feci essi tapedi et lui li ricevette / per il qual conto io vado de bona summa creditor di essi ms Jeronimo / ne altro da lui ho habuto di sua propria ragion / il qual conto io apresento con la presente scrittura / la qual si intende mia diffesa in quanto a essa governaor volesse da un conto de altri benj oltra el panno preditto / e che de beni di propria ragion di esso q. mag.co ms. Jeronimo come nella sua asserita domanda di converso [e formule]

25 settembre 1555
da poi che il m.co Ms Franc.o di Prioli nella sua risposta datta alla domanda prodotta per converso contra di lui per noi governatori della heredità del q. Ms. Hieronimo da molin / si ha fatto licio negar di non aver havuto robbe di ragion del ditto q. Ms. Hieronimo, eccetto che uno panno di .60. / del quale ha p.dutto certo conto, usando alla spiegata tal forma di parole, che lui non ha ricevuto beni di propria ragion di esso q. Ms. Hieronimo / negativa in vero audace et degna di repressione: / conciosiaco qua che per il proprio conto p. sua mag.ia in giudicio prodotto / et per virtu del quale ha dato dimanda contra la detta heredità / sj veda manifesto et chiaro el detto q. Ms. Hieronimo da molin averli mandato in Alessandria in diversi tempi dal 1541. 9. zugno fino 18 luio 1543 gran quantità di pane et altre sorte di mercantie p. una grandissima quantità di denari / la mità delle quale robbe aspet-tavano à lui M.co Ms. Frances.co / et nell’altra mità ditto q. Ms Hieronimo haveva et ha ragione, et doppo l’assignation del ditto conto nello istesso modo sua mag.ia ha havuto dal ditto q. Ms. Hieronimo del 1543 p. la nave Bernarda pannj .4. scarlatinj, et panni .2. Bas-sanesi, che p. la mità importavano molti denari / item del 1550 ha ricevuto dei panni di .60. scarlatinj alui indiriciati su la nave patron Meschin Singritico p. conto di esso q. Ms. Hieronimo; / et parim.te p. conto di esso q. ms. Hieronimo ha ricevuto in diversi tempi con diversi navilij / lavori di vetro, panni .4. di 60 / panno uno Bassanese, panni .3. di –80. da padoua, pannj .2. di .60. scarlatinj, / pezá una raso zallo, / pezza u.a raso limonzin, ambre lave parat barilj .6. 2038. un quarto delle qual ambre è di ragion di lui q. ms. Hieronimo / le quali cose carbon di gran difficoltà fin hora habbiamo potuto rettrouare, / et li habbiamo / voluto dechiarare, / acciò che S. m.cia ne dia conto che p. noi si è stato dimandato, et de per noi si vede, se havendo havuto in tanto capitale ne le mani, lui n’è debitore ò come sia passato l’esito di quello / et per meglio decchiararli q.ilo che sua mag.cia cavillosamente finge di non
intender / aggiungendo alla ditta nostra domanda p. verso li dicemo che noi li domandiamo conto di tutte le robe et mercantie mandateli p. el ditto Ms Hieronymo in alessandria p. suo conto, / overamente in compagnia di altri, nelle quali lui q. Ms Hieronymo habbia partecipacione di parte o di tutto, / accioche si veda come stanno si conti et como siano sta espeditte ditte robe, / et in quanto sua Mag.cia recusasse di dar esso conto, dimandemo noi governatori preditti che le S.re v.tre debbano setiarlo in omnibus et p. omnia juxta forma petitionis nostra, et presentis additionis / considerandolo nelle spese si come ogni giustizia ricerca: interpellandolo à negare o confessare in s.ittura q.to per è stato predetto circa il ricever di ditterobe, p.ché in quanto s. mag.cia negasse in scrittura, s’offerimo noi gournadori di giustificarlo, et non negando in s.ittura habentur pro confessi.

NOTES


5. It is no coincidence that the so-called Transylvanian carpets were of smaller size: they were traded by land. A. Kertesz-Badrus, Türkische Teppiche in Siebenbürgen (Bucharest, 1985).


7. My friend Prof. M. Rogers has an enviable knowledge of that language, even the sixteenth-century Venetian version.

8. BMCC, Ms. PD, Fasc. III.

9. The Magistracy deputed to solve such garbugli, or entanglements.

10. See fasc. IV in Appendix, above.

11. ad instantia et per conto di Ms. Piero e del Leonardoda Cà da Pesaro.


13. BMCC, Ms. PD, fasc. XII.

14. The Venetian braccio is about 60 cm.

15. “Si ha mandato du. ti 50 al Caiero per far soi tappeti et jo andero di matina al Cairo et farò ogni opera acciò el sia servito bene / ancora mi doglio che lui Ms. Lunardo non mi sapia comandare ma sia per intercession di v.tra (vostra) m.a (magnificenza) / li farò vedere uno tappeto di circa 6 brazi di longezza che mando ai miei fratelli et mi avisi se lui vuole sin quella forma che mi adimanda per tavola overo como el grando che mando ai mej fratelli che di quelli da cassa intendo benissimo quello el dimanda, et li prometto farli far molto meglio di quelli che ha vostra magnificenza / guardi 4 che ho mandato per ditto mio fratelo et dira [lacuna] facendoli far meglio piú vagi colori et meglio tessuti che quelli di vostra magnificenza / voglio che mi paghi la provision in tanti salsizionì che siano buoni et questo per pena di non haver comandato ma andar per mezzo di vostra magnificenza sopra simil cosa da niente.”

16. “Il tappeto grande di vostra magnificenza penso sia fornito et penso portarlo meco abasso, et sara molto meglio di quello ho mandato amio fratelo per che come ho ditto hora son diventato maistro et così anche farò ogni forzo per tenervi fornito di quelli da terra, et quelli da casse ma per dio bisogna che vostra magnificenza mi provei di denari che questi sono pouerissimi, et se non si colla con el danaro non si possono lavorare che mi è forzo tener homo al caiero perché li dia duc. ti 2 per teler alla semana et ho quatro teleri che per dio mi va meglio di duc. ti 1 al zorno / però vostra magnificenza mi provei che qui siamo strettissimi del denaro pero ne attendo con primi.”

17. “Quanto alli tappeti per Ms. Lunardo da pexaro ho fatto metter in teler uno tappeto da tavola come quello che ho mandato a casa che sara di b.a. 6 et sara bellissimo et per suo conto farò lavorar un teler et sporo con marco de rines mandarne [lacuna] parte se non tutti, ma di poi che saranno venduti et che siano fini et migliori di quelli che ho mandato a vostra magnificenza perché ogni giorno imparo […] et per fornire la camara ne farò uno da scagno quadro bellissimo et sporo con marco de rines mandarne parte.”

18. “8 tappeti da cassa che voglio sperar contenteranno, et vostra magnificenza et lui che per dio sono molto belli et forse di meglio che vostra magnificenza habbi veduto et di hora per hora atendo il suo tappeto da tavola che potra essere anche con questa nave, ma senza dubio sera con vincenzo dalla man, che io li ho veduti quasi forniti al caiero et saranno molto belli che se contenteranno a Ms. L.do.”

19. “Fra laltro io non mi son scordato di el tappeto grando di vostra magnificenza ne ho servito altra persona et manco quello che faro per lei lo darei ad altri, ma se non lo mandaj fu sola p. il morbo che al presente si manda.”

20. “si ha consegnato al paron in sua mano due tappeti grandi da tavola, che a mio giudicio piaceranno a magnificenza vostra degli quali uno sara per conto di vostra magnificenza qual piú li piacera et altro sarò cortesia venderlo di mio conto, come li torna bene che io lo so che questa merce son cose da aspettare chi le uogli et non correre drieto a persona ma si dieno ben vedere.”

21. “Se li ha anche consegnato 10 tappeti piccoli da cassa molto belli al mio giudicio, et alegri come vuol vostra magnificenza ne habbia alui et del resto vostra magnificenza vendera per
conto mio. Et così anche il tappeto pizolo da tavola che li ho consegnato a ditto patron et sono per conto di ms. lunardo da pexaro che così vostra magnificenza mi commette. Che credo pur che tra questi et quelli di marco de rines satisfara ms. lunardo et dauantazo perché quelli di cassa di prima compradi al caieto mi costano d.ti 13 il pezo et di spese di cortesia [lacuna] di qui costano duc.ti 1 al par; li grandi da tavola di prima compradi costano d.ti 40 luno, di spese direttis cortesia di qui mi pol essere da 4 o 4½ incirca, quel mezan da tavola mi costa con tutte le spese da d.ti 21 incirca di 30 non posso dire apunto a vostra magnificenza il costo di essi per non haver li conti del caieto che mi è falito uno maistro di questi tappedi che portato mi ha via da d.ti 60 che non spero potersi recupere, pero io non mando li conti di questi tappedi per hora.”

22. “Io penso aver satisfatto vostra magnificenza delli tappedi si per conto di vostra magnificenza come per conto del pexaro et di più anche se ne mandera con prima nave acioche vostra magnificenza sia satisfatta di quanto li bisogna, et la prego servirsi di me in ogni cosa che per dio in quello bisognera io non sparagniero vostra magnificenza come mei fratelli apunto et di tappedi jo penso satisfar vostra magnificenza et di avantazo ma alle volte non si puol far così presto che questi maestri sono diavoli et bisogna darli danari in anti tratto et pregarli poi che lavorino et per dio mi e falito uno et mi ha portatto da 70 vni [veneziani] che non penso mai riaverli.”

23. “Questi hebrei volevano dar la tratta in nome di Ms. Hier.mo vostro che io non lo voluta acetar ma ho voluto star avered anche questo colpo quello che farano et che provisione si fara a simil cosa poi mi promettrìo far capitar al tuto in casa vostra che io non ho voluto esser il primo andar su lasino et per dio è pur tropa vergogna che noi dobbiamo star a simil modo ne posso pensar di quello che si habia paura a venezia di simil bestie come questi che io desidero purchè mi vedino un giorno a disputarla con costoro di qui davanti questo Bassà ma non vogliono li nostri da venetia et a me conviene star quieto al mio dispetto et basta alla fine.”
In the fall of 1887 Vilmos Zsolnay, the owner of a Hungarian porcelain factory already enjoying European renown, sent his son Miklós on a journey to the Middle East. Making purchases in the towns he visited along the way, Miklós Zsolnay assembled a collection of 170 wall tiles, which he dispatched to his native town of Pécs, in southwest Hungary. While on his expedition, Miklós Zsolnay kept a diary in German, also writing letters—similarly in German—to his family back home. On the basis of this documentary material it is possible to trace the itinerary he followed and identify the places in which he made his acquisitions. The letters tell us that he reached Istanbul on October 24, 1887. Then, in early November, he made a brief, two-day excursion to Bursa. Leaving the Turkish capital towards the end of that month, he proceeded—by way of Izmir, Larňaka, Beirut, Baalbek, Damascus, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Port Said—to Cairo, where he arrived on December 19, 1887. After spending almost a month in Egypt, he set out for home. On the return leg of his journey he took in both Athens and Rome, arriving in Hungary in February 1888. The collection that took shape as a result of Miklós Zsolnay’s tour was just one amassment of Ottoman tiles to reach Western Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. We may justly ask who or what prompted Vilmos Zsolnay to send his son collecting in the East, and why someone from Hungary, a country that had belonged to the Ottoman Empire for 150 years, should go looking for Ottoman ceramics there. As we shall see, the answers to these questions shed light on the nature of the Ottoman occupation of Hungary, as well as on the milieu in which the Hungarian intelligentsia lived and worked during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Beginning in the late 1870s—some ten years before Miklós Zsolnay’s expedition—an interest in Islamic art was discernible in the output of the Zsolnay Factory. Vilmos Zsolnay’s plans for the future—and perhaps his entire world-view—were influenced fundamentally by the 1873 Vienna World Exhibition, at which his own work met with success. This show represented a turning point in research into Islamic art in that it directed attention to Ottoman art. It was at this exhibition that Vilmos Zsolnay encountered the major ceramics fashions of the age; one was the copying in Europe of ornamental ceramics regarded as Persian and called “Rhodes,” although in fact these were Iznik products from the heyday of the workshops there. The firms of Theodore Deck, Villeroy and Boch, Collinot and De Beaumont, and Colin Minton all exhibited such pieces at the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873. It may have been his experiences at this show that prompted Vilmos Zsolnay to send his daughters Júlia and Teréz to the Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie in the Hapsburg capital, where they were to seek inspiration for their design work in advance of the Paris World Exhibition scheduled for 1878. Also, for the circles in which the Zsolnay family moved, adopting the fashion trends in Western Europe and keeping up with contemporary European design were very much the norm. Vilmos Zsolnay had close ties with Ferenc Pulszky, the director-general of the Hungarian National Museum, as well as with the archeologist József Hampel, one of the best researchers at that institution. The year 1874 witnessed the production by the Zsolnay concern of the “Museum Series” of vessels, the originals for which were ceramic works borrowed from the collections at the Hungarian National Museum. Ferenc Pulszky seems to have played a role in drawing Zsolnay’s attention to Islamic art. Certainly, he and his family made a number...
of tours to the Middle East, Turkey, and Greece during the 1870s. Pulszky even brought home Iznik wall tiles that later passed into the collections of Budapest’s Museum of Applied Arts, in whose founding he himself played no small part.6

The research conducted by the Zsolnay sisters in Vienna was made highly fruitful by the friendship they formed there with the art historian Jakob von Falke, the deputy director of the Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie (also known as the Kunst und Industrie Museum). According to Teréz Zsolnay’s enthusiastic recollections, it was at Von Falke’s suggestion that the two girls studied the collections at the museum. At their request, Vilmos Zsolnay purchased for his library a selection of the latest and most fashionable books in the field, works by Léon Parvillée and Prisse d’Avennes, and there the Zsolnay sisters studied periodicals that strongly influenced the direction their design work would later follow.7 At this time—between 1877 and 1878—their work began to exhibit the influence of Islamic—or, more precisely, Ottoman—art, which they themselves thought to be Persian. Of the stylistic trends discernible in Ottoman art, it was primarily the so-called quatre-fleurs style that captured the girls’ imagination. The link between the Iznik vessels featured in the pages of the journals L’art pour tous and Kunst und Gewerbe and the decorative designs made by Júlia and Teréz between 1878 and 1879 is plain to see.8 As regards the stock of motifs, some of the sisters’ designs show embellishments that were in effect taken over from these Iznik vessels. At the same time, however, use of technical solutions entirely alien to Iznik ceramics—for example, so-called gold brocade grounds or iron grounds—led to the vessels’ appearing to be of a completely new kind.9 In other cases Ottoman patterns underwent significant alteration while at the same time remaining recognizable.10 In these latter patterns, elements taken from the Ottoman quatre-fleurs style are frequently blended with flower motifs found on Hungarian folk embroideries (fig. 1). It

Fig. 1. Plate, 1880–82, designed by Teréz Zsolnay. Mark on the pattern: “Z. T. 1880.” Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs.
is clear that the Zsolnay sisters, too, perceived the similarity between the *quatre fleurs* favored in Ottoman art and the flowers favored in Hungarian folk art. As will become clear below, in Vilmos Zsolnay’s time the vast amount of Turkish embroidery held in Hungarian ecclesiastical collections since the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was still unknown. Moreover, seventeenth-century Hungarian aristocratic embroidery, which itself featured Turkish motifs, was not in general circulation: in all likelihood the Zsolnay girls had never seen any of it. What they had seen was the nineteenth-century folk embroidery from peasant families in Baranya, which they had collected and displayed at an exhibition in 1880.11 We must assume that they instinctively sensed something that no one of their day yet knew consciously—namely, that there was a connection between Hungarian folk art and the “Persian” motifs they had copied.12 In the work of Júlia and Teréz Zsolnay a close link to Iznik examples can be dated to the period of 1878 to 1881.

From the mid-1880s onwards the manufacture of architectural ceramics acquired an ever more important role in the work of the Zsolnay factory. Orders came in from all over Hungary, and subsequently from Vienna and elsewhere in the empire.13 In 1886 the firm won an order to make tiling for the interior of an Oriental-style thermal spa to be built at Trencsénteplic (today Trenčianske Teplice, Slovakia). The work was to be executed from designs by the Austrian architect Franz Schmoranz, according to his instructions.14

Probably it was his friendship with Viennese art historians that led Vilmos Zsolnay to Franz Schmoranz,15 who was in contact with Jakob von Falke. Schmoranz had designed the so-called Khedive Pavilion, a group of Egyptian-style buildings, for the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873. Prior to this he had undertaken an extended tour of the Middle East, taking in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Anatolia. Subsequently, in 1874, he had settled in Vienna as an independent architect. Among his more important solo works is his restoration in 1876 of the 1543 mausoleum of Gül Baba in Buda.16 The tile designs that he made in 1886 for the interior of the Trencsénteplic facility are to be found in the Zsolnay Factory archives, now held by the Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs (fig. 2).17 Especially interesting is a pattern that may have been inspired by the

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Fig. 2. Design by Franz Schmoranz of a tile for the spa at Trencsénteplic. Marked “Schmoranz 1886.” Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs.
Iznik wall tiles on the mosque of Ibrahim Aga in Cairo, which was renovated in 1652 (fig. 3). The plans for the spa at Trencsénteplic, including Schmoranz’s tile designs, were fully executed (figs. 4–5). Through the mediation of Cairo, then, seventeenth-century tile patterns from Iznik workshops were revived in the nineteenth century, in what was then Upper Hungary. It should be mentioned, however, that no single tile or group of tiles that could have served in any prototype capacity in connection with Trencsénteplic can be found in the Zsolnay bequest. Nor, according to the documentation, was such a tile or tiles ever to be found there. Because of this, we cannot know what served as the definitive examples copied by Zsolnay at the time of the 1886 glaze experiments mentioned in his reminiscences. This much is sure: at the time of Miklós Zsolnay’s journey, work was already under way on the Trencsénteplic order. In a letter from Jaffa dated December 15, 1887, Miklós asked whether the tile consignment had yet been sent off in its entirety. It is beyond doubt that the wall tiles purchased during the first stage of the trip—he had acquired substantial numbers in Istanbul and Damascus—did not accompany him to Egypt but were sent home from various places along the way for use on their arrival in Hungary.

The correspondence shows that during the trip Miklós Zsolnay and Franz Schmoranz maintained contact with each other. Of special interest is a letter sent from Istanbul on October 31, 1887, in which there are numerous references to Schmoranz. In this letter Miklós Zsolnay tells his father of a letter Schmoranz had written to him and of his reply to it. It would appear that an opportunity had arisen for additional business cooperation between Schmoranz and the ceramicist family, although in the letter Miklós regards the proposal from the architect brothers as expensive. Unfortunately, the letter gives no details as to the business in question. Mention is made of Schmoranz’s brother, who—as Miklós knew—was working for the Lobmeyr glass concern in Vienna. Later Miklós writes that he has sketched copies of tiles in the mosque of Rüstem Pasha, and that he will very soon send the drawings, made on tracing paper, to his sister Júlia. He then adds that he will purchase original tiles, so that the family can break free of Schmoranz. In the very same letter we find Miklós Zsolnay making plans for his journey to Bursa, which, the references suggest, was Schmoranz’s idea.

Analysis of Miklós Zsolnay’s collection confirms the belief that European collectors during the second half of the nineteenth century drew mostly on the same sources, perhaps finding their way to the fabric of the same buildings. On the basis of Zsolnay’s letters, it is clear that in the late 1880s wall tiles from the second half of the sixteenth century could be purchased in the Istanbul bazaar. A number of letters even tell of acquisitions there. In all probability it was in the bazaar that Miklós Zsolnay came by the tiles in his collection embellished in bole red and
Fig. 4. The Trencsénteplic spa, designed by Franz Schmoranz, as it appeared shortly after 1910. (Photo: Photography Archive of the Hungarian National Museum)

Fig. 5. The central hall of the spa at Trencsénteplic as it appeared in the early 1890s. (Photo: Photography Archive of the Hungarian National Museum)
dateable to the classic period of the Iznik workshops (fig. 6). The four such tiles in the collection today are in near-perfect condition. Almost certainly, the bazaar would have been the source of these tiles, dateable to 1570–80, and probably some of the broken ones as well. Another source of the tiles of this type may have been the mosque of Sultan Ahmet, although the letter in question speaks of fragments only. The very same letter reveals that the thirteenth-century Kashan luster tiles in the collection were similarly acquired in the bazaar.22 In addition to the mosque of Sultan Ahmet, the Yeni Valide mosque figures in the letters as a source for the Istanbul acquisitions.23 On the basis of stylistic analysis, however, tiles could have originated from other buildings as well. The stock of motifs employed indicates that a number of them perhaps came from the Topkapı Sarayı (fig. 7); one tile resembles examples from the mausoleum of Sultan Selim II.24 Again, the tiles from these last two sites could only have been bought in the bazaar. During the remaining part of the trip, the most important destinations for purchases were Damascus and Jerusalem. The itemization of a large purchase made in Damascus on December 6, 1887, appears in the travel diary rather than in the correspondence. Besides many other artifacts, Miklós Zsolnay purchased 105 wall tiles in the city, the great majority of which were Damascus products from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (fig. 8), but there was also a sixteen-piece set of tiles from the fifteenth century (fig. 9). Several tiles in this set bear a close resemblance to tiles on the mausoleum of the high-ranking Mamluk official Gars al-Din Khalil al-Tawrizi, who died in 1420.25

Miklós Zsolnay’s abovementioned letter from Jaffa gives an account of his acquisitions in Jerusalem. According to this spirited account, he managed to buy a few old tiles from the guards at the Dome of the Rock.26

In one sense the makeup of the collection seems somewhat haphazard; in fact, Miklós Zsolnay simply purchased what he could get. The number of tiles that can be fitted together or arranged in matching panels is

Fig. 6. Wall tile, Iznik, ca. 1580. Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs.
extremely small. More than once he bought tiles that belonged to a single set but did not fit together. Such an approach is difficult to understand, since it means that he attached no practical value to whole sets. Multiple tiles of the same type conveyed no additional technical information, and when they did not match they offered no help in reconstructing the motifs of whole panels. The number of tile fragments a few centimeters long is relatively large.

OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS IN LATE-NINETEENTH-CENTURY HUNGARY

The Zsolnay family lived in Pécs, a Hungarian town that had been under continuous Ottoman rule from 1543 until 1686. Pécs and its immediate environs—Baranya county—featured the largest number of surviving Ottoman Turkish architectural monuments in the country. In the late 1870s—at the time when designers at the Zsolnay factory were turning their attention to examples
of Islamic art—the Turkish buildings that were still standing were afforded treatment very different from that advocated in the twentieth century. Although in most cases the age and origins of these buildings were known, their restoration was not considered a priority.

In Vilmos Zsolnay’s time the former mosque of Gazi Kassim Pasha in Pécs was the Roman Catholic parish church of the town. A few minutes’ walk from it was the former Yakovali Hasan mosque; in the late nineteenth century it was a Roman Catholic chapel consecrated to St. John. Similarly intact over the centuries was the mausoleum of Idris Baba; this had earlier served as a gunpowder magazine before becoming St. Roch’s Chapel. Just a few kilometers from Pécs lay the towns of Szigetvár and Siklós: there were two Ottoman mosques in the former and just one in the latter. (All three buildings survive to this day.) In Szigetvár the former Süleyman mosque, situated in the castle, was used as a granary, while the Ali Pasha mosque, in the town itself, served as the Roman Catholic parish church. The mosque of Malkoç Bey in Siklós stood in the courtyard of a restaurant and was used as a dwelling. Architectural monuments from Ottoman times were therefore visibly part of the environment, yet at the same time their nature was somewhat obscured, since their function was adapted to contemporary purposes.

It seems unlikely that the interest of Vilmos Zsolnay the ceramicist in the architectural heritage of Islamic art could have been inspired by buildings dating from the Ottoman period. This was not simply on account of changes in the function of these buildings and substantial alterations to their fabric; it was also because they had probably never been embellished with wall tiles. In any event, by the second half of the nineteenth century Ottoman structures in Hungary exhibited no trace whatsoever of any wall tiles. In his more immediate geographical environment Vilmos Zsolnay would not have come across wall tiles of Turkish origin.

ARTIFACTS OF OTTOMAN ORIGIN
IN LATE-NINETEENTH-CENTURY HUNGARY

What has been said above about architecture applies in a certain sense to artifacts as well. Works of Ottoman art were indeed present in Hungary, albeit not obviously. They existed but were mostly secreted away in private collections, with the result that researchers did not study them. Insofar as these artifacts had meaning, it was not primarily as products of Ottoman art, but rather as integral parts of Hungarian history—for example, as mementos of battles or material illustrations of everyday life. A typical manifestation of this approach was the Historical Exhibition of 1886—actually the first exhibition dealing with Hungarian history—put on to commemorate the recapture of Buda Castle from the Ottomans two hundred years earlier. Exhibited in the section entitled “Arms and Military Equipment” were many high-quality Ottoman weapons, saddles, and harness sets, the great majority dating back to the second half of the seventeenth century. The “Fabrics” section featured little other than twelve seventeenth-century Ottoman carpets from Transylvania, borrowed from Budapest’s Museum of Applied Arts (then called the National Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts), which had been formed in 1874. In the section entitled “Jewelry and Utility Objects” a few unearthed artifacts from the era of the Turkish occupation were displayed; this was the first time excavated Turkish objects had been exhibited. But no Iznik or Kütahya faience was shown, nor Ottoman ornamental ceramics of any type. We learn from the introduction to the exhibition catalogue that nationwide collecting preceded the exhibition. Artifacts were loaned not only by the Hungarian National Museum, the Imperial and Royal Arsenal in Vienna, the National Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts, and the Royal Hungarian University Library in Budapest, but also by many private collectors. From the standpoint of Ottoman Turkish artifacts, the material from Prince Pál Esterházy’s treasury at Fraknó (today Forchtenau, in Austria) proved to be the most important. Part of the value of the exhibition as a contribution to Ottoman studies was that it presented—to the general public and academic specialists alike—Ottoman artifacts hitherto inaccessible to them. Nevertheless, the true quantity and quality of the material held in Hungary emerged only later, at the Millennial Exhibition of 1896. This event featured not only artifacts belonging to Prince Pál Esterházy, but also those held by Count Batthyány-Strattmann, the owner of another very noteworthy Ottoman collection. These two major exhibitions together revealed the nature of the Ottoman artifacts surviving in Hungarian aristocratic collections, which at that time were still almost fully intact. A distinct picture takes shape in the light of the two exhibition catalogues, the surviving inventories and probate lists relating to aristocratic collections, and the material currently held by museums. When it came to Turkish material, Hungarian aristocrats collected primarily weapons, harness sets, horse-blankets, saddlecloths, and saddles. Their
collections and those amassed by other nobles featured Turkish artifacts acquired in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (mainly the latter) through personal or commercial links. This material was supplemented by war booty acquired during military campaigns, especially in the wars of reconquest during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Analysis of the contents of these collections reveals that the Hungarian nobility neither used nor collected Iznik ceramics. In their households, finer faience ware meant so-called Haban faience. Products of Iznik ceramics workshops did of course appear in the Hungarian territories during the second half of the sixteenth century, but their use can be linked exclusively to settlements in which Turkish military garrisons were stationed and to places where Turkish civilian populations lived next to such garrisons. Iznik faience is to be discovered buried mainly in the castles along the Danube waterway, for example, those in Buda and Visegrád. During the late nineteenth century researchers were still unaware of this fact; excavations brought to light a significant quantity of Iznik ware only during the second half of the twentieth century, when archeological research into the period of the Turkish occupation in Hungary was established. With regard to the use of this ware, important differences can be discerned between local Hungarian populations and the occupying Turks. Hungarian peasants did not adopt Turkish-type tableware, which differed from their own. In any event, for these peasants Iznik faience was a luxury that was completely out of reach.

Like the aristocratic collections, the ecclesiastical collections were, in Zsolnay's time, inaccessible and unresearched. In the 1880s József Huszka began surveying Turkish fabrics in the collections held by the Roman Catholic Church, but his findings were published only in part. Not until 1934, when the National Calvinist Exhibition was staged in Budapest, was attention called to Turkish embroideries (most of them from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century) in the ecclesiastical collections, primarily those held by the Calvinist Church. The first scholarly work on the subject came out in 1940. Its author, Gertrud Palotay, expressed the view—still accepted by specialist opinion today—that there was a practical reason for the large numbers of Turkish and Turkish-like embroideries in Hungary's Calvinist churches. “The shape, fabric, color, etc. of the Catholic Church's textile accessories were governed by the constraints of tradition. By contrast, in Calvinist churches Communion cloths, chalice cloths, and cloths used to cover the Communion bread were not required to differ in any way whatever from concur-
Fig. 10. Bed sheet (detail), Transylvania or Upper Hungary, late seventeenth century. Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest.

Fig. 11. Fragment of a bed sheet, Transylvania, late seventeenth century. Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest.
Hungarian National Museum
Budapest

NOTES

1. The history of the family and the business is well known. The factory was founded in the city of Pécs (in southwestern Hungary) in 1853. The heyday of the enterprise is associated with Vilmos Zsolnay, who took over its operation in 1865. For the latest treatment of the history of the factory, complete with references to the more important specialist literature, see Eva Hárs, Zsolnay, Pécs (Budapest, 1986).

2. Ibolya Gerelyes and Orsolya Kovács, An Unknown Orientalist: The Eastern Ceramics Collection of Miklós Zsolnay (Pécs and Budapest, 1999), pp. 15–21. The collection of wall tiles was first exhibited in 1928 in the museum operated by the Zsolnay Factory. See Zsolnay Vilmos, 1828–1928 (Pécs, 1928). In 1948, following World War II, the factory was nationalized. The family papers and the collections in the factory museum—including the tile collection—were then transferred to their present place of preservation, the Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs. In Cairo Miklós Zsolnay had purchased a four-thousand-piece collection of Fustat tile ceramics; this was likewise deposited with the Janus Pannonius Museum when the factory was nationalized. For the Fustat collection in more detail, see Gerelyes and Kovács, An Unknown Orientalist, pp. 31–36, and Ibolya Gerelyes, “Miklós Zsolnay’s Ceramics Collection from Fustat,” Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 52 (2001): 319–52. The author and Orsolya Kovács would like to thank the Max van Berchem Foundation for supporting this research for a number of years, beginning in 1997.

3. Vilmos Zsolnay was awarded the Order of Francis Joseph, Second Class. See Hárs, Zsolnay, p. 33.

4. For the ceramics firms showing at the 1873 Vienna World Exhibition, see Emil Teirich, “Die Thonwaren Industrie,” in Offizieller Ausstellungs-Bericht (Vienna, 1873), pp. 42–50. Some believe that Vilmos Zsolnay established links with Theodore Deck even earlier, in the 1860s, when Zsolnay was researching the technological aspects of producing luster-glaze ceramics. See Imre Katona, Zsolnay Vilmos (Budapest, 1977), p. 146.

5. Hárs, Zsolnay, pp. 60–61. The following provides an interesting reference to the mutually helpful professional links between the three men: At the National Széchenyi Library in Budapest is a copy of Jakob von Falke’s Die Kunstdindustrie auf der Wiener Weltausstellung 1873 (Vienna, 1873). The book was originally the property of the National Library and Museum, which subsequently evolved into two separate institutions: the National Széchenyi Library and the Hungarian National Museum. Stamped on the inside cover is the inscription “Ham-pel József tulajdona” (“Property of József Hampel”).

6. The most important source for the life of Ferenc Pulszky is his memoir, Eletem és korom (My Life and Times), 4 vols. (Budapest, 1882–84). The basis of the collections at the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts, founded in 1874, consists of artifacts purchased at the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873. These purchases were made on the initiative of Ferenc Pulszky and through his mediation. In the collection at the Ceramics Department of the Museum of Applied Arts are two Iznik tiles described as “Rhodes” work (inv. nos. 1177 and 1186). The entry in the accessions book states that Károly Pulszky, son of the art historian Ferenc Pulszky, presented the tiles, which were from Istanbul’s “Achmed mosque” [sic]. Two other Iznik wall tiles (inv. nos. 1178 and 1186) reached the Museum of Applied Arts before 1883 from the Department of Antiquities at the Hungarian National Museum. Today the provenance of the latter two pieces cannot be established. It is highly likely that Ferenc Pulszky presented them—along with many other artifacts—to the Hungarian National Museum. They are published in Ibolya Gerelyes, ed., Suleyman the Magnificent and His Age (Budapest, 1994), illos. 132 and 135; the descriptions are by Emese Pásztor.

7. For the research in Vienna, see Margit Zsolnay, Zsolnay: A gýr és a csalad története 1863–1948 (Zsolnay: A History of the Factory and the Family) (Budapest, 1974), pp. 66–67. The books referred to are Léon Parvillé, Architecture et décoration turques au XVe siècle (Paris, 1874), and Prisse d’Avennes, L’art arabe d’après les monuments du Kaire (Paris, 1877). Certain periodicals, including Kunst und Gewerbe, were to be found in the Zsolnay Factory’s collection of patterns. See Gerelyes and Kovács, An Unknown Orientalist, p. 68.

8. Annette Hagedorn has drawn attention to similarities that in some cases amount to copying. See Annette Hagedorn, Auf der Suche nach dem neuen Stil (Berlin, 1998), pp. 28–29, 58–59.

9. Zsolnay kerámia kiállítás (An Exhibition of Zsolnay Ceramics), ed. Orsolya Kovács (Pécs, 1999), pp. 20–21, 25. Ornamental vessels based on İznik originals: ornamental dish, 1878–79, inv. no. 52.492; goblet, 1878–79, inv. no. 51.1959; ornamental dish with a gold brocade ground and decoration based on that of an İznik work, 1878, inv. no. 51.1267; the same but with an iron ground, 51.12661.

10. For example, a vase designed by Júlia Zsolnay in 1878 for the Paris World Exhibition; the design was not executed until 1895–96.

11. For the exhibition of Baranya folk embroidery, see Zsolnay, Zsolnay, pp. 99–100.

12. For additional analysis of this issue, see the second part of the study.

13. Hárs, Zsolnay, p. 36.

14. Zsolnay, Zsolnay, p. 144: Terez Zsolnay’s recollections from the beginning of 1886: “The factory again had to be expanded… Two large flat kilns were used to fire the more than 10,000 forints’ worth of Persian [italics mine] tiles ordered by the Austrian architect Schmorantz [sic] for the Trencsénteplic thermal spa, which is owned by Count d’Hartcourt.” Here she also mentions technical problems that emerged: “Father continued to devote all his energies to perfecting this rock-hard, frost-resistant material [pyrogranite] and to enriching the color hues of the enamels necessary for the embellishment of the Persian-type tiles [italics mine].”

15. Annette Hagedorn, too, calls attention to the importance of
the Zsolnay family’s contacts in Western Europe. See Hagedorn, *AUF DER SUCHEN*, p. 63.
19. I should like to thank Prof. Doris Behrens-Abouseif for drawing my attention to the Trencsénteplic spa. No tiles featuring in the plans that Schmoranz drew up for the spa are to be found in the Zsolnay bequest, although some have been acquired by other European collections, for example, a collection in Brussels. See Martine Azarnoush-Maillard, *Islamisch Aardewerk* (Brussels, 1980), p. 12; the motif system on this particular tile appears on many pages in the Prisse d’Avennes work mentioned above.
20. The entire correspondence is to be found in Pécs, in the Archives of the Janus Pannonius Museum. The letter mentions Gustav Schmoranz; it was he who published his brother’s work *All-orientalische Glas-Gefässe* (Vienna, 1898), which appeared after Franz’s death. It is worth quoting Miklós Zsolnay’s original text: “…Ich werde nun jeden Tag einige Pausen anfertigen, ausserdem bringe ich originale Fliessen eine kleine Collection...und verschiedene Bruckstücke bekommen, so dass wir uns ganz gut von Schmoranz emanzipieren können.”
22. November 3: “Gestern fand ich bei einem Perser ein kleines Stück der Uralten Mosaikfaenzen Ziegele—auch 4 alte mit Metall reflux sind schon in meinem Besitz, ...gestern kaufte ich vom Imam des Kiosk’s des Sultan Ahmed Djamis Bruchstücke aus der Moschē.” The tiles, dating from 1570 to 1580, have been published: see GERELYES and KOVÁCS, *AN UNKNOWN ORIENTALIST*, pp. 48–49, and SÜLEYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, fig. 135. The descriptions are by Emese Pásztor. Three of the four Kashan tiles purchased in the Istanbul bazaar remain in the collection.
23. The Yeni Valide piece may be the same as the one published in GERELYES and KOVÁCS, *AN UNKNOWN ORIENTALIST*, p. 50.
24. On the basis of published analogies, I think that the fragments that reached the Zsolnay collection came primarily from the Sûnnet Odası in the Topkapı Sarayı. In the collection there are five such fragments, which feature cartouches filled with arabesques. One of these may have come from the mausoleum of Sultan Selim II. See Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby, *Iznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey* (London, 1989), p. 23, fig. 413. One of the similar pieces is published: see GERELYES and KOVÁCS, *AN UNKNOWN ORIENTALIST*, p. 59.
25. From his concisely written and barely legible few lines, it emerges that Miklós Zsolnay put the tiles into five groups, according to price; the largest consisted of seventy-five items. Several of the hexagonal tiles from the fifteenth century have been published: see GERELYES and KOVÁCS, *AN UNKNOWN ORIENTALIST*, pp. 51–53.
26. Jaffa, December 15: “Ist Trencsin-Teplitz ganz abgeliefert? In Jerusalem hatte ich Gelegenheit einige ganz alte Fliessen vom Felsendom von Aufschnern zu kaufen.—Fliessen hab ich eine grosse Menge zusammen gekauft.” Four tiles in the collection can be identified as being the same as those used in the restoration of the Dome of the Rock during the time of SÜLEYMAN I.
27. By the first half of the nineteenth century, a pronounced interest in the Ottoman Turkish architectural monuments on Hungarian soil had already emerged. The earliest work on the subject was Hammer Purgstall’s *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* (Pest, 1834). It was Purgstall who called attention to the inscriptions on the mosque of Sultan Süleyman at Szigetvár. See “Szigetvári arab, török és perzsa feliratok” (Arab, Turkish, and Persian Inscriptions at Szigetvár), *Akadémiai Értesítő* (1844). From the mid-1850s onwards the Sunday newspaper *Vasárnap UJSÁG* dealt continuously with well-known Turkish buildings. Even today the sketches it published serve as source material for the condition of Hungary’s Ottoman monuments in the nineteenth century. For a list of measurements and sketches available in the early twentieth century, but based on work undertaken in the nineteenth, see BARON GYULA FORSTER’S *MAGYAROSZAG MÜMELÉKEI*, 5 vols. (Budapest, 1905). Much of the manuscript material for this work was destroyed in the course of the twentieth century.
28. For architectural descriptions of the buildings listed along with a bibliography of the literature in Hungarian relating to them see GYÖRÖI GÉRÓ, *AZ OSMÁN-TÖRÖK ÉPICÉSZ MAGYAROSZAGON* (Ottoman-Turkish Architecture in Hungary [Mosques, Mausoleums, and Baths]) (Budapest, 1980), pp. 44–57, 59–66, 80.
29. It was many decades before scholarship began to see Turkish monuments in a different way. A real change in attitude came only in the twentieth century, when the original condition and function of buildings became important subjects of study.
30. According to present knowledge, the inner spaces of the Turkish buildings in Hungary were embellished using paint. Cf. GYÖRÖI GÉRÓ, “A török falfestészet magyarországi emlékei” (Relics of Turkish Wall Painting in Hungary), in *ENTZ GÉZA NYOLCOFOIÁDOK SCILÁTÉSNAVÁJNA* (Festschrift for GÉZA ENTZ ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY) (Budapest, 1993), pp. 43–54. There are, however, data to the contrary. In the case of the Yakovali Ahsan mosque in Pécs, there is a possibility that the “glazed bricks” mentioned in a contemporary description might have been wall tiles. The relevant drawing, made in 1861 and still available in 1905, is today lost. Cf. FORSTER, *MAGYAROSZÁG*, vol. 2, pp. 141–42. Another question altogether is whether these glazed bricks were still to be seen in Zsolnay’s time. Similarly unclear is what exactly was removed during large-scale reconstruction work conducted in the eighteenth century. Even in the nineteenth century researchers were unable to clarify these issues.
31. BÉLA MAJLATH, *A TÖRÉNTELMI KIHALÁSOK KALANDJA* (Guide to the Historical Exhibition) (Budapest, 1886).
32. MAJLATH, *TÖRTÉNLEM*, pp. 259–61. In accordance with the approach of the age, these, too, were described as Persian artifacts: “Oriental fabric. Persian handwoven prayer-rug.” This was the first
seeking the east in the west: the zsolnay phenomenon

occasion of Ottoman Turkish carpets from Hungarian—primarily Transylvanian—collections being exhibited. In this very year, 1886, an exhibition presenting the collection of Arnold Ipolyi, bishop of Nagyvárad, was staged at the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest. In this show there were twenty-four carpets, of which eighteen were Turkish and five Persian. See Ferenc Batári, *Oszmán-török szőnyeg* (Ottoman Turkish Carpets) (Budapest and Keszthely, 1994), p. 32.


35. The contents of these collections were dispersed during the twentieth century, primarily as a result of the two World Wars, and were in part destroyed. With regard to the artifacts of Ottoman origin, the destruction of the Batthyány collection at Kőrmend during World War II was especially painful. A significant part of the Esterházy family’s collection at Fraknó passed to the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest even before World War I. The processing of this material is still going on. For the history of the collection, see Imre Katona, “A fraknói kincstár 1725-ös leltára” (The 1725 Inventory of the Fraknó Treasury), *Muveszettörténeti Értesítő* 29 (1980): 131–47. Fortunately some of the Ottoman Turkish artifacts held by other aristocratic and noble families also passed to museum collections. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Count Ferenc Széchényi, the founder of the Hungarian National Museum, had already amassed a considerable number of artifacts. Széchényi and his near-contemporary, Count Miklós Jankovich, both presented their collections to the National Museum. Data relating to the Turkish artifacts in the Széchényi benefaction are preserved in the Hungarian National Museum’s first printed inventory book (in Latin): *Cimeliotheca Musei Nationalis Hungarici* (Buda, 1825). With regard to Miklós Jankovich’s collecting, our most important source consists of four handwritten, Latin-language inventory books, as well as correspondence relating to purchases. See Hedvig Belitska-Scholz, “Jankovich Miklós, a gyűjtő és mecénás (1772–1846)” (Miklós Jankovich, Collector and Patron of the Arts [1772–1846]), in *Művészettörténeti Füzetek* 17 (Budapest, 1985).


38. József Huszka, *Magyar díszítő stíl* (Hungarian Decorative Style) (Budapest, 1885), in which he published some of the findings of his collecting in Transylvania and Upper Hungary. Gertrud Palotay, too, makes reference to Huszka, claiming that his books of sketches were preserved at the Ethnographical Museum of Budapest. See Palotay, *Oszmán-török elemek a magyar himzésben = Les éléments turc-ottomans des broderies hongroises* (Budapest, 1940), pp. 26–27.


40. Palotay, *Oszmán-török*, p. 27. Regarding the literature since then, mention should be made of the work of Veronika Gervers, who persuasively analyzes the influence exercised on Hungarian embroideries by their Turkish counterparts: Veronika Gervers, *The Influence of Ottoman Turkish Textiles and Costumes in Eastern Europe* (Toronto, 1982), pp. 19–22.

Several recent publications have defined the histories of the well-known Islamic collections in Europe, Russia, and the United States.\textsuperscript{1} The foundations of these collections lie firmly in the nineteenth century, but collectors have continued their activities, with many new names added to their ranks, throughout the twentieth century. One collector who has not been acknowledged, probably because he is usually associated with East and South Asian art, is Avery Brundage (1887–1975). The collection that he and his wife, Elizabeth, donated in 1960 to the city of San Francisco forms the backbone of the Asian Art Museum holdings.

Avery Brundage was perhaps best known for his role in the Olympic Games movement and as president of the International Olympic Committee from 1952 through 1972. His extensive travels in pursuit of his Olympic ideals gave him a unique opportunity to visit many Asian countries. The Brundage collection numbers some eight thousand pieces, five hundred of which are West Asian works of art, including prehistoric Iranian ceramics, Luristan bronzes, and an excellent representative corpus of Islamic wares (some 320 artifacts). However, in true museum tradition, there are many more pieces in the reserves than on display. Sadly, there is no supportive correspondence or personal record indicating why Brundage purchased these objects, or if he had any idea of their provenance, if indeed he cared. But it is evident that he had a good eye for the unusual and the interesting. Two ceramic pieces are of particular interest: a polychrome, early Abbasid luster bowl, accession number B60 P478 (figs. 1, 3, 4, and 5), the luster bowl because it is unique, and the underglaze-painted dish because it is an excellent example of its type, and its provenance, whether Syrian Mamluk or Iranian, is open to question. Most Islamic collections have samples of these wares, but little progress has been made in researching those of Iranian origin since Gerald Reitlinger’s seminal article was published in 1938.\textsuperscript{2} The Mamluk wares have received more attention, but no definitive conclusions have been drawn to differentiate one ware from the other.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{The Polychrome Luster Bowl.}

I precede my discussion of each of these vessels with a brief description of its decoration and state of preservation. Despite the many breaks and mends in the polychrome luster bowl, B60 P478 (figs. 3, 4, and 5 for exterior and profiles), my detailed examination of the luster bowl under ultraviolet lamp, with the assistance of associate conservator Mark Fenn,\textsuperscript{4} revealed conclusively that most of the vessel is original. There are a few rogue rim fragments and some plaster infills, the luster has been badly abraded, and at some stage—presumably before it was sold to Brundage—a restorer carried out a somewhat unsympathetic overpainting job, but the design is definitely as originally conceived.

This round bowl, with its curved, flaring sides, everted rim, and low, well-shaped foot has the diagnostic, well-levigated, creamy yellow Basran body.\textsuperscript{5} It measures 27.8 cm in diameter and 7.6 cm in height and is covered both inside and out with a tin-opacified lead glaze to produce an opaque white surface for the overglaze-painted bichrome (chocolate brown and golden olive) luster decoration. The exterior surface is noticeably grayer and is flecked with gray specks, probably from intrusive manganese. Even the inside of the foot ring is glazed. The interior design was outlined in a thin double line of golden olive, and a thicker white highlighting line was used to accentuate the motifs. The design includes a central eight-pointed star formed by two interlocking squares. The points of the stars are filled in with alternating chocolate brown and golden olive luster. The center is a roughly drawn octagon delineated by two fine, golden olive parallel lines; its grayish white ground is undecorated except for traces of a thin, somewhat curvilinear Kufic inscription (possibly two lines), which is impossible to read, even under the UV lamp. Four
Fig. 1. Polychrome Abbasid lusterware bowl. The Avery Brundage Collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, B60 P478. (Photo: courtesy of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco)

Fig. 2. Underglaze-painted blue, black, and white dish. The Avery Brundage Collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, B60 P1962. (Photo: courtesy of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco)

Fig. 3. Exterior of the lusterware bowl. (Photo: courtesy of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco)

Fig. 4. Profile of the lusterware bowl. (Photo: courtesy of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco)

Fig. 5. Section of the lusterware bowl. (Author’s drawing)
similar eight-pointed stars radiate from four alternate points of the central star; their centers are decorated with a series of peacock- or bull’s-eye designs and stippled dots. The space between them is filled by cruciform motifs, with a central, seven-petal rosette reserved in each. The cruciform shapes are somewhat irregular, as their contours are dictated by the curves of the bowl’s cavetto. Their tops are capped with three-petal motifs that link them to the outer stars, and a pair of “winged” motifs sprouts from each. These cruciform shapes are painted in chocolate brown luster over schematic, alternating designs of arrows or wavy lines in golden olive luster. The three-petal motif is formed with a fine line and cross-hatching in golden olive, and a central chocolate brown lens shape. The half-palmettes are defined with thick lines of chocolate brown, which are heavily overpainted. The rim appears to be bordered with a continuous, thick line of chocolate brown. The exterior is decorated with three large circles and triangles in chocolate brown on a whitish ground, with golden olive dashes in between. The inside foot ring has two concentric circles—one chocolate, one golden olive. These merge in places, encircling more dashes, which are badly abraded and have been heavily overpainted.

It is widely accepted that the type of polychrome wares to which this luster bowl belongs were produced in the ninth century. Extensive research and visits to the storage areas of numerous museums have nevertheless demonstrated that the overall design on this bowl is unique and the first known example of a star-and-cross motif on a ceramic vessel. Its individual design elements, however, are common, and many similarly shaped bowls and fragments can be cited. In ceramic tile revetments the star-and-cross design is not known to have occurred before the twelfth century in Anatolia and the thirteenth century in Iran. However, a stucco dado with a star-and-cross design was excavated in House III by the German team at Samarra; according to Alastair Northedge this house was abandoned around 895 CE. The tops of the crosses in the stucco dado of this house also end in petals and palmettes. To date, the ceramic vessel nearest to the luster bowl under consideration is an Egyptian Fayyumi jar in the collection of the Islamic Museum, Cairo, which research dates to around 1000 CE or earlier. For the other motifs we should look to illuminated manuscripts. Indeed, rosette motifs can be found as verse spacers in ninth- or tenth-century Kufic Qur’ans, although these rosettes seem uniformly to have six petals. The numerous frontispieces and finispieces of such Qur’ans would have provided endless inspiration for decorative motifs. Geometric interlace designs are common to both illumination and leather bookbindings, as well as to woodcarving and stuccowork. A five-petal rosette can be seen on a teak panel from Tikrit, Iraq, dated to the second half of the eighth century.

THE UNDERGLAZE-PAINTED BLUE, BLACK, AND WHITE DISH

The physical state of the dish, B60 P1962 (figs. 6, 7, and 8 for exterior and profiles), is much better than that of the bowl just considered; it has only one significant mend, with a little overpainting, which is easily discernible (fig. 6). Although the dish languished previously in storage, it is now on permanent display in the new Asian Art Museum housed in the old City Library, opposite City Hall. It measures 28.4 cm in diameter, and 6.6 cm in height. Its thick alkaline glaze is clear and glasy, indicating that the bowl was probably never underground; pitted and crackled, especially on the exterior, the glaze does not cover the foot. The piercing of the low foot ring, reminiscent of that found in so-called Kubachi wares, suggests that for many years the dish was suspended on someone’s wall by a wire or string. It has a composite, or stoneware, rather gritty white buff body, a white slip, and a geometric design depicted in underglaze cobalt blue and black on a creamy white ground. According to Dr. Le He, curator of Chinese ceramics at the Asian Art Museum, its shallow profile and elegant, narrow foot replicate a very common Ding shape, at least in spirit. Unlike the luster bowl, this dish belongs to an extensive family of similarly decorated vessels, but among this family its shape is seemingly unique.

The decoration consists of a central six-pointed star, or seal of Solomon, drawn in a thick cobalt blue line. One fine black line lies just within the central hexagon of the star, and a second one encircles seven blue dots that create a schematic six-petal flower at the very center of the dish. On a stippled white ground, pseudo-calligraphy in thick black lines, perhaps approximating the repeated word Allāh, encircles this central motif. Each point of the star contains three blue dots and two fine black lines. Connecting adjacent points are blue trefoils, their interstices filled with more black pseudo-calligraphy on stippled grounds that are finely outlined.
in black. The resultant lobed hexagram is framed with a wide white band, filled with a double row of blue dots and fine black “commas,” between continuous, thick blue lines the cobalt of which has smudged and run during the firing process. The whole central design is encircled by a white band delineated by fine black lines, beyond which is a band of crosshatched black on white, overpainted with cobalt that has also bled. The six lens-shaped spaces between the central design and the encircling white band are filled with more pseudo-calligraphy and feature single blue dots, two of which are framed with fine black lines. The rim is a simple blue band. The exterior has fifteen black schematic spirals23 contained by double bands of black; there are dots painted in the interstices above most of these spirals.

DISCUSSION OF PROVENANCE

The luster bowl is undoubtedly an early Abbasid ware, most probably produced in Basra,24 but its find-spot is unknown. In 1999 I visited Housshang Mahboubian at his gallery in Grosvenor Street, London, to see if he recalled handling these two vessels. The museum records indicated that Brundage had acquired most of his West Asian artifacts through H. Khan Monif25 and the Mahboubians.26 Mr. Mahboubian confirmed that he believed his firm had sold them both to Brundage, and mentioned that Brundage definitely visited their gallery in Tehran on a number of occasions. He thought that the luster bowl came from Jurjan and the dish from Khurasan, somewhere near Nishapur. He then illustrated the confusion concerning these underglaze-painted wares, producing a photograph of a similarly decorated bowl with an everted rim,
Madina, 28 he said that he had serious doubts about the no. 4457.30 All the others had been either confiscated ever vague, was a dish in the Islamic Museum, Tehran, similar decorated wares observed in museum collec-
tions, the only one with a confirmed provenance, how-
now in the Los Angeles County Museum, and I had a
chance to examine the bowl in July 2003 and consider
it to be a similar ware to the Asian Art Museum dish.
During a visit to Iran in 2002 I noted that, of all the
similarly decorated wares observed in museum collec-
tions, the only one with a confirmed provenance, how-
ever vague, was a dish in the Islamic Museum, Tehran,
no. 4457.30 All the others had been either confiscated
from smugglers or purchased on the open market. As
the director, Zohreh Roohfar, stated, all her pieces are
“good”—in other words, every one has a sound, legit-
imate provenance. On a further visit to Iran in 2003
I found a base shard with one of the star points, which
had come from Isfarayin, in the Juvayn district in west-
ern Khurasan. In the Mashhad pottery storage, which
houses all the finds from Khurasan surveys and excava-
tions, I located another fragment, found during exca-
vations for a modern cesspit in Enqelab, also in the
Juvayn area. Thus, although we are no nearer to iden-
tifying a precise place of manufacture, it is reasonable
to state that these wares were made in Iran, probably
somewhere in Khurasan. There was doubtless a consid-
erable output of similar underglaze-painted wares in
Syria and Egypt at the same period—indeed the Danish
excavations at Hama31 and more recent finds in
Aleppo and Palmyra32 have produced abundant com-
parative material—but their shapes, decorative motifs,
and execution differ from those of the dish considered
here. Regional differences are not so distinguishable
among the so-called Sultanabad wares produced dur-
ing the Ilkhanid period—especially the radial bowls—
but that is a separate subject.

OVERALL DESIGN

Each of these two pieces obviously has a geometric
design, but between them there is an age difference of
at least five hundred years. In this intervening period
the potters of Iran, Syria, and Egypt, in their quest to
mimic Chinese porcelain, discovered how to manufac-
ture a composite, or stonepaste, body from a more por-
celain-like paste. These potters also invariably decorated
their vessels with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic
forms, evidently disregarding Islamic proscriptions
against such forms or inferring that, since such wares
were exclusively for secular use by a wealthy merchant
class, such proscriptions did not apply. In each vessel
considered here we find a horror vacui and the use of
the white ground to highlight the designs. Perhaps this
is what attracted Brundage to them both.

The seal of Solomon (as either a pentagram or a hexa-
gram) is a common Islamic design, and it was used in
talismanic bowls to protect the owner from evil spirits,
malevolent forces, and poisons.34 In his article on
medicinal bowls, Spoer explains how this hexagram was
also the symbol of the sun, with its twelve rays possibly
representing the twelve signs of the zodiac, which in
turn may symbolize the twelve Arabic letters that begin
the Shahada: là ilaha illa ‘llah.35 It is tempting to read
the letters in the center of the hexagram as a repeat of
this formula. It was common practice for Muslim pot-
ters to include blessings and good wishes to the owner,
and perhaps what we have here is a development of this
function, with the hexagram being a shorthand form
of all these sentiments, easily comprehensible to the
educated and the illiterate alike. It should be remem-
bered that life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centu-
ries was extremely turbulent, with periods of upheaval,
plague, and constant shifts of power that would have
encouraged the populace to seek every possible means
to protect themselves and their families. However, we
have no documentary proof to support such a hypothe-
sis. Perhaps the most sensible conclusion is that the
decoration on both vessels was an exercise in geometric
form, with the potter challenged by having to adapt
to a curved surface.

CONCLUSION

It is a disappointment that we have no real idea of what
drove Avery Brundage in his collecting quest for West
Asian artifacts, but we must admire his serendipitous
fortune in acquiring these two vessels and other pieces.
From the limited correspondence it is hard to gauge
who had the upper hand—the collector or his dealers.
Trunkloads of antiques were shipped across America,
terse letters ensued, and objects were returned. There
was no sign of profuse thanks for a rarity procured.
There were dealers’ letters encouraging Brundage to
visit their respective New York galleries after his con-
siderable absences but no record of what he found
there when he did. There is a noticeable shortage of
manuscript material in his West Asian collection, so perhaps he was more excited by objects of ceramic, metal, glass, and stone.

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NOTES

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4. Grateful thanks to Mark Fenn, who bravely took a section sam- ple in order that Rob Mason could analyze the petrofabric (see below).

5. R. B. Mason, “Early Mediaeval Iraqi Lustre-painted and Asso- ciated Wares: Typology in a Multidisciplinary Study,” Iraq 59 (1997): 15–45. Mason confirmed by e-mail that Mark Fenn’s section was composed of what he describes as a typical Bas- ran petrofabric. The body of these early Abbasid lusterwares is so distinctive that they can be identified by eye in a mound of shards.

6. Ibid. Mason’s BL.A “dash-circle,” fig. 13, p. 54.


9. For example, British Museum 1928 4–19, 1, whose profile is published in Mason, “Early Mediaeval,” BRM.05, fig. 14, p. 55. This has a six-pointed central star and the same exterior dec- oration; its dimensions are identical.


11. E. Herzfeld, Der Wandschmuck der Bauten von Samurra und seine Ornamentik (Berlin, 1923) p. 161, abb. 234, orn. 221, pl. 79.

12. Personal e-mail communication, April 10, 1999.

13. The Arts of Islam, cat. of an exh. at Hayward Gallery, London 1976 (London, 1976), p. 222, catalogue no. 277, Islamic Museum, Cairo 1988. This type-2 vessel is decorated with alternating eight-pointed stars and crosses in opaque green, yellow, pur- ple, and white glazes. In their centers, the stars have identical inscriptions—barka kûmla (perfect blessing)—and the crosses have rosettes.

14. E-mail communication with G. T. Scanlon.


16. F. R. Martin, The Persian Lustre Vase in the Imperial Hermitage at St Petersburg and Some Fragments of Lustre Ware Found near Cairo at Fostâl (Stockholm, 1989). Like Wallis of the British Museum, he follows the dictum that illuminated manuscripts “were chief disseminators of motives of ornamentation.”


20. Among Chinese prototypes are a thirteenth-century Ding ware dish on display in the Percival David Foundation (PDF 164); and two examples depicted in Chauimei Ho, ed., New Light on Chinese Yue and Longquan Wares (Hong Kong, 1994), p. 81, fig. 17, no. 42, and p. 165, fig. 103. The latter two are Longquan green-glazed wares of the early fourteenth century. Unfortu- nately most books on Chinese ceramic art do not include line drawings to make it easier to compare profiles.

21. For example, (1) Islamic Museum, Cairo, 16241 (unpublished); (2) Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, 1971.21 195038 (pub- licated in Mason, “Early Mediaeval,” BRM.05, fig. 14, p. 55). Among Chinese prototypes are a thirteenth-century Ding ware dish on display in the Percival David Foundation (PDF 164); and two examples depicted in Chauimei Ho, ed., New Light on Chinese Yue and Longquan Wares (Hong Kong, 1994), p. 81, fig. 17, no. 42, and p. 165, fig. 103. The latter two are Longquan green-glazed wares of the early fourteenth century. Unfortu- nately most books on Chinese ceramic art do not include line drawings to make it easier to compare profiles.

22. See A. Ittig, “A Talismanic Bowl,” Annales Islamologiques 18 (1982): 79–94; on p. 86 Ittig explains that the seal of Solo- mon “is believed to have been the symbol inscribed on the
Two Ceramic Pieces from the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

ring of Sulayman, which endowed its owner with power over both terrestrial and supernatural beings; she adds that five- and six-pointed stars were interchangeable.

23. Such spirals are a common feature of these Iranian ceramics, and can be found on a gamut of glazed wares. The inspiration is the stylized Chinese cloud pattern on blue-and-white Yuan-dynasty funerary ceramics. See Zhang Pusheng, “Recent Research into Chinese Blue and White Porcelain”, TOCS 56 (1991–92): 37–46, see p. 41, fig. 2.


26. M. Mahboubian, Treasures of Persian Art after Islam (Austin, 1970); in the preface to this catalogue Mehdi Mahboubian states that his father, Benyamin, died in 1969 at 100 years of age. In the 1930s he had conducted over 100 excavations in Iran and “was responsible for practically all early excavations of Islamic sites, such as Bazineh Gerd, Farahan, Soltanabad, Saveh, Aveh, Ray, Yaskand, etc.” He states that the first Ilkhanid ceramic center was Juvayn, and he thinks that potters from there were taken to Sultaniiya. I note that many of these pieces (ceramics, bronzes, and paintings) are now in the Reza Abbasi Museum, Tehran.


29. See n. 23 above. Grube, “Timurid Ceramics,” pp. 77–78, states this problem, and confirms that “Eastern Iran appears to have produced the lion’s share, and Nishapur is generally identified by dealers and collectors as its main source.”

30. Ibid. This is a high-sided, deep bowl measuring 30 cm in diameter and 8.5 cm high. However, both the register and the label state “probably Khurasan,” so we still do not have a well-defined provenance.


32. Personal visits to museums in both centers and to Hama in the spring of 2001.


34. Ittig, “Talismanic Bowl,” p. 86.

35. Spoer, “Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls,” p. 239.
A *tadhkira* (memorandum) prepared some time in the 1280s, which gave general instructions for the management of Egypt during the absence of Sultan Qalawun from that land, also provided a fairly clear general picture of where the trouble spots of Cairo were. The memorandum directed those in charge of the city to take special care in patrolling certain areas, especially “the Nile bank, the cemeteries, and ponds such as the Elephant’s Pool (*Birkat al-Fal*) and the Abyssinian Pool (*Birkat al-Yabash*)...and certain public halls in the Husayniyya Quarter known as *Qát al-Futuwwa*, where turbulent folk hang out.”

What were the *Qát al-Futuwwa* (Halls of Chivalry), and why were they so dangerous? As we shall see, in the mean streets of al-Husayniyya there flourished a Chandleresque combination of chivalry and gangsterism. In English “chivalry” and “gangsterism” are two words; in medieval Arabic one word may suffice: *futuwwa*. If the chivalrous aspects of the institution are only briefly dealt with here, this is because they have hitherto received more attention from scholars. The earliest Western studies of this puzzling phenomenon concentrated almost exclusively on them; Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall took the lead with a barmy essay in which he not only identified *futuwwa* as an Oriental institution corresponding to Western chivalry but also linked the drinking cup of *futuwwa* initiation with the Holy Grail. In general, early Western studies of medieval Islam were bedeviled and distorted by the impulse to look for Eastern equivalents of the chivalry of Christendom. Hence the preoccupation with Saracenic heraldry and Saracen fiéfs (as iqṭā’s were understood to be) as well as with the poorly understood phenomena of *furūsiiyya* and *futuwwa*. Western scholars went looking for Saracen knights and Arabian orders of chivalry and, with some difficulty, found them. For example, A. N. Poliak, writing in 1939, offered a misleading description of *futuwwa*: “The order of knights devoted to Muhammad’s posterity, *al-futuwwa*, which was headed by the sultan and open to native knights, ceased to exist in the fourteenth century, probably owing to the growing exclusiveness of the “Turkish” nobility.” Poliak probably took his lead from much earlier speculations by Étienne Quatremère, who had similarly linked *futuwwa* with the *ashrāf* (descendants of the Prophet).

*Fatā* is a young man. *Futuwwa* literally means “young-manliness” and, more specifically, the qualities that should be possessed by a young man—honor, generosity, courage, and solidarity with his confreres. (The corresponding Iranian term is *javānmardi*.) Although there is, I think, no evidence for the existence of *futuwwa* prior to the tenth century, its devotees traced the origins of *futuwwa* back to ‘Ali and, through ‘Ali, back to Ibrahim. In the course of the tenth to thirteenth centuries the institution spread through Iran, Iraq, Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt. *Futuwwa* lodges seem to have been meeting-places for “les jeunes” (to borrow the term used by the historian of medieval France, Georges Duby). That is to say, they were places where men who were too young to marry could get together and...well, it depended. Sometimes these lodges were no more than sports clubs; sometimes they acquired political interests and turned into local factions; sometimes they became closely linked with particular crafts and produced something akin to guild solidarity; but sometimes they turned away from the world and dedicated themselves to mystical devotions. In the early thirteenth century, a number of Sufi writers produced treatises that were devoted wholly or in part to the inner aspects of *futuwwa*. (Most notable among them was Ibn al-‘Arabi, who addressed three chapters of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* to the subject.)

The earliest surviving treatise on *futuwwa*, written in the tenth century by Ibn al-Husayn al-Sulami, stressed the importance of feasting, hospitality, and good fellowship. In the early fourteenth century, Ibn Battuta received a great deal of hospitality in Anatolian towns from the *akhis*, the Turkish equivalents of the Arabic *fitān*. Ibn Battuta’s welcome as a visiting stranger may suggest that a primary function of *futuwwa* lodges was to offer hospitality to visitors, as does...
the special status of Ibrahim, or Abraham, as one of the patrons of futuwwa, for it was reported of Ibrahim that he never dined alone, since he always had guests at his dinners. In the 1180s there was an attempt to regularize the existence of such lodges and to bring them under central control, as the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, al-Nasir li-Din Allah (r. 1180–1225) declared himself the head of all the futuwwa lodges in Iraq and elsewhere. Al-Nasir’s patronage was perhaps designed to reconcile his Sunni and Shi’i subjects in a broadly tolerant umbrella organization. It was also a means of extending the caliph’s influence beyond his frontiers, since he conferred investiture on foreign princes as an honor—a sort of Middle Eastern anticipation of the Burgundian Order of the Golden Fleece.

However, the elevated status of futuwwa in Iraq was a transitory phenomenon, for in 1258 the Mongols captured Baghdad and put the last of the city’s caliphs to death. Subsequently in 1261 the Abbasid caliphate was revived in Cairo, and the first act of the newly installed caliph was to ceremonially invest Mamluk Sultan Baybars with the trousers of futuwwa—a sort of girding with knighthood. In 1263 Baybars in his turn invested the second of the Cairo caliphs with futuwwa. There was a lot of fuss about these ceremonies at the time, and in the same year the trousers of futuwwa were sent to Berke of the Golden Horde. Arab chiefs of the Khafaja tribe were also invested with futuwwa. Quite a bit later, in 1292, Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil invested a chieftain of the Hakkari Kurds in Upper Iraq with futuwwa. Thereafter there are no more references to courtly futuwwa. It was defunct.

But if we move on to the twentieth century and consult a dictionary of colloquial Egyptian, we find futuwwa defined as “neighborhood strong-man and protector of local interests, bully, tough-guy, hood.” Moreover, Sawsan al-Messiri’s article on the sociology of futuwwa in modern Egypt does not deal with any sort of chivalric revival à la Mark Girouard. Rather the article is about neighborhood protection rackets and roughnecks. The modern roughnecks discussed by Messiri and others, though they usually belong to gangs, do not appear to have undergone initiation rituals, nor do they trouble to trace the spiritual origins of what they are doing back to ‘Ali and Ibrahim.

Staying with modern futuwwa, one finds that it features prominently in modern Egyptian novels and films—most notably the novels of Naguib Mahfouz. Futuwwa toughs make a minor appearance in one of Mahfouz’s early works, as the bullies of schoolchildren in Bayn al-gasrayn (published in 1956; the English translation of 1990 is entitled Palace Walk). Their importance grows considerably in his later fiction. Mahfouz’s religio-sociological allegory, Awlad harratinâ (1967; translated in 1972 as Children of Gebelawi), is ostensibly devoted to futuwwa toughs who dominate the háras. The rival strong-arm men in the hāra chronicled by Mahfouz are all descendants of Jabalawi (namely, God), and the novel only ends with the explosive destruction of these small-time local gangsters. Mahfouz’s novel Malhamat al-harâfish (1977; translated in 1994 as The Harafish), an epic saga of urban riffraff, is similarly dominated by gang wars and intrigues. The very word used by Mahfouz in his title, harâfish, is no longer part of modern Egyptian. In a study of medieval urban life under the Mamluk sultans, Ira Lapidus described harâfish as “beggars and menials” who “formed a turbulent and dangerous mob.” As I have noted in a review of this novel, Mahfouz in Malhamat al-harâfish has shaken off Western fictional models and “gone back to the oral storytelling tradition and revived the traditional romance, which dealt with the activities of such legendary urban criminals as Mercury Ali, Crafty Delilah, and Ahmad the Sickness. Such tales, which celebrate the craftiness and courage of rogues, have always been popular with the futuwwa gangsters who ‘protect’ the various quarters of Cairo.”

In portraying these toughs, Mahfouz seems to have been drawing on childhood memory as much as on imagination. Interviewed by the novelist Gamal al-Ghitany, he looked back with actual nostalgia on the toughs of the Gamaliyya quarter of Cairo in the opening decades of this century—in particular, their storming of the local police station had lodged in his memory. The futuwwa toughs of Mahfouz’s novels are not always unmitigated villains, and Mahfouz’s attitude to the real-life social phenomenon was and is tinged with ambivalence. He has gone on record with the view that the futuwwa leaders of the 1920s and 30s were protectors of the quarters rather than their oppressors, adding, however, that “as with some rulers, the protector sometimes turned into a usurper.” Mahfouz, who was involved in the film industry for much of his career, scripted the screenplay of al-Futuwwa. This film, directed by Salah Abou Seif and released in 1957, dealt with the undeniably career of Zaydan, the “Vegetable King,” a racketeer who used violence and corruption to dominate the vegetable market. Haridi, a naïve immigrant newly arrived from the countryside, rallies the neighborhood to overthrow Zaydan, but in the course of the struggle Haridi himself becomes corrupted and in his turn
becomes the “Vegetable King.” In the 1950s Mahfouz was also involved in the making of Tawfiq Salih’s Futuwat al-Husayniyya (Tough-guys of the Husayni Quarter), a period gangster movie set in 1905.

Indeed futuwawī has come to designate a whole genre of modern Egyptian cinema. As the authors of Arab and African Film Making observe, “The word futuwawī in the Middle Ages and in religious contexts generally designated ideals of chivalry and brotherhood. By now, in Egypt at least, its meaning has degenerated so that it denotes a kind of bully system, a sort of marketplace Mafia, in which any boss who loses his iron grip on his followers will rapidly be replaced by the next-toughest aspirant around.” (As Lizbeth Malkmus notes, this is perhaps faintly reminiscent of the Khal-dunjian cycle of corruption and decay.)

In the films devoted to futuwawī, the plot usually revolves around the theme of an honorable man becoming corrupted in the course of trying to fight the system (as in Salah Abou Seif’s film referred to above). The futuwawī system always wins (just as Al Pacino is progressively corrupted in The Godfather). In futuwawī films and the Coppola Godfather series alike there is great play with the themes of honor and shame, though the honor in question is, of course, that of thieves. This gangster corruption quite often carries overtones of political allegory, and the political fatalism of such films is vaguely reminiscent of the cynical watchword of di Lampedusa’s great novel, The Leopard: “Things must change in order that they stay the same.”

However most of the above is by way of digression. To return (a little reluctantly) to the Middle Ages, it seems that some time between 1261 and modern times a sea change took place in the nature of futuwawī—a descent from caliphal patents of honor to muscling in on small-time racketeers and other street performers. But then in the 1360s the quarter was attacked by a plague of worms that ate food, paper, and wood. Roofs collapsed, and many houses were abandoned. A flood followed in 1375. The suburb reverted to its squalid suburbs of Cairo, such as Bab al-Luq. Usta ‘Uthman, “Flower of the Gangsters,” a liveryman and one of the main heroes of the popular cycle, is identified as being one of the shuttār (and I will come to the significance of this term shortly).

In the real, non-fictional world, al-Husayniyya was also a recognized recruiting ground for zu‘ar, or neighborhood militias of young cudgelmen, and was notorious for vice and crime. As the already-mentioned tadhkira of al-Husayniyya was an area over which it was necessary to exercise special vigilance. It was perhaps also not entirely coincidental that Shaykh Khadr al-Mihra, the populist, rabble-rousing Sufi shaykh and spiritual guru of Baybars, had his za‘wiya just outside the Bab al-Futuh. According to al-Maqrizi, in the early fourteenth century the suburb improved a bit, becoming gentrified to some extent even though it was still the place to watch acrobats, prizefighters, and other street performers. However, in the 1360s the quarter was attacked by a plague of worms that ate food, paper, and wood. Roofs collapsed, and many houses were abandoned. A flood followed in 1375. The suburb reverted to its squalid ways and in al-Maqrizi’s own time—the early fifteenth century—the place was miserable, underpopulated, and controlled by zu‘ar racketeers.

According to al-Qalqashandi, the soldiers who used to live in al-Husayniyya moved to lodgings closer to the Citadel. However, later yet in the fifteenth century, the area was particularly favored by Qaytbay, whose powerful ally, the amir Yashbak, built his qubba there. Moreover, there is evidence of continued settlement in Ottoman times, when the butchers and abattoirs were concentrated in this area.
From the eighteenth century onwards, the butchers, a notoriously tough body of men, linked their activities with the Sufi Bayumiyya order, which was powerful in the quarter. During Bonaparte’s occupation of Egypt, al-Husayniyya, with its turbulent population, proved to be one of the main foci of resistance to the French, so that in the end the French were driven to attempt to raze at least part of the quarter.

As has already been noted, Mongol immigrants were settled in al-Husayniyya as early as the 1260s. In the years 1294 to 1296 a new wave of immigrants, the Oirats (that is, the western tribe of Mongols, also known as Kalmuks), deserted to the Mamluks, and Sultan Kitbugha settled them in al-Husayniyya. The Arab chroniclers remarked on a number of things concerning the Oirats: First, that they were not Muslims and therefore did not observe Ramadan and also un-Islamically clubbed horses about the head before eating them. Second, that they were astonishingly beautiful, and therefore Oirat women were much sought-after as brides by the Mamluk elite. Also, according to al-Maqrizi’s Khitat, the Oirats “became known for their zu`ara (gangsterism) and shuj¸a (boldness), and they were called al-Bad¯a. So an individual Oirat might be called al-Badr such-and-such. They adopted the dress of futuwwa, and they carried weapons. Stories about these people proliferated.” Later on their fortunes declined, and many ended up working as menial servants in the quarter.

If one turns to al-Turkumani’s case against futuw wa, another aspect of the criminality of this sort of brotherhood was the readiness of its members to take up cudgels against the agents of the state (ghulmân al-shurta wa-wulât al-Muslimin). Futuwwa members prided themselves on their skill with weapons, but al-Turkumani piously observed that a true muruwan (masonic) practice of members looking after each other produced a brief risâla wholly devoted to futuwwa, in which he noted that its apologists presented the deliverance of people from prison or from enforced legal penalties as a charitable activity: the big man (al-kabîr) marches along at the head of his following and says, “Deliver your brethren in futuwwa,” but the right reply to this is “Listen, O you of little courage (maruwaw), this is all the deceit of the devil (talbis Iblîs), and his aim is to lead you away from the way of the Prophet.”

Futuwwa, as al-Turkumani viewed it, was one of the worst bida‘ of the age, and he treated with brisk contempt its partisans’ attempt to link it with caliphal futuwwa. The attempt to trace its lineage back to ‘Ali was, if anything, even more outrageous. Al-Turkumani’s discussion of futuwwa comes in the fifth fasl of the Kitâb al-Luma’. It follows a chapter devoted to the evil of chess and precedes the one on the wickedness of brotherhoods devoted to hunting.
Al-Turkumani also wrote a short treatise devoted solely to attacking futuwwa, and this has a colophon testifying that it had been endorsed by Ibn Taymiyya and, allegedly, by all the muftis of Egypt. Al-Turkumani had indeed studied under Ibn Taymiyya, and it is plausible that it was his teacher who had taught him to loathe futuwwa, for the latter had also issued a fatwa against the institution. In it, Ibn Taymiyya indicated that all sorts of vices might flourish in these meetings of young men. According to him, a futuwwa meeting was known as majlis al-daskara, or “session of the village.” He added that daskara had been a neutral word, but in his time it acquired pejorative overtones, because it was applied to gatherings for the purpose of fornication, wine drinking, and singing. The entry on das-kara in Lane’s Arabic-English Lexicon offers the meaning, “a town or village,” but two of the earlier definitions are more germane: “a building like a qasr, which is surrounded by houses, or chambers, and in which the vicious or immoral (shuttarr) assemble”; or “houses of the foreigners, a’ajim, in which are wine and instruments of music and the like.” Incidentally, al-Turkumani in his Risalat on futuwwa twice refers to the ritual of induction as a tashkira. Although Labib proposed emending this to tadhkira, another possibility is that tashkira represents a mishearing of daskara.

A fatwa by the fourteenth-century Aleppan Zayn ʿUmar al-Din b. al-Wardi (1292–1349) echoed al-Turkumani’s writings in denouncing the prominence of livāt, or homosexuality, in futuwwa. It is indeed easy to imagine that the futuwwa’s cult of the young man may in certain circumstances have become confused with a different sort of cult of beardless youths. A number of litterateurs in the Mamluk period, among them al-Badri and al-Nawaji, produced anthologies devoted to the joys of the beautiful boy. Al-Badri’s was entitled “The Shining Dawn: On the Description of Fair Faces”; al-Nawaji, who died in 1455 and is better known for his anthology on wine-drinking, the Halbat al-kumayt, compiled at least two treatises on beautiful young men: “The Throwing-off of Shame in the Description of the First Growth of the Beard,” and “The Prairie of the Gazelles in the Purity of the Beauty of Servant Boys.” Mamluk moralists were also much vexed by the mukhannath, or transvestite prostitutes, who worked the streets.

Ibn Taymiyya, al-Turkumani, and other Mamluk experts on bidʿa rejected the claim of members of popular futuwwa lodges that their chain of initiation could be traced back to the Abbasid caliph al-Nasir. In so doing, they denied any link between popular Cairene futuwwa of relatively recent date and the more respectable and longer-established futuwwa of the courts. On a related issue, studies of twelfth-century Iraqi futuwwa have suggested that one of al-Nasir’s aims in promoting the institution was to reconcile Sunnism and moderate Shiʿism under its umbrella. The futuwwa’s slogan Lā fata ilā ʿAli (‘Ali is the youth par excellence) and its tracing its lineage of initiation back to ʿAli might be taken as hinting at Shiʿi aspects to the organization, and it is probably true that Shiʿism was more of a vital force in Mamluk Egypt than has hitherto been realized. However, as far as the Mamluk period and Mamluk sources are concerned, there is no real evidence to suggest that futuwwa was linked to Shiʿi sympathies or practices—and this was not one of Ibn al-Turkumani’s or Ibn Taymiyya’s grumbles. (Incidentally, Bulliet in his work on tenth-to-twelfth-century Nishapur found that members of futuwwa, when their affiliation was identifiable, were invariably Shafiʿite Muslims.)

Although Ibn Taymiyya and al-Turkumani went out of their way to denounce various aspects of futuwwa, Abu ʿAbdallah b. al-Hajj al-Abdari (1336–66?), who similarly wrote a lengthy treatise on bidʿa, does not seem to have noticed the phenomenon at all. Ibn al-Hajj did deal disapprovingly with homosexuality, gazing on men, singing and dancing, various unacceptable Sufi rituals, and dodgy artisanal and commercial practices, but he does not discuss futuwwa (unless I have missed it). The evidence is too fragmentary and relies too much on the apparent silence of the sources for one to come to any firm conclusion here, but what this suggests is that popular, quasi-criminal, ritualized futuwwa was a phenomenon of limited duration in medieval Egypt. The futuwwa-loving Oirats had arrived at the end of the thirteenth century. Ibn Taymiyya and al-Turkumani lived and wrote at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Gabriel Baer, who wrote several excellent studies of guilds in the Ottoman period, suggested that there was an essential continuity between medieval Egyptian futuwwa and the craft-based guilds of Egypt in the Ottoman period. However, the supposed continuity is doubtful. I have come across no references to futuwwa in the Mamluk lands in the late fourteenth or the fifteenth century. Ibn al-Turkumani had urged the Mamluk authorities to ban futuwwa, and it is indeed possible that recommendations from him and other like-minded “ulema” were eventually heeded. A new wave of futuwwa manuscripts was produced in Egypt in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but, although al-Jabarti’s ‘Ajāʾib
al-athār contains plentiful information about criminal activity and popular disturbances in Ottoman Egypt, the word futuwwa does not seem to be in the author’s vocabulary. Compared to futuwwa, the brotherhood of the harafish had a longer existence. The first reference to the harafish was in 1298, but they were still a power to be reckoned with at least as late as 1516, when the shaykh of the harafish accompanied Qansuh al-Ghuri on his ill-fated journey to Syria.44

Futuwwa seems to have been linked, however vaguely, with another and more long-lived phenomenon, one that at first blush would not appear urban at all: the hunting lodge. Futuwwa treatises written during the caliphate of al-Nasir had spelled out the hunting privileges of young men, giving them special license to hunt with crossbows and listing the manâšib, or fourteen noble species of birds that they could honorably hunt.45 According to Ibn Khaldun, the caliph was crazy about crossbows and pigeons.46 With respect to the belt of futuwwa, Louis Massignon has observed that “it was a military belt worn by an archer, a ‘tir-bent,’ an arrow belt, the insignia of the guild of ‘couriers’ (shâṭir, whence the Indian shattar, religious order, derives...).”47

It is noteworthy that, after al-Turkumani had finished discussing the wickedness of futuwwa lodges, he then immediately turned to the use of the crossbow. Hunting leagues that used the crossbow were reprehensible, according to him, because they were liable to break the Islamic law on slaughtering. The crossbow was cruel to birds and proscribed in Hadith. The shuṭṭâr huntsmen were wicked because they valued marksmanship more than piety. They were also bad because they did not mind admitting into their ranks homosexual men—nor, for that matter, Jews and Christians. Shuṭṭâr preferred to swear by the dirt, rather than by God. All that mattered to these awful people was the ability to kill certain birds—the manâšib birds. If one succeeded, one was acclaimed a shâṭir. Their group solidarity and their unquestioning obedience to their leaders were also to be abominated. So was their trampling through other people’s fields. Although a member of such a group is called a shâṭir, or cunning one, according to al-Turkumani, the only real cunning people are the good Muslims.48 (Interestingly and curiously, Ibn Turkumani’s aversion to companies of archers finds a parallel in the Western world in the fifteenth-century Malleus Maleficarum, whose authors, Krämer and Sprenger, wrote of “the witchcraft of archers.” According to the famous inquisitors, such skill as certain crack archers possessed could only be explained by their having entered into a pact with the devil.49 Also, more germanely with respect to Islamic archery’s association with vice, the sixth chapter of al-Badri’s treatise on beautiful boys was specifically devoted to archery and hunting and to the erotic prospects afforded by these activities.) Al-Turkumani’s view that hunting with a crossbow was illicit was backed up, to some extent at least, by Ibn Mangli’s fourteenth-century treatise on hunting, Uns al-malâ bi-wahsh al-falâ, in which the author states that it is forbidden to hunt and kill animals using blunt weapons or projectiles, such as the balls fired from a bunduqa.50

In medieval Arabic dictionaries, a shâṭir (plural: shuṭṭâr) was defined as a wrongdoer, a clever thief, someone who is agile and witty or swift on his feet. But in the usage of al-Turkumani and other medieval Egyptian writers, the word was also quite specifically associated with hunting and the use of the bow. While a shâṭir and a ḥuṭâwere not necessarily one and the same man, Ibn Taymiyya discussed futuwwa and assemblies of archers in one and the same disapproving breath. These are people, he claimed, who have taken an oath of infidelity, and who celebrate together with feasting.51 It seems that they formed gangs, somewhat similar to the Mohawks of eighteenth-century London or the Apaches of Paris in the 1920s. If the adherents of futuwwa excelled with the knife, the shuṭṭâr were more versatile, being enthusiasts also of single-stick fencing and wrestling as well as archery. In the early fourteenth century the sports and enthusiasms of the shuṭṭâr and like-minded wastrels briefly enjoyed court favor under Sultan al-Muzaffar Hajji (r. 1346–47). This young sultan enjoyed watching the single-stick fencing of the awbâsh (riffraff). He gambled on racing pigeons and donned leather breeches in order to wrestle with servants and lowlife types. (His other enthusiasms were polo and torture.)52

In the folk epic devoted to Baybars, which we have already mentioned, Baybars as a young mamluk was initiated into a hunting lodge in Damascus with the assistance of Fatima bint al-Aqwasi, daughter of the bowyer, after he had proved himself by shooting at the manâšib birds with a crossbow. The corporation of archers to which he was admitted was under the leadership of a shaykh and a nagib; it had forty members and was dedicated to hunting the ten noble breeds of bird. On the day of the hunt, each sub-group of four archers was assigned one particular breed to hunt. After this first round, the winner—in the Sûra, the winner was of course Baybars—then had to use his crossbow to bring down forty birds, four from each species. The
The anonymous author concluded his account of Baybars’s prowess as an archer with the lament that those were the days when people preferred hunting to games of tric-trac or dominoes. The above fiction, and moreover fiction from Ottoman Syria, but it may well reflect medieval realities. Historically, such jolly huntsmen may have been capable of providing sizable armed militias in times of crisis. When in 1524 Ahmad al-Kha’im, the Turkish governor of Egypt, rebelled against Istanbul, he called upon the support of the zu’ar and shuttār to help him dislodge the janissaries from the Citadel of Cairo. According to the geomancer and historical romancer Ibn Zunbul, the two leaders of the shuttār, Shaban al-Shagharti, Head of the Bowyers, and Ahmad al-Shirbini chose from their followers a squad to enter the Citadel by an underground passage and so come upon the janissaries unawares. Later on, when the Ottomans launched a counteroffensive, Ibn Zunbul tells us that the shuttār, along with the zu’ar, the riffraff, and every dog and his brother, were among the last of the rebel’s supporters.

The tales of The Thousand and One Nights teem with with shuttār who get into scrapes but who, being infinitely resourceful, use artful dodges to get themselves out of those scrapes. Some of the shuttār featured in the Nights, such as Crafty Delilah or Calamity Ahmad, had epics in their own right devoted to them in medieval Egypt. Ali Zaybaq was the most famous of the janissaries added to later Egyptian recensions of Al layla wa-lawla, among them, “The Sharper of Alexandria and the Chief of Police,” “The Chief of Qus Police and theSharper,” “The Simpleton and Sharpier,” “The Tale of the Sharpers with the Shroff and his Ass,” and “The Story of the Three Sharpers.” Not all shuttār were all that sharp. Several stories indeed are devoted to their stupidity-stupidity heightened in some cases by drugs. And there is evidence that at least one real villain in fifteenth-century Egypt took to calling himself after the fictional Ahmad al-Danaf, or Calamity Ahmad. He was executed in 1485. In Cairo the legendary villains enjoyed the status of Robin Hood or Dick Turpin. The cult of such fictional “heroic” villains can be seen as a later and more vulgar version of the cult of crime and lowlife that was such a striking feature of the culture of the literary elite in Buyid Iraq, as represented by, for example, the tenth-century vizier and patron of Abu Dulaf, al-Sahib b. ’Abbad. Moreover, the cult of the criminal can, of course, be traced further back yet, to the semi-legendary lives of the sa’ālik poets of pre-Islamic Arabia.

As noted above, the caliph al-Nasir li-Din Allah had been an enthusiast for futuwwa, hunting with the cross-bow, and pigeons. Like crossbow hunting, pigeon fancying could have disreputable undertones in medieval Islamic society, and indeed pigeon racing was condemned by most religious authorities. A pigeon racer could not bear witness in a court. According to its enemies, pigeon racing was invented by the citizens of Sodom (so the sport is of some antiquity). Professed pigeon fanciers used the excuse of pursuing errant pigeons to break into houses or to spy upon women from the rooftops. It was also forbidden to hunt pigeons, since it was not halāl to consume them. According to al-Jahiz’s treatise on animals, the rearing and flying of pigeons was a privilege of fityān. In The Thousand and One Nights story, “The Rogueries of Delilah the Crafty and Her Daughter Zaynab the Cony-Catcher,” Crafty Delilah’s father had been the caliph’s master of carrier pigeons, and eventually Delilah is awarded the same post. In another story, “The Adventures of Mercury ’Ali of Cairo,” ’Ali pretends to have eaten Delilah’s pigeons. So, to begin to conclude, one finds a skein of ill-defined yet indubitable connections between the young men involved in pigeon fancying, crime, hunting, boy-ogling, and the rituals of brotherhood.

Such lowlife denizens of Cairo’s poorer quarters can be seen as marginal figures—as subservives and representatives of a counterculture. However, it is doubtful that this was their own perspective on the matter, for their gangs and associations played a central role in the functioning of the city. As far as most of the inhabitants of Cairo’s hāras were concerned, it may be that it was the Mamluk elite whom they perceived as the marginal men and the representatives of an alien counterculture. The defense of poor and humble citizens from the oppression of the alien Turkish soldiery was surely one of the most important roles of futuwwa lodges and similar groups.

This study concentrated on the futuwwa and shuttār groups, but al-Husayniyya and the Bab al-Luq teemed
with other “hushrūt,” or “human vermin.” I have said little about the zu‘ar and the haraṙfish (for these ruffians have been well studied by Brinner and Lapidus). I have said nothing at all about the ji‘ aydiyya, or Curly-Haired Ones (possibly a confederation of Gypsy toughs: remarkably little work has been done on the Gypsies in the medieval Near East). According to a footnote in Quatremère’s Histoire des sultans mamлюks, Tenenre claimed that Gypsies (Bohemiens) were called in Arabic “Xatres,” plausibly šāhir, plural: šuttār. Nor have I had time to research and discuss the tanwābīn, or repentant bandits who turned “sultan’s evidence” and became policemen. Nor have I discussed the subdivisions of the Banu Sasan, as listed in al-Zarkhuri’s conjuring manual—including the Ashāb al-Mīn (or professional treasure hunters), the false ascetics, the Halwati juring manual—including the cessions of the Banu Sasan, as listed in al-Zarkhuri’s con-

NOTES


7. On this sort of futuwwa in general, and on futuwwa in Anatolia more specifically, see F. Taeschner, Zunfte und Bruderschaften im Islam (Zurich, 1979).


9. See, for an example of this, R. S. Humphreys, From Saladin to the Mongols (New York, 1977), p. 138.


In 1978 the late L. T. Giuzalian published a cast brass or bronze bucket (fig. 1) in the Hermitage collections. His detailed description of the object and reading of its inscriptions are unnecessary to repeat here. Giuzalian proposed that it should be known as the “Fould bucket,” because at the time it was first illustrated in the scholarly literature it was in the collection of the distinguished French collector Louis Fould, in Paris. Subsequently the bucket came to Russia, where it passed into the Fabergé family, one of whom offered it to the Hermitage for purchase in 1926, though for some reason it was not bought. On the closure of the Fabergé workshops and the emigration of the family it remained behind in Leningrad. It appeared in an antique shop in 1946 and somewhat later, in 1953, was acquired by the State Hermitage. That in brief is its recent history.

In its somewhat different shape, its unusual decorative composition, and many details of its ornament, the Fould bucket differs markedly from buckets associated with late-twelfth- or early-thirteenth-century Khurasan. This was all noted in Giuzalian’s article, though he still attrib-
uted it to Herat of the late twelfth century (ca. 1180–85) because of the form of its handle, the similarity of its decorative scheme to strapwork on the minaret of Jam, and the nisba of the craftsman who signed it, Muhammad b. Nasir b. Muhammad al-Haravi.5

What distinguishes the Fould bucket from other buckets of similar shape, however, is the overall gilding of its ground, which Giuzalian attributed to its patron’s or purchaser’s desire to emphasize its exceptional character.4 And indeed, if it is to be considered to be of Khurasani manufacture, it is the only gilt piece among a large group of late-twelfth- and early-thirteenth-century brass or bronze vessels.5 A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, while not disputing Giuzalian’s conclusions, has expressed some doubt as to its Herat provenance.6 Gilding on Iranian silver vessels was known well before the coming of Islam and continued to be practiced from the eleventh to the thirteenth century.7 But no gilt brass or bronze Iranian vessels are known.

If we approach the gilding on the bucket as something other than a patron’s chance whim, we need to turn our attention to later vessels—not Iranian but Turkish. Sixteenth-century Turkish gilt copper and brass or bronze vessels are discussed by Melikian-Chirvani in an article of 1975,8 and by James Allan in an exhibition catalogue of 1982.9 The former alludes to the widespread use of gilding on copper or brass in sixteenth-century Turkey but considers the technique to have come from Venice,10 since gilding is so totally uncharacteristic of Persian metalwork.11 The latter also stresses the widespread use of gilding on Ottoman Turkish copper vessels, though its author is more cautious in approaching the possibility of gilt brass or bronze in Iran, citing finds at Nishapur.12 Nevertheless Allan disputes Melikian-Chirvani’s attribution to Venice of the use of gilding in Ottoman Turkey, pointing to Byzantine gilt copper vessels and artifacts and to a bronze plaque with gilding and an Arabic inscription13 from the period of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. In the collections of the State Hermitage there are two such objects: a bronze portable icon of the twelfth century,14 and a twelfth-century copper cross.15 Interestingly, in Byzantium even gilt stone portable icons are known.16

As the 1983 Istanbul exhibition demonstrated, gilt bronze objects were also manufactured in areas of Asia Minor under Muslim domination, i.e., in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum,17 and it must be stressed that the well-known bronze openwork lamp made in Konya, signed by the craftsman ‘Ali b. Muhammad al-Nusaybini and dated 679 (1280–81), was also gilt.18 In Central Anato-

lia this technique was employed in the second half of the thirteenth century.

We may thus suppose that the gilding of bronze vessels was well known in both the Christian and the Muslim areas of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Asia Minor. Later, when these territories were absorbed into the Ottoman Empire, this indigenous craft tradition simply became more widespread and so did not have to be brought in from outside. It thus follows that the gilding of the Fould bucket is a fully characteristic element of its decoration and not the whim of a customer, and the place of its manufacture is to be sought in the Sultanate of Rum, somewhere in Anatolia.19

In favor of this view are the following considerations:

1. The bucket is faceted, whereas all the known twelfth-century Khurasani buckets, more than eighty to date, are of plain globular shape.
2. On all the Khurasani buckets the decoration is in horizontal registers, whereas on the Fould bucket it is in vertical stripes.
3. The strapwork on alternate vertical bands of the Fould bucket is indeed similar to the decoration on the shaft of the minaret of Jam. However, this can be fully explained by the influence of Khurasani architectural decoration on the monuments of Seljuk Anatolia, which has long been accepted as an established fact.20
4. The Fould bucket is signed by the craftsman Muhammad b. Nasir b. Muhammad al-Haravi. As usual, we know nothing about him. It was the nisba al-Haravi that evidently led Giuzalian to attribute the bucket to a Khurasani workshop. But no nisba can be conclusive evidence that anyone, let alone a craftsman, was born or worked in the city from which his nisba was taken. As study of the careers of ulama has shown, their nisbas played the role of surnames. All we can assert here is that our craftsman’s family was from Herat, but as to his own connection with that city nothing clearly follows.
5. Nor is the name of the bucket’s patron or owner of much help. The technical execution of the inscription on the rim that records these is mediocre if not poor, and severely damaged as well. The Kufic and naskh inscriptions on the body are calligraphic in the full sense of the word, which cannot be said of that on the rim. The tips of the shafts of its ascenders are in the form of human heads, though they are carelessly executed. This connects the inscription on the rim with inscriptions on many Khurasani vessels of the later twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries, though on these, in contrast, the execution is generally very fine. Moreover, some of the letters of the inscription on the rim are carelessly engraved.
and inlaid with silver, to the extent that they make the inscription difficult to read and convey the impression that it is not original but replaces an earlier one. I must add that that this is only an impression, for I have been unable to make out any trace of an original craftsman’s inscription, though such there should have been on a piece of this magnificence.

Giuzalian’s reading of the inscription is as follows: “Glory to its exalted possessor, the merchant Jamal al-Din, champion of Islam, well known to emperors and sultans, ‘Ali b. Ahmad al-Bistami (?). May Allah prolong his merits! Long may he abide!” However, by no means are all the words in the inscription clearly legible. In the present article there is no space to deal with all the questionable readings. The patron’s unusual nisba, al-Bistamī in Giuzalian’s tentative reading, admittedly points to western Khurasan. We know nothing of his life, however, and so far nothing can be learned of him from the historical sources. His nisba is therefore of no help in demonstrating a Khurasani provenance for the Fould bucket.

Now to the title, which Giuzalian did not discuss: bahādur al-Īslām, “champion of Islam.” It is, to begin with, unclear whether the titles “champion of Islam, well known to emperors and sultans” could properly be applied to a merchant, as Giuzalian asserted; they appear to be much more appropriate to a high military officer. Secondly, bahādur, as fairly reliably read in the inscription, derives from the Turco-Mongolian baatār (hence Russian bogatyr’). It is somewhat unclear when it became standard in Persian. The articles on bahādur in the Encyclopaedia Iranica and the dictionary of Dehkhuda both give only late uses of it—fourteenth- and fifteenth-century uses, to be precise—in Persian. Its first appearance can scarcely be so late, but because of its absence from the Shāhnāma, some doubt attaches to when this occurred.

We may suppose that the title bahādur first came into Persian following the Mongol invasion of Iran in the 1220s. And indeed there are three occurrences of it in Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Nasawi’s account of the life of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din Mankuburni, completed in 639 (1241–42). This shows that the term was well known to the author of this work, which was written in western Iran, or even further west. This circumstance further weakens, both chronologically and geographically, the probability that the bucket was made in twelfth-century Khurasan.

As I have already said, the shape of the bucket and the vertical arrangement of the decoration on its facets have no analogies among the vessels that can with fair confidence be attributed to twelfth-century Khurasan. There is, however, another reason for questioning the early date of ca. 1180–85 that Giuzalian proposed. This is the fact that the human heads and the heads of birds and monsters on the Fould bucket all have haloes, whereas on the Bobrinsky bucket and other buckets near it in date haloes are absent.

On closer inspection we observe that these heads have something like outer contours surrounding the haloes. This feature is clearly visible on objects made by Shadhi, who was working in the first decade of the thirteenth century, or perhaps slightly later. Human heads with haloes are also to be seen on Mosuli brass-work of the 1220s and subsequently become widespread. The date of the Fould bucket is thus to be brought forward to the first decades of the thirteenth century.

A second noteworthy element of the decoration is the representation of Bahram Gur and Azada out hunting. The theme is from the Shāhnāma of Firdawsi. It seems that scenes from the Iranian national epic may have been used in art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, though there is little extant evidence for this, but on Khurasani brasses or bronzes they do not occur. The only scene from the Shāhnāma to appear on metalwork of the first quarter of the thirteenth century is that of Bahram Gur hunting, six occurrences of which Eva Baer has already listed. Another appears on a straight-spouted brass ewer of Syrian workmanship, datable to the first half of the thirteenth century, in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, with the Fould bucket, that makes a total of eight occurrences in all. All these pieces are datable to the early thirteenth century or later, but, more important, not one of them was made in Khurasan.

A third noteworthy element of the decoration is also of relevance to the dating of the piece. In the lower parts of the alternate vertical stripes with sun rosettes in the middle are human-headed birds wearing triangular caps. The birds are addorsed, and their tails appear to be joined by a ring, but they turn backwards to face one another. This element is exceptionally rare in contemporary decoration, and a survey of parallels in the scholarly literature gives only a few analogies. Addorsed birds or animals that are also facing backwards are encountered in various parts of the Near East, but one gains the impression that they were more widespread in the countries to the west of Iran, and that they are in some way Mediterranean motifs, though further work remains
to be done on this. So far I have only been able to identify a few objects bearing them:

(a) A fragmentary silk bearing the name of a Seljuk Sultan of Konya, ‘Ala’ al-Din Kayqubad—perhaps, though not necessarily, Kayqubad I (d. 1236)—where the hind legs of addorsed lions are joined.

(b) Two bronze doorknockers in the Khalili collection, in the form of dragons with their tails intertwined, attributable to thirteenth-century Anatolia or the Jazira, and a further doorknocker of this type from the great mosque at Jazirat b. ‘Umar (the modern Cizre), shown in the 1983 Istanbul exhibition, The Anatolian Civilisations.

(c) A rectangular brass tray inlaid with silver with a cruciform depression at the center in which are represented four pairs of dragons with their heads turned back and their tails intertwined. The compilers of the exhibition catalogue Islam and the Medieval West attributed the tray to thirteenth-century northeastern Iran. Its shape and silver inlay and the content of its Arabic well-wishing inscriptions are certainly typical of Khurasani work of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. However, the dragons with intertwined tails suggest a place of manufacture to the west of Iran, and it now seems more correct to attribute the tray to Anatolia or the Jazira in the first half of the thirteenth century.

(d) A brass or bronze inkwell inlaid with silver in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, bearing a unique representation of Gemini in the form of two birds (?) shown back-to-back but with their heads turned so that they face each other. Eva Baer, who published the inkwell, dates it to the first half of the thirteenth century and attributes it to Syria or Northern Mesopotamia, rather than to Iran. Such pairs of addorsed creatures, both animals and birds, with their heads turned so that they face each other and with their tails linked, must thus be seen as originating to the west of Iran and have no connection with Khurasani metalwork of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

The pointed triangular caps of the harpies on the Fould bucket have a number of parallels:

(a) On a well-known covered brass or bronze bowl in the Ethnographic Museum in Ankara, published by D. S. Rice. The object is composite, being made up of two pieces of different dates, the bowl being from eleventh-century Transoxania and the cover, with its inlay in copper and silver, of later date. On it we see human figures with haloed heads and foliate ornament, the only analogies to which (though not very close ones) appear on the brass ewer of Ibrahim b. Mawali, made at Mosul in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. This suggests that the cover was also made at Mosul in the first or second decade of the thirteenth century.

(b) The base of a brass or bronze candlestick inlaid with silver in the Khalili collection, attributable to early- or possibly mid-thirteenth-century Jazira.

(c) A fragmentary unglazed dish in the National Museum in Damascus, datable to the first half of the thirteenth century.

(d) A brass or bronze inkwell sold at auction in 1998. This is catalogued as from twelfth-century Khurasan. However, the haloes around the figures’ heads and the rather different character of the silver encrustation cast doubt on a Khurasani provenance, and the object must, rather, be from early-thirteenth-century Mosul or the Jazira.

These parallels also connect the Fould bucket not with Khurasan but with the Jazira, Northern Syria, or possibly Anatolia.

To sum up, the Fould bucket certainly has some features in common with Khurasani vessels. This is clear from its general shape and, in particular, its handle. But when we turn to the details it shows marked differences in the general scheme of its decoration in vertical stripes, in its faceted body and gilt ground, and in the haloed heads of its human figures and its addorsed sirens or harpies with their linked tails and pointed triangular caps. None of these elements are present on Khurasani metalwork of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries; on the contrary, they appear no earlier than the thirteenth century, and on metalwork primarily manufactured to the west of Iran—Northern Mesopotamia, the Jazira, Syria, and Anatolia.

We may say that the decoration in pairs of elongated half-hexagons forming figures-of-eight has a direct analogy on the minaret of Jam. But this is substantially the so-called Seljuk chain motif (or more exactly, form of composition), which was widespread in the Near East in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This brings us, how-
ever, to a dead end: we have no idea where exactly the man who made the bucket was working. Was he trained in Khurasan, or in some Khurasani workshop active in the lands to the west of Iran? And where and when was he born? In light of the considerations advanced above, particularly of the gilding, it would appear that the Fould bucket was made about the middle of the thirteenth century, most probably in Anatolia. It would doubtless help if we could read the name of its owner, but the ownership inscription, by comparison with the other inscriptions on the bucket, is poorly executed, and the reading of it is in many places unclear. In any case, at present the owner’s name, as read by Giuzalian, is not to be found in any of the sources. We cannot therefore regard the study of the piece as complete, and it will have to be reviewed at a later date. Interestingly, scholars are increasingly coming to recognize a new geographical school of metalwork located in Anatolia. We may therefore expect the number of pieces attributable to this area to increase. In any case, at present the owner’s name, as read by Giuzalian, is not to be found in any of the sources. We cannot therefore regard the study of the piece as complete, and it will have to be reviewed at a later date. Interestingly, scholars are increasingly coming to recognize a new geographical school of metalwork located in Anatolia. We may therefore expect the number of pieces attributable to this area to increase. In any case, at present the owner’s name, as read by Giuzalian, is not to be found in any of the sources. We cannot therefore regard the study of the piece as complete, and it will have to be reviewed at a later date. Interestingly, scholars are increasingly coming to recognize a new geographical school of metalwork located in Anatolia. We may therefore expect the number of pieces attributable to this area to increase.

In conclusion I should like to dwell briefly on two other buckets. The first is still unfamiliar to the scholarly world: it was sold at auction by Sotheby’s, London, twelve years ago. The catalogue illustration is too small to allow one to make out its decoration completely. It is of silver-inlaid brass or bronze (fig. 2); at 26.5 cm, it is taller than the Fould bucket though like it is faceted. The number of facets is not given, but I calculate that there are eighteen, whereas the Fould bucket has twelve. As one may judge from its scalloped rim, the Sotheby’s bucket is thin-walled—beaten rather than cast like the Fould bucket and the overwhelming majority of Khurasani buckets. I have not deciphered the Arabic inscription below the rim. The decoration of each facet is identical, a grid of similar rhomboids.

From the catalogue illustration it would appear that the lower part of the bucket and the foot were added later, as repairs following major damage or breaks, for I cannot make out any decoration on them. However, the piece is interesting and important: a second faceted bucket, though of beaten, not cast, metal, it is plainly connected not with the Khurasani group but with the Fould bucket. The two pieces are evidence for a tradition of faceted buckets. As a working hypothesis we could suggest their manufacture in thirteenth-century Anatolia, though where in Anatolia is unclear.

The second bucket (fig. 3), with its rather strange and exceptional decoration, has long been known. It is in the British Museum and was first published in 1962 by Ralph Pinder-Wilson, who dated it to the twelfth century. In 1979 it was the subject of a study by Eva Baer. After a detailed description of the piece and discussion of numerous analogies to both its shape and its decoration, with which I am in complete agreement, she unexpectedly concluded, “Persian bronzes and works of art comparable to the British Museum bucket are too scarce to be more precise about its date. Tentatively, and considering the technical examinations undertaken by Dr. Werner, we believe that the bucket is not older than one hundred to one hundred and fifty years.”

How can this conclusion follow? How can the technique of its manufacture have been so changeable and unconservative? And how can analysis of the metal alloy allow such precision in dating? We are still far from being able to make such judgments, for which thousands of analyses would be necessary to bring even a degree of
clarity to dating by technique or alloy composition. In recent years I have become interested in nineteenth-century Iranian copper and brass vessels. Among them one frequently finds pieces with precise dates, while the style of their decoration and the workmanship of their grounds are already clear enough. I may confidently assert that neither the shape nor the ornament of the British Museum bucket has anything at all in common with these late Iranian vessels. Certainly they use punched dotting, but for the whole ground. On the British Museum bucket, punched dotting is used for the ornament itself, in registers: this is a difference of principle. The bucket must therefore be readmitted, in the full sense of the word, to the corpus of early metalwork. To the early decorative parallels adduced by Eva Baer one may add that the handle type does occur on Khurasani pieces, though rarely, and that the scalloped foot is also known on an early openwork brass lamp, perhaps of the thirteenth century, formerly in the collection of Charles Schéfer and then that of Edmond de Rothschild, though its present location is unknown. One should mention that the ground of the British Museum bucket is decorated with a different tool, to wit, a gouging instrument that leaves a wedge-shaped groove, which is used on a number of Byzantine silver vessels for the execution of linear ornament. There can be no doubt that it was made in the eleventh or twelfth century, though it is difficult to specify the date more closely. Its body is globular, while its decoration consists of ten vertical stripes, a feature that associates it with the bucket sold at Sotheby’s, London, in 1990 and with the Fould bucket. On one of the stripes, as on all the facets of the Sotheby’s piece, is a grid of rhomboids. One should add that the British Museum bucket is not cast but beaten, though of rather thick brass or bronze, which also associates it with the Sotheby’s bucket.

Admittedly, the decoration of the British Museum bucket is, all in all, extremely individual. In fact, the decoration of the vertical stripes with broken lines forming pseudo-inscriptions may recall the unexpected broken lines both on some pieces of Anatolian art and on the carved stonework of certain thirteenth-century Anatolian buildings. These analogies may be rather distant, but they are real and deserve mention. It cannot therefore be excluded that the piece is of Anatolian manufacture, though the evidence for this is so far only indirect. In any case, the only connections with Khurasan are in the shapes of the body and the handle; everything else is totally different. It is entirely possible that buckets were made not only in Khurasan but also in other areas from which the survivors are few or have not so far been identified.

On the basis of the early analogies to both the shape and the decoration of the British Museum bucket adduced by Eva Baer in her article, we might suggest a working hypothesis connecting the three buckets treated in this article. It is both possible and probable that globular buckets without inlay were made somewhere in twelfth- or thirteenth-century Anatolia or the Jazira, and that the British Museum bucket was one of these. Subsequently, the bucket auctioned at Sotheby’s in 1990 was made in this same area. Whereas the decoration of the former was simply in vertical stripes, the body of the latter has both well-defined facets and silver inlay; this second feature in my view demonstrates its later date. What also connects the two buckets is that they are of beaten metal, since the great majority of late-twelfth- and early-thirteenth-century Khurasani buckets are cast. These include, however, a small group
of beaten vessels that are not well understood: either they are earlier in date—perhaps eleventh century—or they were made in some provincial center or workshop by Khurasani craftsmen.

These two lines of evolution—of Khurasani cast buckets and of beaten buckets attributed here to Anatolia—combined somewhere in Anatolia about the middle of the thirteenth century to produce the splendid Fouled bucket, which is just as much an ornament to the collections of the State Hermitage as the world-famous Bobrinsky bucket.

The State Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia

NOTES

4. Ibid., p. 78.
5. Gilt bronze belt trappings and other small gilt bronze objects from the Nishapur excavations. See J. W. Allan, Nishapur: Metalwork of the Early Islamic Period (New York, 1981), nos. 7–9, 15–21, 25, 28–32, 78, 133–38, 143, 148–50, 152, 186, though not all of these are necessarily to be connected with Iran. Between 1998 and 2000 a series of gilt bronze objects was sold at auction by Christie’s, London, catalogued as “Iran, twelfth century”: (a) Sale of Oct. 13, 1998, lot 231, five small human figurines (height 7.4 cm), evidently the feet of a casket, of cast bronze, with traces of gilding on some of them. These might be associated with twelfth-century Khurasan, though it is unclear from the black-and-white illustration whether they were all gilt. (b) Sale of Apr. 13, 2000, lot 258, a figurine of a falcon (height 8.9 cm), the function of which is not apparent but whose decoration is difficult to accept as twelfth-century Khurasan. It is evidently Near Eastern, though its exact provenance remains to be determined. (c) Sale of Oct. 20, 2000, lot 343, a set of cast gilt bronze belt trappings, the ornament of which has little in common with that of Khurasan work: one ought to compare it in the first instance with other belt trappings, though we still know very little of these. Quite possibly, as the catalogue entry suggests, they are not of Iranian manufacture. It is difficult to suggest a date, though one should note that their decoration differs from that of belt plaques found in the Nishapur excavations. This completes the material so far known.

7. For example, a jug in the State Hermitage, inv. no. VZ-795, Iran, tenth century, reproduced in Zemnovo iskusstvo, Nebesnaya knoza: Iskusstvo Islama = Earthly [sic] Art, Heavenly Beauty: Art of Islam, cat. of an exh. at the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, June–Sept. 2000 (St. Petersburg, 2000), no. 111; a small dish, also in the State Hermitage, inv. no. S-499, Iran, early eleventh century, reproduced in Earthly Beauty, Heavenly Art: Art of Islam, cat. of an exh. at De Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, Dec. 1999–Apr. 2000 (Amsterdam, 1999), no. 111; a small box from the Nishapur excavations, Iran, eleventh–twelfth centuries, reproduced in Allan, Nishapur, no. 1; two fragments of a silver jug from the Gubodor hoard in the province of Perm, attributed to thirteenth- or early-fourteenth-century Anatolia or Iran, State Hermitage Museum, inv. nos. VZ-884–85, reproduced in V. P. Darkevich, Khudashestvenny metal' Vostochny XV–XVIII vv. (Moscow, 1976), p. 31, fig. 46.
11. Melikian-Chirvani, “Recherches” 152, 160–61. Some years ago I saw a seventeenth-century Iranian dish with gilding. In 1988 a mid-seventeenth-century Iranian gilt copper bowl was auctioned at Sotheby’s, New York (Dec. 2, 1988, lot 210). These are the only two gilt copper objects of the later period known to me. Of course, the question arises whether this gilding is contemporary with the pieces or was done much later.
12. See note 5, above.
13. Allan, Nishapur, p. 34.
18. The date on this has been read as 679 (1280–81) and as 699 (1299–1300). D. S. Rice’s reading of 679 seems to be the more likely. See D. S. Rice, “Studies in Islamic Metalwork 5,” Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 17 (1955): 207–12. Recently two more bronze openwork pieces close to the Konya lamp have been sold by Christie’s in London. One, sold Apr. 23, 2002, lot 145, is a large lamp (height 53.7 cm), or possibly a birdcage, as the catalogue concedes. It bears no trace of gilding. It was catalogued as from thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Khurasan. This also is devoid of gilding. A thirteenth-century gilt bronze ewer, similar in shape to twelfth-century Herat ewers, was found in the Nishapur excavations, Iran, eleventh–twelfth centuries, reproduced in Allan, Nishapur, no. 1; two fragments of a silver jug from the Gubodor hoard in the province of Perm, attributed to thirteenth- or early-fourteenth-century Anatolia or Iran, State Hermitage Museum, inv. nos. VZ-884–85, reproduced in V. P. Darkevich, Khudashestvenny metal' Vostochny XV–XVIII vv. (Moscow, 1976), p. 31, fig. 46.

A SECOND "HERAT BUCKET" AND ITS CONGERS
there in the later thirteenth century can only be guessed at. This piece is also devoid of gilding. As for a third openwork lantern in the Keir collection, which has long, and doubtless correctly, been associated with twelfth-to-thirteenth-century Anatolia (see G. Fehérvári, Islamic Metalwork of the Eighth to the Fifteenth Century in the Keir Collection [London, 1976], no. 99, pl. E), its decoration is completely different from that of these two pieces.

19. It must be said that this conclusion was anticipated by Professor Oktay Aslanapa many years ago (see his Turkish Art and Architecture [New York and Washington, DC, 1971], p. 284). He attributed the Fouled bucket to Seljuk (or Turkic) metalworkers. But since he included in this group the Bobrinsky bucket, all twelfth-century Khurasani metalwork, and the brasswares of Mosul without a shred of evidence for his assertion, it evoked little scholarly attention.


22. We should remember that although the Bobrinsky bucket was made at Herat for Rashid al-Din ‘Azizi b. Abu ‘I-Husayn al-Zanjani, Zanjani is a town in Persian Azerbaijan. On the basis of the patron’s name and nisha, K. Inostrantsev has even suggested that the bucket was made for an Isma‘ili in western Iran (Azerbaijan), though confirming that the place of manufacture, Herat, was correct. See K. Inostrantsev, “Bronzovy kotokel 559 goda khidzhry,” Izvestiya Imperatorskoi Arkeologi-cheskoj Kommissii 60 (Petrograd, 1916): 52–56.


25. Melikian-Chirvani, Islamic Metalwork, p. 71, fig. 41; A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, “Les bronzes du Khorasan–7: Sazi de Herat, ornama-niste,” Studia Iranica 8, 2 (1972): fig. 2; E. Atæl, W. T. Chase, and P. Jett, Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art (Washington, DC, 1985), no. 4. We also see the same feature on the Wade cup, which is dated to ca. AD 1200 (cf. R. Ettinghausen, “The ‘Wade Cup’ in the Cleveland Museum of Art: Its Origin and Decoration,” Ars Orientalis 2 (1957): 364–65, fig. 1), and on the Vaso Vescovali in the British Museum, which is to be dated to the first decade of the thirteenth century (see Ettinghausen, “The Wade Cup,” fig. 9; and E. Baer, Metalwork in Medi- eval Islamic Art [Albany, 1983], figs. 207, 225). Haloes may possibly have been used for the heads of harpies on Khurasani metalwork, but such occurrences require further attention.


29. Atæl, Turkish Art, no. 198.

30. MTW 1407, MTW 1928. See Earthly Beauty, no. 3.


32. Islam and the Medieval West, cat. of an exh. at the University Art Gallery, Binghamton, NY, Apr.–May 1975 (Binghamton, NY, 1975), no. 58. Dimensions: 9 inches sq. At the time the piece was in the collection of N. Anavian.


38. Ibid., no. 132.


40. See Earthly Beauty, no. 122, D. N. Khalili collection, MTW 850.

41. Islamic Art and Indian Miniatures, cat. of an auction at Chris-tie’s, London, Apr. 28, 1998, lot 266.

42. A. S. Melikian-Chirvani some time ago (in “Anatolian Candle-sticks: The Eastern Element and the Konya School,” Rivista degli Studi Orientali 56, 1–4 [1987], pp. 225–66) reattributed to Anatolia a large group of brass or bronze candlesticks that D. S. Rice had associated with Tabriz. In my view he is correct, though this rather large group of pieces requires further study. In particular, they are clearly products of different workshops. Cf. also n. 18, above.


44. Among the globular-bodied buckets attributed to Khurasan, beaten vessels occasionally appear, though they are of lesser—even mediocre—quality, and they have no silver inlay. One should also mention thin-walled—i.e., beaten—cylindrical-bodied buckets with engraved decoration and without inlay in other metals. In scholarship of recent decades these have been associated with Egypt. See Fehérvári, Islamic Metalwork, pl. 96, nos. 24 and 26.


47. Baer, “Traditionalism or Archaism,” p. 92.
49. For a drawing, see D. S. Rice, “Studies in Islamic Metalwork 5,” p. 233, fig. 11.
50. Baer, “Traditionalism or Archaism,” p. 88: “The background is mostly punched, using punching tools with either a straight, circular, or wedge-shaped point.”
51. Compare the remarkable decoration of the folding wooden Qur’an stand signed by the craftsman ‘Abd al-Vahid. It is even difficult to decide whether calligraphy or some abstract pattern is at the basis of its “twisted” ornament. But it is clearly thirteenth century in date, and its decoration is entirely characteristic of Anatolia in this period. Cf. E. Kühl, *Islamic Art* (London, 1963), fig. 202.
52. Cf. the unexpected broken lines on various mid-thirteenth-century buildings of Konya, the Sahib Ata mosque, the Büyük Karatay madrasa, and the Ince Minare madrasa. See Aslanapa, *Turkish Art and Architecture*, ills. 30, 35, 38.
53. Cf. n. 44, above.
With few exceptions, such as the tughra of the Ottoman sultans, the art of the signature has rarely drawn the attention of Islamicists. And yet, the signatures used by Muslim rulers and their officers—their different types; the honorific addresses attached to each type; which type and address were to be used on which occasion for which recipient; whether the signature should be penned by the sultan himself or by his vizier or secretary and, if by one of the latter, the question of his rank according to the status of the recipient; the position of the signature upon the page and, of course, its form and how it was to be penned—were matters of the greatest interest and significance to medieval writers upon the secretary’s art, such as the great al-Qalqashandi.\(^1\) Modern scholars, most notably Samuel Stern, have paid some attention to the origin and development of the ‘alîma, which Stern called “the classical Islamic method of signature, namely the inscribing of a motto, rather than the name of the signatory.”\(^2\) But the morphology of the signature—its form and the manner in which it was penned—has generally been neglected. In large part, this reflects the fact that few original documents from the dîwân of Muslim rulers survive before the thirteenth century. However, given the modest size of the surviving corpus, it is remarkable that there exists no comprehensive review of it, and it is to be regretted that the study of Islamic diplomatics still lags far behind that of the Latin West and even Byzantium.

The Arabic documents issued by the Norman rulers of Sicily have begun to be given the attention that they deserve.\(^3\) Until recently, it was taken for granted that the trilingual chancery of the Norman kings, in which Arab, Greek, and Latin scribes worked side-by-side to produce documents in all three languages, was the almost spontaneous product of the proximity in which the three cultures coexisted in Sicily. It is now becoming clear, however, that the trilingual chancery was the deliberate creation of King Roger and his ministers, who imported scribes—and with them, scripts, diplomatic form, bureaucratic structure, and chancery practices—from outside the island. This was done not for purely administrative purposes—not in order to issue Arabic documents to their Arab subjects, Greek to the Greeks, Latin to the Latins—but rather to enhance the image of the king, whose beneficent authority was to be seen in the act of mastering, through use of their languages and scripts, the three cultures of his subjects.

A similar process was responsible for the celebrated art and architecture of the Norman kingdom. Thus, as is well known, King Roger was depicted not just as a Latin king, but also in Byzantine imperial robes of a bygone age, and in the guise of an Islamic sultan. The Cappella Palatina, for example, was not the spontaneous product of the fusion of Arab, Greek, and Latin cultures in Sicily, but rather the deliberate creation of King Roger and his ministers, who imported mosaicists from Byzantium, painters from Fatimid Egypt, and masons and stone carvers from Campania and Puglia, who each contributed a part to the artificial and composite royal image. Once in Palermo, of course, these foreign ateliers influenced both each other and their Sicilian pupils, so that there rapidly developed local traditions of mosaics, painting, sculpture, and so on. But just as the creative impulse had come from the king and his ministers, so did the artistic traditions that they created remain confined within the narrow royal circle and escape remarkably little beyond the walls of the palace.

That extraordinary flourishing of art and architecture in Norman Sicily lasted only sixty years, from the coronation of King Roger on Christmas Day, 1130, to the death of his grandson, William II, in 1189. On William’s death the dynasty failed, and the increasingly fragile hold of the Norman kings upon their subjects was broken. The Latins attacked the Muslims, who fled to the mountains of the interior and in their hilltop refuges created an independent rebel emirate that fought on until the final destruction of the Muslim community in 1246. Frederick II attempted to recreate something of the atmosphere that had surrounded his grandfa-
ther but was unable to reproduce the unique palace culture of Norman Sicily.

Two of the Arabic signatures discussed in this article—King Roger’s ‘alāma and the Arabic signature of William Malconvenant, a Royal Justiciar under William II and Constance—have been thought to attest to the cultivation of their signatures, the extent to which these two Normans had become Arabized. The remainder are the ‘alāmat of four of the royal eunuchs, a group that is sometimes held to exemplify the level of cultivation reached within the royal palace, the extent to which the rulers were Arabized and their servants Christianized. On such evidence rests the assumption of what in medieval Iberia has been termed convivencia and the assertion that such fortuitous cultural proximity was what produced the palace culture of Norman Sicily. But when the morphology of these signatures is thoroughly examined, and when they are set in the fullest possible historical context, each can be seen to offer an individual perspective upon the real nature of palace life under the Norman kings.

KING ROGER’S ‘ALĀMA

During the months that the Spanish pilgrim Ibn Jubayr spent stranded on Sicily during the winter of 1184–85, he heard the following report about the Norman King William II:

Although Arabic had been used as an administrative language in Norman Sicily until 1111, the year before Roger II came of age, thereafter his chancery issued no Arabic document until 1130, and for two decades Arabic was almost completely supplanted by Greek as the language of central administration and government. 9 None of the Norman rulers of Sicily employed an Arabic signature before 1130, and only after Roger’s coronation, and the creation of the Arabic facet of the monarchy, was the royal ‘alāma imported from an Islamic chancery as part of the reconstruction of the royal diwān. 10 The Arabic note quoted above, which explains the purpose of the ‘alāma, suggests that as late as May 1143 it was not a standard feature of diwānī documents. Indeed, it may never have become standard, for this is the only surviving occurrence of a royal ‘alāma from Norman Sicily.

Each of the ‘alāmat employed by or attributed to the Sicilian kings is a hamdāla—a formula beginning with the words al-hamdul li-llāhi (“Praise be to God”)—
which had been a standard form for the ‘alāma since the early tenth century, when it was used by a vizier of the Abbasid chancery. The Fatimids were the first to use the ḥamdala as a royal ‘alāma, and all the Fatimid caliphs used the same formula: al-hamdul-lāhi rabbi l-‘ālamīna (“Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds”). The Norman ‘alāmāt were thus not modeled upon the motto of the caliph himself, but rather upon those used by his leading officials and viziers. For example, an ‘alāma extremely close to that of Roger II—al-hamdul-lāhi shukran lī-ni’matt-hi (“Praise be to God, in gratitude for his bounty”)—had been used by the eleventh-
century vizier, al-Jarjara’s, while a similar formula—
al-hamdu li-llahi ‘alã n’ami-hi (“Praise be to God, for His bounties”)—was widely used in the Fatimid chancery in King Roger’s own day, by Ibn Muyassar, chief kadi under al-Amir and al-Hafiz, and by at least two unnamed clerks in al-Hafiz’s chancery. Thus, in May 1143, the use of the ‘alãma was a recent innovation in Norman Sicily, and the formula used by Roger imitated a Fatimid model.

Roger II’s regular signature was Greek, even on Arabic and Latin documents. But even though Roger had been educated by his mother’s Greek advisors and administrators, five years after reaching adulthood he was still unable, or at least unaccustomed, to write his name, and used instead the sign of the cross. Indeed, throughout Roger’s life his Greek signature was written not by his own hand but by professional scribes.

Like King Roger’s Greek signature, the Arabic ‘alãma at the head of the endowment charter of Santa Maria is evidently the work of a practiced penman (fig. 2). It was written with a reed-pen (qalam), and not with the quill that was used for the Greek text of the document. The writer was at pains to give the impression that, from start to finish, he had not once lifted the pen off the page. Thus the first two words are written in a single flourish: the initial alif-lam are joined, the dâl is looped up to join the top of the following lâm, and the terminal hâ of Alla’h turns back on itself to begin the loop of the wâw; the writer may have lifted his pen after the hâ, before forming the wâw. The tail of the wâw twists sinuously back on itself to become the shin. The crossbar of the kaf is furnished by the alif in the following word. The tail of the râ’ lifts vertically in a calligraphic flourish that serves to carry the line to the height of the top of the lâm-alif: here, the writer may again have lifted his pen. The bridge between the râ’ might indicate damma tanwîn. The words li-an’um are written in a single sweep with the elaborate trefoil flourish that signals the end of the motto. Such a final trefoil is often attempted by Sicilian scribes—for example, by the royal eunuchs Richard and ’Ammar in their alâmât discussed below—but is never more smoothly executed. Whether the writer of the royal ‘alãma lifts his pen once, twice, or never, he controls the thickness of line and the flow of ink almost perfectly, and only in the very tail of the trefoil does he deliberately permit the line to thin and fade. In short, the ‘alãma is the work of an expert Arabic calligrapher.

It is instructive to compare Roger’s ‘alãma with those of two Fatimid viziers—Bahram, in March 1136, and Tala’î, in May/June 1151. In each case, the vizier writes his ‘alâm in bold, monumental script that contrasts strongly with the fluid cursive of the text. The individual letters are clearly differentiated, and the shafts of the alif and lâm are greatly elongated in a manner that seems to be moving towards the tughra. Tala’î’s ‘alâm, in particular, is strikingly different from the polished cursive of the scribe, who frequently runs the letters into each other and joins them together. Both vizieral ‘alâmìs may be compared to those used by chancery clerks as notes of registration, which are written in workaday scribal hands that are much closer to the script of the text than are the monumental scripts used for the vizieral ‘alâmìs. What this may suggest is that neither of the viziers was a master of the fluid cursive used by the scribes of the dâwãn.

In contrast to these vizieral ‘alâmìs, Roger’s is a superb example of the cursive script used in his dâwãn and must be the work of a professional Arabic scribe. It is inconceivable that Roger, who was unable or unaccustomed to write his own name in the Greek language in which he had been educated, and whose chancery had only recently begun to use Arabic after an interval of twenty years, could have guided the reed that wrote this elegant ‘alâm.

For our purposes, the point to stress is that Roger’s Arabic signature does not indicate the extent to which he was Arabicized, but rather the pains that he and his ministers took to ensure that he appeared to be so. Roger’s ‘alãma helps to explain how it came to be believed, for example by Ibn Jubayr, that he and his successors could read and write Arabic—a deliberate fiction that contributed to the illusion that they resembled Muslim rulers.

THE ARABIC SIGNATURE OF WILLIAM MALCONVENANT

While King Roger had his ‘alãma written for him by a professional scribe, there can be little doubt that William Malconvenant, a Master Justiciar under King William II and Queen Constance, wrote his Arabic signature with his own hand.

Four documents signed by William survive in their original form. All bear his signature in Latin, written by the scribe of the document and preceded by William’s autograph mark of the cross—evidence that he was unaccustomed, or more probably unable, to write his name in Latin. But in the two documents issued after he became Master Justiciar, William adds to his Latin
signature his name in Arabic, Ghylm Mlqmnnt, which should probably be vocalized Ghuliyalm Malqumanant: note that William omits the alif with which the king’s name, Ghuliyalm or Ghuliyəlm, is usually written on coins, documents, and inscriptions.¹⁵ Fifteen years separate the two Arabic signatures, but they are written in the same manner and clearly by the same hand.

In May 1183 (fig. 3), William began the name Ghuliyəlm by drawing a horizontal line from left to right. Onto that line, he drew rough approximations of the Arabic letters, lifting his pen for each in five separate actions. Below his Christian name, William constructed his family name Malqumanant in the same manner, starting with a horizontal line, onto which approximations of the Arabic letters were added in seven separate actions. The two names were then enclosed in an open-topped frame, which gives to his signature something of the feel of the roughly rectangular ciphers used by the royal eunuchs (see below).

In May 1198, William constructed his signature in an almost identical manner, again working from left to right (fig. 4). But, fifteen years on, the approximations of the Arabic letters have moved further away from their original model: an extra letter seems to have crept in between the ghayn and the ləm in Ghuliyəlm,²⁶ and the two məms in Malqumanant have developed from closed loops into open hooks.

While an Arab scribe or witness would have used cursive script (fig. 5a) to sign a name, the model that William followed was clearly written in the script known as Kufic (fig. 5b). Note, in particular, how in Malqumanant the initial məm is formed clockwise from the upper left, not anticlockwise from the lower left; how the qaf is formed as a circle or semicircle on a pronounced stem, not as a fluid loop; how the last three letters are distinguished by their descending heights; and how the final tāʾ ends in a horizontal line—all of which can be characteristics of Kufic script.
Kufic is never used in the Arabic documents of Norman Sicily, but is rather employed on coins, monuments, and textiles, or in special manuscripts such as Qur’ans. Although William Malconvenant may have seen the name of King William written in Kufic on a coin or in an inscription, it is inconceivable that he happened by chance upon his own family name written in Kufic script. To write Malqumanant, he must surely have secured the cooperation of an Arab scribe. This is confirmed by the transformation of the n and v in Malconvenant into ṃm in Malqumanant, which reveals that the transcription derived from an aural source and not from transliteration of the written form. In other words, whoever composed the Arabic signature was attempting to reproduce the sounds that he heard, not written letters. The Arab scribe, in short, could not read Latin.

It is easy to imagine that the scribe, faced with the task of teaching his master to write his name in Arabic, must very soon have realized that William could no more master Arabic cursive script than he could Latin. The scribe then had the happy thought that it would be far easier for William to copy his name were it to be written out for him in linear, angular Kufic. Instead of the complicated business of forming and joining—the twelve consonants of his name in cursive Arabic script (let alone the twenty-two letters of his Latin name), William would merely have to draw two horizontal lines onto which he would place twelve simple linear figures, seven of which were merely vertical strokes.

Why, when William had used the mark of the cross as his signature since 1159, did he in midlife take the trouble to learn how to write his name in Kufic? Clearly, it was not for the benefit of readers of Arabic, for William seems to have moved and worked within a predominantly Latin environment, and few Arabs would have been able to decipher his outlandish foreign name written in such a bizarre script. It follows that his Arabic signature was directed at a Latin audience, few of whom would have recognized that William was no more able to write Arabic than they. In other words, it served William’s purposes that he be thought by Latins to be able to read and write Arabic. The fortunes of his family, and his own career, may explain why this should have been so.

The Malconvenant were one of the oldest Norman baronial families in Sicily. Their family seat lay in Coutances, some five kilometers from Hauteville-le-Guichard, and it is probable that at least one Malconvenant accompanied the young Roger d’Hauteville when he set out for Italy in 1057. William’s grandfather seems to have taken part in the conquest of Sicily and, in the division of the spoils, ca. 1095, to have been granted the barony of Calatrasa. The Malconvenant remained lords of Calatrasa until 1162, when the king summoned John, William’s eldest brother, to Messina, where the royal army was gathering for a campaign against the rebels on the mainland. John was to bring with him the eleven knights that he owed as service for his barony but, whether through poverty or ill-disguised sympathy with the rebels, brought only three. The king therefore took Calatrasa back into the royal demesne but graciously granted John two much smaller estates that lay far apart and had no castle, for which he was to owe three knights’ service. It seems probable that the much-reduced family estate could no longer support the youngest son, so that William was obliged to seek his fortune in the royal administration. There he did well and by 1183 had come to hold the office of Master Justiciar. Master Justiciars were responsible for judging cases brought directly to the royal court or sent there from the local courts, and they also held inquests to investigate disputes involving the rights of the royal demesne. Under William II, they came to exercise a supervisory role from the royal court over the provincial justiciars. Master Justiciars tended to be drawn from the king’s closest counselors, and William’s appointment may indicate the return of the Malconvenant to royal favor.

In Sicily, from the reign of Roger II until the fall of the dynasty, the use of two or more languages in coins, documents, and inscriptions was almost exclusively a royal prerogative. Trilingual and bilingual public texts were effectively a royal monopoly, broken by no institution or individual outside the narrow circle of the court and palace. They were symbols of the royal policy of populus trilinguis—visual proclamations that the cohesive rule of the king had united the three linguistic communities of the island into a single Sicilian people. William adopted his Arabic signature only after he entered royal service. It attested neither to his ability to read and write Arabic nor to his Arabization; rather it proclaimed that he belonged to the royal circle, it declared his adherence to royal policy, and it befitted his rank as Master Justiciar of the trilingual curia regis.
THE ‘ALÂMÂT OF THE ROYAL EUNUCHS

From the reign of Roger II until the fall of the kingdom, the Norman kings employed eunuchs as household servants, palace officials, and administrators. Two of the royal eunuchs—Philip of al-Mahdiyya and Peter—came from Ifriqiya as children and were raised within the palace, and it is likely that the others had similar origins. The Arabic and Latin narrative sources agree that, although the royal eunuchs had been converted to Christianity, they remained Muslims at heart. Ibn Jubayr reports that all or most of them “hide [their] faith, fear for [their] lives, and cling to the worship of God and the performance of his precepts in secret”—in other words, that they practiced taqiyya. An interpolation into the Chronicle of Romuald of Salerno tells how Philip of al-Mahdiyya, “beneath the cloak of the name of a Christian, behaved like a secret knight of the devil” and went to the stake for his faith. The author known as Hugo Falcandus describes the career of the eunuch Peter, who “like all the palace eunuchs...was a Christian only in name and appearance but a Muslim by conviction”; later, as Ibn Khaldun relates, Peter defected to the Almohads and, under the Muslim name of Ahmad, commanded the Almohad fleet.

Each of these Arab and Latin writers may have had his own reasons for emphasizing or exaggerating the extent to which the royal eunuchs were Muslim. A very different picture is painted by a Latin charter of January 1186, in which Bishop Stephen of Lipari-Patti grants the priory of Santa Sofia di Vicari to the eunuch Richard, “because...he is a brother of our church, and because this church is especially eager for his patronage.” Indeed, the careful qualification with which Ibn Jubayr opens his account of the royal eunuchs—“all or most of them hide their faith but cling to the law of Islam”—suggests that at least some may have been genuine converts to Christianity. Fortunately, the mottoes that they chose to use as their personal signatures supplement the testimony of external observers with the eunuchs’ own words. The ‘alâmât of four royal eunuchs—Peter, Martin, Richard, and ‘Ammar—survive.

Peter was a Berber from the Sadghiyan of Sadwikish and had been captured as a boy from the island of Gerba. At court, he seems to have been known by the French diminutive Perron (“Little Peter”), and thus appears as Perron in Greek and Barrun in Arabic. By 1141, he was a royal chamberlain and one of the directors of the royal diwân. Like many palace officers, he also had military duties, and in 1159 he commanded the Sicilian fleet against the Almohads. Back in Sicily, Peter was promoted to Master Chamberlain of the Palace and—together with Richard Palmer, bishop-elect of Syracuse, and the notary, Matthew of Salerno—was one of the triumvirate of Royal Familiars who effectively ran the kingdom. He played a leading role in the suppression of the baronial rebellion against William I, both on the mainland and in Sicily. In 1166, on his deathbed, King William freed Peter and confirmed him as one of the triumvirate who were to advise his widow, Margaret, the regent for their young son, William II. During the struggle for power at court that followed the king’s death, Peter fell out with Richard Palmer, who joined forces with the baronial party and eventually forced Peter to flee to the Almohads.

Peter signs his ‘alâmât—’alâ llâhi tawakkul—and two surviving documents, dated December 1149 (fig. 6) and May 1152. From the open loop of the initial ‘ayn, Peter draws a long horizontal line to the left, and then raises it vertically to form the lâm. The yâ’ of the alif al-maqsûra begins by curving to the left, but is then pulled sharply back to the right in a long horizontal line ending under the loop of the initial ‘ayn. The line is lifted vertically to give the alif, turned down to give a lâm, and then carried leftwards up and down in four little peaks that indicate the second lâm and terminal hâ’ of Allâh, and the initial tâ’ and wâw of tawakkul. The tail of the wâw rises vertically and is tied to make the extravagant bow with two loops that indicates the kaf—the upper representing the cross-bar, the lower the body of the letter. From this bow, the line escapes horizontally, rises into a looped lâm, falls again, curves left, and finally turns sharply back to the
right in a yāʾ that closely reproduces the form of the letter below it. The whole signature is written—or, at least, is intended to look as if it had been written—as a single line, without lifting the pen from the page.

Martin first appears in February 1161 as one of the leading officers of the royal dinwān. In the following year, when William I led the army to which John Malconvenant had brought only three knights against the rebels on the mainland, Martin was entrusted with the suppression of the rebellion in Palermo. Thereafter, he returned to his desk in the dinwān and held the offices of Master Chamberlain and Royal Familiar until at least 1169.40

Martin signs his ʿalāma—tawakkul ʿalā llāhi (“My trust is in God”), a variation on the motto used by Peter—41 to three surviving documents, dated January 1161,42 November 1166,43 and March 1167 (fig. 7).44 The initial tāʾ lies hidden in the lower right of the cipher. The tail of the following wāw sweeps up to give a looped kāf that is strongly reminiscent of that used by Peter. So, too, is the way in which the yāʾ begins by curving left but is then pulled back sharply to the right in a long horizontal. Although in this case there is no alif, the line is again extended vertically upwards and then looped around to form the ʿayn. Martin pens the rest of the ʿalā in exactly the same way as does Peter. From the alif al-miqṣira, the line again rises vertically to form the alif, turns downwards, and then bumps on in four rounded peaks representing the two lāms and the hāʾ with a final flourish that turns back horizontally to the right and fades away.45 This late signature of Martin’s is extremely balanced, confident, and fluid, and has clearly been much practiced. The earliest version of the same signature is much cruder, which raises the possibility that Martin may then have still been learning how to pen his cipher, perhaps using that of Peter as his model.

The eunuch Richard probably first appears in January 1161 as one of the officers of the royal dinwān. As Master Chamberlain of the Palace and Royal Familiar, he played a leading role during the regency of Margaret, from the defection of Peter to the flight of Margaret’s cousin and chancellor, Stephen du Perche, whose fall Richard engineered in 1168. Thereafter, Richard seems to have returned to the royal dinwān, where he served until at least March 1187. Towards the end of his career, he provided for his retirement by securing a life-interest in the priory of Santa Sofia at Vicari from the bishop of Lipari-Patti and by renting a piece of land from Palermo cathedral to plant an orchard or vineyard.46

Richard signs his ʿalāma—lā yakhfā ʿalā llāhi shay (“Nothing is hidden from God”)—to two surviving documents, dated March 1167 (fig. 8)47 and March 1187,48 and perhaps also to a lease of January 1161, in which the signature is badly damaged.49 Richard introduces a new and distinctive element in the form of a bold lām-alif that divides his cipher with two strong diagonal lines. In order to write his ʿalāma without lifting the pen—or to seem to do so—Richard must write the two letters of the first word in the wrong order, beginning in the upper left corner at the top of the alif, and then falling diagonally, making the basal loop, and climbing diagonally to the upper right corner. There, from the top of the lām, the line sharply zigzags down through the yāʾ and khāʾ. It continues horizontally across the rect-
angle, loops up to form the fā’ and then, as the alif al-maṣṣura, descends and curves to the left before being pulled sharply back horizontally to the far right of the rectangle. The words ‘alā lāhī are written in a manner already familiar from the signatures of Peter and Martin, but after the three sharp peaks of lāhī, the line bumps on through three more peaks and finally turns back on itself to form the last word, shay”. Richard’s ‘alāma is framed by two trefoils, to the left and right, the tails of which are folded back under the cipher to make a sort of open-topped box that accentuates the rectangularity of his signature.

Morphologically, these three ‘alāmāt have certain features in common. All are ciphers formed from letters closely interwoven in such a way that their contents are concealed. Each is built up from three lines of text written one above the other. Each incorporates a frame of pronounced vertical and horizontal lines that imparts a distinctly rectangular shape to the composition. (This characteristic is perhaps deliberately evoked in the Arabic signature of William Malconvent, with its two lines of text enclosed in a rectangular frame.) As has already been observed, the manner in which the words ‘alā lāhī are penned in all three ciphers is almost identical. These strong similarities suggest that the three eunuchs, who were not just contemporaries but also colleagues in both dīwān and palace as well as allies in the fierce political battles at court, may well have collaborated in developing their ‘alāmāt. Indeed, in the close atmosphere of the palace, sharing exile, captivity, physical mutilation, and their common, hidden faith, the eunuchs came to think of themselves as a family, with siblings and even “sons,” so it comes as no surprise to find a family resemblance in their signatures.

Turning from morphology to content, a common theme may again be discerned. None of the mottoes used by the eunuchs belongs to the standard repertoire of the medieval Islamic world. It therefore seems probable that each was deliberately chosen or devised by the signatory. The mottoes used by Peter, Martin, and Richard are all ambiguous and could be read as referring to the Christian God, were it not for their strong Qur’anic resonances that would have been immediately recognized by a Muslim reader. The closely related ‘alāma of Peter and Martin are modeled upon a formula that occurs many times in the Qur’an, for example in such verses as fa-tawakkal ‘alā lāhī inna lāhā yuḥībbu l-mutawakkilīna (3:159: “Put your trust in God, for God loves those who put their trust [in Him]”) and wa-tawakkal ‘alā lāhī wa-kaftā bi-lāhī wakīlīn (4:81: “Put your trust in God, for God is sufficient as a representative”). But Muslims would also have heard echoes of the portentous warnings given by the prophets in Sūrat Ḥūd. Innī tawakkaltu lāhī (“I put my trust in God”), Hud proclaims (11:56) as he warns ‘Ad that, unless they listen to him, they will be cursed in this life and the next. Again, Shu‘ayb states that wa-mā tawfiqī illā bi-lāhī ‘alay-hi tawakkaltu (“My prosperity is from God alone, in Him I trust”) as he warns Midyan (11:88) lest they suffer the same fate as other peoples who ignored their prophets—Noah, Lot, Hud, and Salih. Richard’s ‘alāma confirms that this prophetic layer of meaning is intentional, for it is drawn from a verse in Sūrat al-Mu‘āmin: yawma hum bārizūna lā yakhfū ‘alā lāhī min-hum shay’un li-mañi t-mulku l-yaumma li-lāhī l-wāhidhi l-qahhāri (40:16: “On the [Last] Day [mankind] will arise. Nothing will be hidden from God concerning them. To whom will belong the kingdom on that day? To God, the One, the Conquering”). The story to which this passage belongs tells of the Believer (al-mu‘āmin) at the court of Pharaoh, who “concealed his faith” (40:28: yaktumu imāna-hu—see n. 36, below) but then warned Pharaoh that if he did not turn to God the Egyptians would suffer the same fate as the peoples of Noah and Hud. In their signatures, the eunuchs Peter, Martin, and Richard cast themselves in the role of the Believer at Pharaoh’s court—as warners concealed in the court of an infidel king, as prophets who conceal their warnings in the Qur’anic verses to which their mottoes refer, and as Muslims who conceal their true faith behind the elaborate ciphers of their ‘alāmāt.

Their colleague, the eunuch ‘Ammar, was altogether more blunt. He is the only royal eunuch to sign with his Arabic personal name (ism), instead of the Christian name with which he had been baptized. All he has left us is the formula with which he witnesses a Latin-Arabic lease dated March 1187, in which a fellow eunuch, John the Royal Chamberlain, rents a piece of land outside Palermo from a Greek monk.

‘Ammar’s signature begins with a standard witness formula—ashhadu-ni anā l-fatā ‘Ammār wa-hādhihi ‘alāmāt-i (“He [John] called me, the eunuch ‘Ammar, as a witness, and this is my ‘alāma”)—written as a perfectly legible line of text. The ‘alāma itself, like those of the other eunuchs, is written as a cipher and has the form of a very rough rectangle (fig. 9). It begins with the pious formula known as the ḥasbala—ḥasbiya l-lāhū (“God is sufficient for me”). From the clear initial hā’, the line runs horizontally to the left to represent the sin, rises
Two brief conclusions must serve to draw this little essay to an end. First, the Arabic signatures that it has examined all, in different ways, were intended to proclaim falsehoods and to conceal truths. Roger’s ‘alāma was designed to convey the idea that he was like a Muslim ruler, and to conceal the fact that he was nothing of the kind. William Malconventant’s Arabic signature was designed to proclaim his mastery of Arabic, one of the languages of the trilingual administration to which he belonged, and to conceal the fact that he was unable to write his name in Latin and anything but his name in Arabic. The ‘alāmāt of the eunuchs concealed their professions of faith, encrypted in Arabic, from their Christian masters. But those very professions of faith at the same time concealed from themselves, and from any other Muslim who chanced to read them, that they were collaborating with a Christian king in the exploitation of their fellow Muslims.

Our second conclusion is that much can be learned from the little details of material culture that normally escape the gaze of the art historian. The long list of Michael Rogers’s publications at the beginning of this volume includes some that venture well beyond the territory familiar to historians of Islamic art and that, by illuminating the hidden, neglected, and obscure, have thrown light back upon the wider subject. We cannot claim that our own taste for arcana has ever needed stimulation, but it is a great comfort to know that we are not alone. Nor do we claim ever to have made darkness visible with the luciferian brilliance of Michael Rogers. All that we have done to illustrate this point is to choose a few neglected signatures written by men who, in very different ways, were key figures in the Norman court. The detailed study of the morphology of their signatures may not have given much aesthetic pleasure, but it did permit us not only to read them—something which, in the case of the ‘alāmāt of the eunuchs, had not been done before—but also to collect new information about their acts and motivations. When that information was examined in context, it was shown to offer three little glimpses, from three

Fig. 9. ‘Ammar’s signature (reconstructed portion shown in gray). Detail from Palermo, Archivio della Cappella Palatina, pergamena no. 19, dated January–March 1187.

in a single peak for the bā’, and then drops and runs horizontally back on itself to give the yā’. A loop carries the line round to a vertical alif, and then through the three peaks representing the word llāhu. Thus far, the motto can be easily read, but the final phrase is concealed both by the complexity of the cipher and by the faintness of the line. After the terminal hā’ of llāhu, the line continues as a small wāw and then rises and falls in a tall peak that represents the definite article al-. At the foot of the lām, the line performs a loop and runs back towards the right in a long diagonal that seems to end in a closed loop (mīm) out of which the line emerges to run back on itself in another long diagonal (ṣin) that passes through the initial alif-lām. Next, the line rises in a tall vertical stroke (lām), falls again, and then can just be seen to complete another loop (mīm). It rises again in two sharp peaks that bear, respectively, a pair of points below the line and a single point, only just visible, above (yā’ + nūn). The line then falls, and fades away to the right with a flourish that possibly includes two trefoil loops. Beneath his ‘alāma, ‘Ammar has drawn two trefoil flourishes, the tails of which turn sharply right and run away beneath his witness formula.

Although the final phrase is initially difficult to decipher, even in the original document, the whole ‘alāma now becomes clear—hashiya llāhu wa ‘l-muslimūn (“God and the Muslims are sufficient for me”). ‘Ammar chose to make an explicit profession of Islam, knowing that the penalty for apostasy was death, and that other eunuchs had gone to the stake for their faith.52 The eunuchs John and Richard, who both signed the same document, must have been fully aware of the content of ‘Ammar’s ‘alāma. The lease was issued with the approval of the whole chapter of the Royal Chapel and of James, the precentor of the Royal Chapel and Archdeacon of Catania—any of whom, the eunuchs must have been all too aware, might have denounced them for apostasy. They must have been supremely confident in the protection afforded them by the Arabic ciphers within which they concealed their true beliefs.
very different perspectives, into the Norman palace—
glimpses that afford new insights into the broader ques-
tion of the nature of palace culture in Norman Sicily.

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NOTES

Authors’ note: The article was written by J. J., but it was N. J. who
cracked the ciphers behind which the eunuchs concealed their sig-
natures; she also contributed several crucial observations on the
signatures of Roger II and William Malconvenant. We are both
particularly grateful to Monsignor Benedetto Rocco,
and to the directors and
staff of the Archivio di Stato, the Archivio Diocesano, and the Bi-
blioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, all in Palermo. It has not
proved possible to have detailed photographs made of all the sig-
natures; figs. 2–4 and 6–9 are therefore drawings made from en-
larged digitized images.

1. Abū ‘Abbās Ahmad al-Qalqashandī, Subh al-aš’āf bi sinā‘at al-
sinā‘ah, 14 vols. and index (Cairo, 1913–72), passim.
2. Samuel M. Stern, Fātimid Decrees: Original Documents from the
Fātimid Chancery (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), pp. 123–
65 (quote from pp. 123–24).
3. Most but not all of the documents are published in Salvatore
Cusa, I Diplomi greci ed arabi di Sicilia, pubblicati nel testo origi-
nale, tradotti ed illustrati, vol. 1 in 2 parts; projected vol. 2
apparently never published (Palermo: Lao, 1868–82). Recent
studies include: Albrecht Noth, “I documenti arabi di Rug-
gero II,” in Carlrichard Brühl, Diplomi e cancelleria di Ruggero
II (Palermo: Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo,
1983), pp. 189–222; Adalgisa De Simone, “I diplomi arabi di
Sicilia,” in Testimonianze degli Arabi in Italia (Fondazione Leone Caetani, Giornata di Studio: Roma, 10 dicembre 1987) (Rome:
Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1988), pp. 57–75; Jeremy
Johns, Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Divan
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
al-Kalḳashandī, 2nd rev. edition., ed. Michael Jan de Goeje and
William Wright, Gibb Memorial Series no. 5 (Oxford, 1907),
p. 325.
5. Coins of Roger II and William I struck in the mint of al-Mah-
diyah in Itīfiḏa employ a fuller version of the motto that Ibn Juhayyān says was used by William II—al-ḥamdu l-lāhī hapqa
hamād-hi wa-kā-ḥa huwa aḥlu-hu wa-mustahqiqahu ("May God
be praised, as it is right to praise Him, and as He deserves
and merits")—Hasan H. Abdul-Wahhab, “Deux dinars nom-
mands de Mahdia,” Revue Tunisienne 1 (1930): 215–18; Jeremy
Johns, Malik Itīfīqaṭ: the Norman Kingdom of Africa and the
6. Palermo, Archivio della Cappella Palatina, no. 8; ed. Cusa,
Diplomi, no. 70, pp. 68–70. Color plate in L’età normanna e
sveva in Sicilia: Mostra storico-documentaria e bibliografica, cat.
of an exh. at Palazzo dei Normanni, Palermo, Nov. 18–Dec. 15,
7. For additional bibliography, see Johns, Royal Divan, p. 306,
no. 20.
8. For George, see Johns, Royal Divan, pp. 80–90, 256–67, 280–
83. For his church, see Ernst Kitzinger, The Mosaics of St. Mary’s
of the Admiral in Palermo (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks
9. However, it is not impossible to read an alif (indicating fathā
tawīn) after the rā‘ of shukr, and to understand the preceding
waw as waw ma‘yya—giving al-hamdu l-lāhī wa-shukran li-
an‘umī-hi ("Praise be to God with thanks for His blessings")—
see also note 19, below.
11. Ibid., pp. 277–78.
12. Dominique Sourdel, Le vizirat ’abbāsid de 749 à 936 (132 à
324 de l’hégire), 2 vols. (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas,
13. Stern, Fātimid Decrees, pp. 127–30, citing and supporting a state-
ment to that effect by Ahmad b. ‘Alī al-Maqgrīzī, Al-Mawū‘a‘ wa-
l-tībā‘ bi-dhikr al-khi‘a‘ wa-l-‘thār, ed. Muhammad Qattah al-
‘Abd Allāh Mūkhlīs (Cairo, 1924), p. 36. Because al-Jarjarā‘ī
had lost his hands, his ’alāma was written for him by the qiddī
al-Qudā‘ī.
15. Tāj al-Dīn b. Muyassār, Akhḫār Mīṣr, ed. Henri Massé (Cairo:
Institut français d’archéologie orientale [Textes arabes 2],
16. Vera von Falkenhausen, “I ceti dirigenti prenormanni al
tempo della costituzione degli stati normanni nell’Italia meri-
dionale e in Sicilia,” in Forme e struttura sociale in Italia
nel medioevo, ed. Gabriella Rossetti (Bologna: Mulino, 1977),
pp. 356–57; Johns, Royal Divan, pp. 78–79. (This is a conve-
nient point to pass on Professor von Falkenhausen’s warmest
wishes to Michael Rogers, whom she remembers with great
fondness from a Swan Hellenic cruise on the Black Sea.)
17. Cusa, Diplomi, no. 34, p. 385 and pl. 3.
18. Vera von Falkenhausen, “I diplomi dei re normanni in lin-
gua greca,” in Documenti medievali greci e latini. Studi comparati-
De Gregorio and Otto Kresten (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di
Studio sull’Alto medioevo, 1997), pp. 282–86, and tav. 4 and
7.
19. This manner of raising the tail of the rā‘ to link to the follow-
ing letter is well attested in Sicilian divānī scripts. Alterna-
tively, as already noted in n. 8 above, the vertical stroke could
be read as an alif, in which case the bridge might even repres-
ent the fathomātawīn.
20. Stern, Fātimid Decrees, pl. 17.
21. Ibid., pl. 33.
22. Ibid., pl. 4.
24. (1) Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale per la Regione Siciliana, Tab-
ulario di Santa Maria di Monreale, pergamena no. 6, dated
1159; ed. Carlo Alberto Garuﬁ, I documenti inediti dell’epoca
normanna in Sicilia, Documenti per servire alla storia di Si-
eus frater(tis) sum [i.e., brother of Robertus Maleconven-
ant]. (2) Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale per la Regione Sicil-
iana, Tab. di Monreale, pergamena no. 7, dated April 1162; ed. Carlo Alberto Garufi, *Catalogo illustrato del tabulario di Santa Maria Nuova in Monreale*, Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia, ser. 1, vol. 19 (Palermo, 1902), Appendix 1, doc. no. 1, pp. 161–63; + *Ego Guill(elmus) malcouena(n)t regis curie reg(e)s* JusticiaRius +. (4) Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario di San Salvatore di Cefalú, pergamena no. 35, dated May 1198; ed. Giorgio Battaglia, *I diplomi inediti relativi all’ordinamento della proprietà fondiaria in Sicilia sotto i normanni e gli svevi*, Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia, ser. 1, vol. 16 (Palermo, 1895), doc. no. 41, pp. 123–28; + *Ego Guill(ebmnus) malcouena(n)t magne Imp(e)r(ialis) Curie mag(is)te Rius*.

25. See n. 26, below.

26. This might be a *waaw*, in which case his name could be read *GhuhlYalm*.


30. Ibid., pp. 212–56.

31. Ibid., pp. 249–50.


41. One might also read *tawakkul ‘alâ ilîhî* (“My trust is in my God”), depending upon whether the final flourish is understood as a hâ’ or a yâ’.


43. Toledo, Archivo General de la Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Fondo Messina, no. 1118 (S2004); only Greek text edited: see Johns, *Royal Diwân*, p. 311, no. 37.


45. See n. 41, above.


47. Cited in n. 44, above.


49. Cited in n. 44, above.


51. Cited in n. 48, above.

52. See n. 33, above.
It is a matter of great satisfaction and fulfillment for me to have been given the opportunity to participate in this celebration of Michael Rogers. His influence has been uniquely important for me; quite simply, it was he who, initially and primarily, introduced me to the enterprise of art-historical work. Even more particularly, my subject relates to an area with which he has long been concerned, and concerning which we have long since had occasion to communicate. I hope that this present effort will find favor.

As the present paper developed, it came to be much too large for inclusion in the planned volume in honor of Professor Rogers. When confronted with the necessity of radically reducing the size of my submission, I found only one viable course of action: that of cutting off and presenting the first part of the work I had written. The larger version naturally dealt with a broad, representative range of the types of pre-Timurid jade objects in the al-Sabah Collection and, in addition to the ancient objects here discussed, covered Islamic jades up through the fourteenth century. The necessary reduction of the present publication is made less painful by the project of a volume on pre-Timurid jades planned for publication by the al-Sabah Collection in the reasonably near future.

**FIRST REPORT**

In the literature on Islamic art, the first recognition of a pre-fifteenth-century Islamic school of jade carving came in my entry in the 1982 catalogue, *Islamic Jewelry in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, for a belt fitting excavated at Nishapur. I had discovered this piece (which is of the type seen in fig. 9a–d) in the early 1970s, among uncatalogued small finds from the Nishapur excavations in the stores of the museum. I had furthermore exhibited the fitting in the Metropolitan’s Nishapur gallery, which opened in 1975, with the same attribution as in the 1982 catalogue entry: “Iran, possibly Nishapur, 9th–10th century” (an attribution by which I still stand).

In the meantime I had communicated with colleagues about it, both orally and in writing. I quote here a relevant section from the catalogue entry:

> Our nephrite belt fitting antedates by five hundred years the earliest previously known groups of Islamic jades...The likelihood of Iranian or even Nishapuri manufacture does not seem remote given the...pictorial evidence cited and the number and quality of what are surely local lapidary objects unearthed at Nishapur. It is probably merely a matter of accident that no other jade pieces were retrieved by the Museum’s excavations there. A mate identical to the present piece was seen on the Tehran art market in 1978.¹

Despite all this, the conventional and prevailing picture, often repeated in the literature, has been that jade carving was introduced into the Islamic world only in the fifteenth century, under the Timurids. Thus, as recently as 1996, no less an authority than Robert Skelton stated that “Although the material [jade] was thus known in the Islamic lands before the 15th century, there is no evidence of it being worked by lapidaries under Islamic patronage until Timur’s grandson Ulughbeg (1394–1449...) acquired two large blocks of greenish-black nephrite in 1425... . These were taken to Samarkand to be carved and inscribed for use as Timur’s tombstone in the Gur-i Mir... ”² Michael Rogers, for his part, on the one hand conservatively stated that the “earliest attributable Islamic jades are Timurid,”³ but also commented that recent “finds of jade (in minute quantities) from Nishapur in a pre-Mongol context...at Sirāf on the Persian Gulf and at Madinat Sultān in Libya show it to have been worked fairly widely in the Middle Ages” (my publication of the Nishapur piece being the only citation for the passage).⁴ From the literary side, Ralph Pinder-Wilson long ago pointed out⁵ the importance of the section on jade in al-Biruni’s *Compilation on Gemstones*,⁶ written in the 1040s at the Ghaznavid court. But neither he nor any subsequent scholar whose work I am aware of had properly stressed that the passage in question from al-Biruni’s work makes it perfectly
clear that in his time it was not only the “Turks” who used jade (for their saddles, weapons, belts, etc.), but that “others imitated them in this, making rings and knife handles of it.”

**FILLING OUT THE PICTURE**

Meanwhile, during the decades after the discovery of the Nishapur fitting I noted the existence of more and more jades from the East Iranian world that clearly predated the fifteenth century; and, especially from the 1990s forward, we in the al-Sabah Collection were able to build up a range of such jades that (quite aside from their beauty) can only be described as monumental in scope. Not surprisingly, the more our awareness expanded, the greater the range, quality, and quantity of the material seemed. It became more and more evident that I had indeed, in the work that led to the 1982 publication, been touching only the perimeters or branches of a great corpus. We had engaged something distinctive and previously unsuspected, with enormous implications; subsequent work allows us to largely sketch in a proper if not fully detailed picture of the great industry to which scholarship for so long remained so remarkably blind.

The results of my work with respect to this matter (and subsequent to the 1982 publication) were first publicly presented to the scholarly community in a lecture before the Islamic Art Circle, London, in 1998, giving me, inter alia, my first opportunity to dedicate these efforts to Michael Rogers as well as to Ralph Pinder-Wilson and Robert Skelton—all true pioneers in the study of Islamic hardstones, especially jades. The present paper forms part of an outgrowth of that lecture and with respect to the main points and topics discussed in both is largely the same, if considerably amplified in certain areas while bereft of most of the Islamic material presented there.

**SOME DETAIL ON THE LITERATURE**

In the following section, I shall enumerate certain prevalent earlier misconceptions, followed by any commentary that seems to me to be appropriate.

1. That jade carving has a very special status within the art of hardstone carving due to technical differences between carving it and carving the likes of rock crystal and the cryptocrystalline quartzes such as agate.

Without going into unnecessary detail, one may simply dismiss this notion. Although modern technical literature on the actual practice of jade cutting often stresses (minor) difficulties associated with producing a mirror polish (especially due to a tendency to develop an undesirable “orange peel” surface), in historical times no jade (jadeite or nephrite) posed any special difficulties for cutters, who seem almost never to have produced or been interested in high-sheen finishes, satiny ones rather than having been the norm. Jade (specifically nephrite, the only variety encountered in our material) is slightly less hard than the quartzes but like them requires the same lapidary techniques: using hard grits and powders such as garnet, emery, and diamond, delivered in conjunction with water by tools (usually rotary) of wood, copper, iron, lac, and leather. Indeed, for certain types of work, jade could be less troublesome, due to its toughness, than crystalline materials like rock crystal. Of course, this same toughness could also prove a disadvantage, e.g., when knocking free cylindrical stumps produced by core-drills in the process of hollowing out the interior of a vessel. But as indicated, these are minor details in the overall picture, and any differences bear no relation to the implications encountered, which have repeatedly and grossly misled the uninitiated not merely in a technical sense but with respect to the historical issues involved.

2. That jade carving was not practiced in ancient or earlier medieval times in regions that became part of the Islamic world.

It would be wrong to leave the impression that there has been no publication of jades worked in pre-Timurid (indeed, in pre-Islamic) times in the part of the world with which we are concerned; without any pretense to an exhaustive review, we should try to give a fair impression of the situation. The diligent and learned A. Lucas has cited a number of objects from Egypt that had been reported as jade; and although he retains the scientist’s skepticism (since “it was impossible to examine any of these objects either chemically or microscopically without destroying them”), he does clearly express his opinion that the double-cartouche signet ring of Tutankhamun “is almost certainly nephrite,” adding that the fact “that at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty a small piece of this material should have reached Egypt from Asia would not be surprising.” Carol Andrews accepted as proven fact (without citation) that Tutankhamun’s ring is “securely identified” as jade, and indicated that it
constitutes the “single instance” of such.10 Jack Ogden, on the other hand, struck a more skeptical stance. In his text he sums up with respect to Egypt: “There are no confirmed examples of any jade although a ring from Tut Ankh Amun’s tomb was tested by Lucas who said it was almost certainly nephrite.”11 Otherwise, he represented that this ring “was examined by A. Lucas ...and classified as Nephrite jade,” then added that it is a “unique specimen if confirmed.”12

Two further recently published examples should be mentioned here. The first of these is a late Pharaonic (“after 600 BC”) “two fingers amulet,” which “has been identified as jadedite.”13 The second is a hololithic “néphrite” signet ring with elliptical bezel, of the first century BC, which was part of the treasure taken in the nineteenth century from the Meroitic pyramid of Amanishakheto.14

The positing of a problem about the presence of jades in the Islamic world (or the parts of the world that became predominantly Islamic) has most peculiarly affected the field of Islamic art scholarship, a “problem” one might even characterize as a kind of mysterious red herring that has resulted in a greatly amount of mischief. Those coming to the issue when focusing on other periods and cultures, on the other hand, have often seen no insurmountable problem with jade turning up practically anywhere or at any time (again, see Lucas’s comment, cited above); this of course reflects the real situation. Aside from the often-mentioned European and other “Old World” usages of jadesites and nephrites in prehistoric times,15 and the Ancient Egyptian case (discussed above), we can (again, without pretense of exhaustiveness), cite some further literature dealing with jades being fashioned where, by the lights of the Islamic art-historical literature, they should not have been.16

For what is now Afghanistan, the earliest reported instance of objects thought to be jade that I have come across was for objects excavated in the south, at Mundigak (consisting of beads, period “I3–II,” dating to the second quarter of the fourth millennium BC) but not confirmed as jade.17

Teng Shu-p’ing relates that there is “mention [in Han-dynasty Chinese historical records] of a white-jade ‘night-shining cup,’ sent [as tribute] by the people of the western regions [my italics] to King Mu of Chou” in the “10th Cent. B.C.”18

William Trousdale reports extensively19 on jades from Western Asia (including Afghanistan and neighboring former Soviet republics), South Russia, and Europe, dating from a few centuries on either side of the time of Christ, including one example that he has suggested may be of “Roman” origin.20 (In this connection, see below for a discussion of a series of particularly telling ancient examples from this region.)

Kamal Giri cites an example of what was thought to be jade among excavated ancient Indian material.21 This author (in the 1998 London lecture cited above) presented in slides and discussed the Sasanian dish from Susa that is thought to be jade. This had been mentioned earlier, in connection with rock crystal examples, in a Christie’s catalogue,22 and was published in 2000 by Souren Melikian-Chirvani.23

It is also possible to cite publication of medieval jades from Central Asia (while confessing that others have probably escaped me). A small exhibition catalogue from the early 1980s illustrated a pair of “néphrite” flat-slab earring pendants of peculiar outline and a Nestorian cross-shaped pendant of basically similar character preserved in the Institute of History of the National Academy of Science, Kirghizia, both reported to be from “Krasnorechenskoe settlement” and dated to the eighth or ninth century.24 A recent catalogue published a set of eight jade belt fittings from the region of Almaty (now in the National Archaeological Museum of Kazakhstan), and dated them to “Inizio XII–fine XIII secolo.”25 (We may remark in passing that these are more likely to be from the later end of the suggested range, to judge from the form of certain pieces.) Finally, we note the mention of “des perles et des pendentifs de néphrite,” and “une élégante pendeloque de jade en forme de larme,” from excavations at Farab/Otrar, Kirghizia, with respect to which there is no comment about the date.26

However, without ignoring the above, it still needs to be reiterated that whenever the subject of Islamic jades was at issue, the almost universal picture conveyed by the literature was that no jade industry existed until the Timurids began one in Samarkand; some conjectured that this happened as a result of the Timurids’ importing Chinese craftsmen knowledgeable in the “mysterious” art of carving jade.

3. That the art of jade carving is represented in the Islamic world only by a small number of objects attributable to the Timurid period (fifteenth century), perhaps a few from the Safavid period (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), a considerable number from the Ottoman period (sixteenth through nineteenth centuries), and
a quite sizeable number from the Mughal period (seventeenth through nineteenth centuries).

The material presented in my 1998 lectures and even the abbreviated material seen and discussed here will, I hope, have succeeded in largely disposing of the erroneous notions discussed above. To reiterate, the range and large number of identified Islamic jade objects that predate the fifteenth century will only be properly sensed with publication of the jades in the al-Sabah Collection; the present study can, however, hint at the voluminous corpus embodied in this collection. The material (especially when fully presented in the planned volume) should make it clear that jade use has a history, sufficiently represented by objects from the Near East and Central Asia, stretching back for millennia and continuing through Sasanian and early and medieval Islamic times.27

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS

I am prone to certain hypotheses about the main centers of jade working in the medieval Islamic world, foremost among which, I would suggest, was Balkh. There are abundant indications that the East Iranian world was home in earlier medieval times to a prolific and sophisticated lapidary industry, a situation that is very persuasively represented in the material excavated at Nishapur alone.28 Additionally (and aside from other historical, geographical, and art-historical considerations that will not be explored here), there are strong indications of this in the art market (especially in the consistent patterns in stories of putative origin—see "Addendum: 'Archeology' in the Market" and "List of Objects Appearing in the Illustrations, with Putative Origins of Each," below).

A striking aspect of East Iranian medieval jades is the variety of ways in which many of them parallel those of the Chinese world, and numerous problems remain in working out the various relationships, mechanisms, and directions of transmission involved.

As a better picture is developed of various art industries in the East Iranian world, we shall surely see more and more previously undreamed-of interchange between the art traditions of the Chinese and the Iranian megacultures. Our view into the jade industry reveals that these interchanges were quite strong during long spans starting from before the time of Christ and continuing right through into the period in which they are conventionally thought to have begun in earnest, namely the later thirteenth and earlier fourteenth centuries, in the bloom of the Mongol-Islamic school of art. There is no escaping the fact that a number of jade types found in the East Iranian region were inspired by Chinese models, but this should not cause us to fall into the trap of thinking that the ancient Near Eastern and Islamic industries were essentially dependent upon such inspiration. The facts are quite otherwise, and indeed many developments, some of them of importance to world art history, took place in our region. As indicated above, detailed presentation of the material and the issues will have to await the planned volume, in which it may be seen that this rich, enormously productive, and highly creative area of the Islamic world had its own indigenous traditions of jade working. And of course, as we know in the case of other media and traditions, not all the influence traveled in the Far East-to-West Asia direction. A very great deal of work needs to be done on the history of jades, including those of China, all of Central Asia, and the Islamic world.

PRESENTATION OF REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES: ANCIENT PERIOD

The attribution given the two pieces illustrated in figs. 1 and 2 will, at least initially, be seen by some as especially controversial, since it implies that these pieces not only predate the accepted beginning of jade carving in the region by approximately one and a half millennia but also represent a previously unsuspected school of jade carving that bridges two justly famous art-historical periods—the Greco-Bactrian and the Kushan—in the region of what is now Afghanistan.

The jade objects from ancient Egypt seem to amount to a sporadic, opportunistic phenomenon—that is, the use of whatever attractive hardstones became available. But it is clear, on the basis of the present pieces, the very numerous examples of the types seen in figs. 3–5, and other indications, that the situation in ancient Bactria was one of a consistent taste for, and availability and use of, jade. This is surely not simply due to the relative proximity of the region to the source of the material in Khotan (and possibly nearer by). Fortunately, one is able to cite conclusive comparative material for each of the pieces in figs. 1 and 2; in both cases, the comparison pieces are from the Soviet excavations in 1978–79 of princely tombs at Tiliya Tepeeh, near Shibarghan in northern Afghanistan, as published by Victor Sarianidi in 1985—all dated to the first century BC to the first century AD. The material from these excavations provides two instances of dragons so similar to
the jade dragon head in fig. 1 as to leave no doubt that they all come from the same cultural milieu.31 In Sarianidi’s catalogue number 4.8 the analogy with LNS 380 HS is most evident, the dragon being one of four fantastic beasts that slither up one side of a fabulous turquoise-set gold dagger and scabbard. The great similarity between the two cited dragons from Tiliya Tepeh is sharpened by Sarianidi’s comments:

In this tomb there was one more plaque, depicting a winged dragon (ill. 98). Its jaws gape, its nose is turned up, and its eyes stare wide open beneath the bulging ridges of eyebrows. Its horns are short, its ears long, and a beard coils out from beneath its neck. Its writhing body rests on bent paws, and its tail is coiled beneath the belly. This iconographic posture, as well as the very image of the dragon, bears an amazingly close similarity to the raised representation of the mauling episode on the scabbard found in this same tomb. However, of undoubted interest is the representation of a dragon similar in iconographic type and style that is to be seen on the gold Karagalinka diadem from Northern Kirghizia in the USSR. Apparently, Bactrian craftsmen had developed by that period canonical representations of fantastic creatures of the indicated type of menacing winged, serpentine dragon that had a definite semantic meaning in local legend and mythology; they repeated them time and again in their work, commanding a steady sale throughout neighboring regions.32

The fact that the jade piece is reported to have come from Afghanistan is a matter not to be disregarded with respect to the relationship between it and the pieces from Tiliya Tepeh. And the fact that other instances of very similar monster heads have also been unearthed in Afghanistan further cements the matter. For example, “makaras” on ivory panels from Bagram (ca. first century AD)33 are distinctly of the same type, if not quite as strikingly similar to the jade as that cited from Tiliya Tepeh. A larger and older context for the dragon type, which seems to some extent to counter Sarianidi’s suggestions about its nascence, is provided by material said to be of the fourth to second century BC from Inner Mongolia.34 It seems that this general type is in fact another of many elements of old steppe art tradition that impact the art of Bactria and northern India. It seems further that this dragon type bears some relationship with the Greek ketos, a subject that must remain beyond our present scope.

The roundel with a relief-carved head of a mouflon, or wild mountain sheep (fig. 2), is remarkable for its depiction and for its reflection of jade-carving tradition, despite the fact that it is carved from a highly translu-
The full frontal view is one that seems to have been favored over a considerable span of time in Central Asia, but one can match the jade-simulant roundel very closely indeed, again in a marvelous turquoise-set gold scabbard from the Tiliya Tepe excavations, which features not only the same species and general sort of view, but also very similar stylistic elements and aspect. One remarks particularly the splaying-out of the sides of the head and the horns, with the ears in front of the latter; the prominent ridge down the center of the face; and the diagonally set eyes in the shape of a lens cross section. Although the mountain sheep on the golden scabbard (two instances, flanking either side of the scabbard at the lower end) do not sport beards, it is to be noted that animals’ beards were an artistic preoccupation of the style in question: witness the prominent ones featured on the horned “wolf-dragons” and other monsters engaged in combat on the two scabbards from the same tomb referred to above. The jade-simulant mountain sheep roundel, too, is putatively from Afghanistan, specifically Ghazna.

The sword guard in fig. 3 belongs to a class of object that turns up in sizable numbers in the region that was ancient Bactria. It was in fact a widespread, although not universal, element in a constellation of sword furnishings that accompanied the introduction of the long iron sword and that prevailed practically throughout Eurasia in the last centuries BC and first centuries AD. The system invariably involved the suspension of a straight sword (often but not always a meter or more in length) from a separate, dedicated sword belt by...
means of a “slide” in the form of a transversely slotted block or, more simply, an elongated rigid loop, which was mortised into or otherwise affixed to the upper part of the scabbard. This system probably originated with northeast Asian nomads but is thought to have been used in China from at least the fifth century BC. The slides were made of a variety of materials, including (apparently most often) wood, as well as bone, ivory, glass, and a range of stones. Due to their degree of permanence, the hardstone (especially jade) examples, which of course represent the luxurious high end of the scale, have the best survival rates.39 Trousdale characterizes the phenomenon of the scabbard slide (carrying the obvious implications for the other elements of the system to which it belonged) thus:

The significance of the scabbard slide lies in the implications inherent in its extremely wide distribution and historical occurrence in one or another of its forms in Asia and Europe...the major portion of known slides, over eighty percent, may be ascribed a Chinese provenance. But in lesser numbers they have been found in Korea, Inner Mongolia, Viet-Nam, Pakistan, the Crimea, and the lower Volga and Perm regions of European Russia, possibly in Turkey, and, in a related form, in Syria, southern Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Sweden, Norway, Finland, France, and England. This geographical scope may be extended by the addition of regions where no actual examples have been reported, but where their presence may be inferred from representations: northern India, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Soviet Central Asia, southern Siberia, and Italy.40

As a minor modification to the above summary, Trousdale’s later work (‘Kushan Scabbard Slide’) reports on a scabbard slide from Afghanistan; a representative survey of the numbers of such objects coming out of Afghanistan and Northwest Pakistan in recent decades would decidedly alter the general picture of prevalence of extant examples from the region, as well as the balance of Chinese versus non-Chinese examples. The same applies to the other related sword-fitting types here presented, namely pommels and quillon blocks.

Our jade quillon block LNS 169 HS (fig. 3), then, exemplifies the classic luxury type of one of a narrow range of such fittings associated with the scabbard slides. The type is characteristically pierced by a central vertical slot (through which the sword’s tang extends upward as an extension of the blade) and has a central notch at the top, into which the lower end of the grip nests. The type seems to go back to the beginnings of the sword/belt/fittings nexus (see above) and generally to have been associated with it in most regions. It probably arrived in Bactria with the rest of this equipage constellation in the second century BC and with it disappeared by around the fourth century AD.41

Countering any inclination to see the types represented in figs. 3–5 as imports are two major considerations. First, each type clearly exists in large numbers, from the East Iranian region and across Eurasia. (All of our “local” types are represented in significant numbers in the al-Sabah Collection.) Second, among a wide variety of materials of which the sword fittings (slides, quillons, and pommels) in the al-Sabah Collection are made, various types of local Afghanistan “jade-simulant” stones (as well as the local lapis lazuli) are well represented. Additionally, two quite small quillon blocks of the type of LNS 169 HS (fig. 3), of cast copper alloy, are in the collection.42 Metal seems to have been the original material for such quillons, in association with long swords.43 Indeed, one strongly suspects that the form in its most classic materializations, even in jade,44 is (like another classic and widespread quillon type, which has long arms and long langets) the natural result of forging metal around a bar inserted into a centrally opened hole and hammering out the flanking material to form the protective wings or arms. In both types the central gable ridge is the point from which the metal on each side of the guard is deformed outward; and in the case of the shape of our quillon (sometimes described as butterfly- or heart-shaped), even the upward projection of the extremities of the arms can be the result of the deformation caused by thinning out the billet. As a matter of fact, one notes certain examples of early steppe-forged quillons of “but-
terfly” form that are more basic in nature and must be regarded as formal ancestors of the canonized type here under discussion). 45

Like the scabbard slides, the quillons and pommels of the types here representing the region of ancient Bactria seem invariably to be plain, whereas in the Far East (China) they classically are decorated, often with elaborate and even high-relief motifs, from geometric designs to prowling ch’ih dragons and the like. 46 Most of the properly excavated and accessibly published, well-placed material is from East Asia (China and Korea), and this naturally has received the greatest amount of attention. But as we have seen above, the soil of vast areas has shown the enormous spread of the types, from northeast to southwest Asia and Europe. Thus the masses of undocumented finds from Afghanistan and neighboring regions should now come as no surprise to us. 47

Discs of the type seen in figs. 4a and 4b served as the main decorative element of the pommels of many—probably most—swords of the types fitted with quillons like that in fig. 3 (but again, as with slides and quillons, these were most commonly of less valuable materials). Had it been the goal to attach hilt to sword most securely, the disc would have been passed through by the upper end of the tang, the tang then being planished over or fixed by a pin above the disc; but surviving archeological evidence seems to suggest that the disc did not usually serve such a structural role, the grip being affixed to the tang by other means. It seems that both in China (where in any case the disc seems usually not to have had a central hole) and elsewhere, it was most commonly inserted into a larger disc and then topped by some other decorative element, typically of metal and frequently set with stones or glass (which covered or otherwise disguised the hole in the ring and held it down). 48

The pommel seen in fig. 5 represents an alternative to the disc type exemplified in figs. 4a and 4b. This as well could accompany quillons of the type of LNS 169 HS (fig. 3); like the latter, it has a central notch into which the grip fit to secure its integration with the sword. A central hole running vertically through the pommel allowed the passage of the upper end of the sword’s tang, and one example in the al-Sabah Collection (LNS 231 HS, unpublished) has part of the tang, which broke off the sword and remained wedged in the pommel, still in place.

MATERIAL BEARING UPON THE EXISTENCE OF AN ANCIENT JADE-CARVING INDUSTRY IN THE BACTRIAN REGION

As shown above, the al-Sabah pieces in figs. 3–5 are far from unique examples of types that originate from the areas of ancient Bactria and its neighbors (chronologically, and for the material in question, Yüeh-chih/Kuei-shang/Kushan territory). Although Trousdale wrote in 1975 that from “within the borders of the Kushan empire only two scabbard slides are known...[having been] recovered at Sirkap in the excavations conducted by Sir John Marshall,” 49 he countered the impression this passage might create in the reader’s mind by unequivocally stating (on the basis of both archeology and representations, especially in sculpture) that the scabbard slide (and attendant long iron sword, with its characteristic type of quillon and disc pommel) arrived in Bactria precisely with the Yüeh-chih/Kushana. 50 Subsequent to this publication, Trousdale himself (in “Kushan Scabbard Slide,” see n. 18) published another (jade) scabbard slide from the region, which had been purchased in the Kabul bazaar and was reported to have come (like so many of the jades in the art market) from northern Afghanistan. As also indicated above, a quite sizable number of additional ones are now known, and we intend to report on these in the planned volume on jades of the West Asian region.

Even more intriguingly, other highly individualistic and rare sorts of pieces from the period and region (in addition to those in figs. 1 and 2) can be cited, which go further to clarify that as in medieval times this part of the world was home to a center of jade carving not only previously unsuspected but sophisticated, significant, and prolific. Three examples will here suffice to indicate the breadth and variety of the store.

The first of these, published by E. V. Rveladze in “Gopatshah of Bactria,” (see n. 47), is an elongated flat plaque (6.6 x 2.2 x 0.4 cm) of uncertain function, preserved in the Museum of the Peoples of Uzbekistan. It is of rectilinear outline (with straight, parallel sides and pointed, gable-outline ends), and has the image of a couchant mythological “bull-man” or “man-bull” (Gopatshah, or guardian of the waters) engraved in intaglio into its surface on one side, and that of a Bactrian-style helmeted king on the other. The author places the origin of this object “in North-Eastern Bactria at the juncture of the Yueh-chi and Early Kushan periods,”
sometime between the first century BC (p. 294) and, possibly, the first century AD (p. 299), arguing the case in detail for the attribution, especially on the basis of numismatic evidence. He also appends a brief excursus on the other finds of early nephrite pieces in Central Asia, citing the following: an example from Uzbekistan of the first millennium BC, “probably the earliest known article fashioned from nephrite to have been found in Central Asia” (p. 304); a seal from Ferghana attributed to the Achaemenian period (p. 305); a small bowl from Kirghizia “dating from between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD” (p. 305); and the jade quillon block (cited above, being of the type of our fig. 3) as well as the jade scabbard slide excavated together with it in the Samarkand region and “dated by G. A. Pugachenkova to the 2nd–1st centuries BC” (p. 305).

The second object of the ancient Bactrian regional school of jade carving that I wish to discuss here (found in a temple deposit in the vicinity of the probable find spot of the famous “Oxus Treasure” in the British Museum) is very possibly slightly earlier than the “Gopatshah” plaque, being datable no later than the first century AD and possibly as early as the third to second century BC. It is thought to be a pommel, and takes the form of an abstract, angularly rendered head of a “wolf-dragon.” The piece is of added interest because it is inlaid with contrasting materials: the spaces between the large triangular teeth visible along the sides of the open lips and the outer circular rings around the eyes are apparently in lapis lazuli, while the eye centers (and perhaps the teeth) seem to have been in glass, now decomposed or lost. Further, the rings intermediate between the outer lapis lazuli ("lasurite") ones and the eye centers are of a white material that may perhaps be shell, as may also have been the teeth.

While the “wolf-dragon” pommel is in a style issuing from immemorial steppe traditions, our next example (in the Sir Joseph Hotung Collection and published as Chinese) seems to vastly widen the range of ancient Bactrian artistic blendings that impacted objects made of jade. This jade is in the form of a miniature mask of mythological character, which immediately recalls the likes of Central Asian cave paintings and Tang-period guardian figures. It must be admitted, however, that most of the stylistic elements of this remarkable piece can be traced back to classical art and to its variations evolved in the Indian subcontinent and the region of present-day Afghanistan; it is in the latter that the piece seems particularly at home, probably having been carved ca. the first to second century AD. The difficulty of its proper attribution stems especially from the much-cited but still insufficiently understood phenomenon of the blending of styles in the region and the extent to which Greco-Bactrian style influenced the arts of Central and East Asia as well as the Indian subcontinent for centuries after its florescence. This difficulty is aggravated by the prevailing assumptions about the places in which jade, particularly jade as fine as this, was or was not carved. Whether or not the proposed attribution is accepted, the following should be considered: overall, the closest single parallel to the piece is a marble mask found at Shahr-i Gulgula (Bamiyan, Afghanistan); now in the Institute of Fine Arts, Tashkent, it has been dated to the Roman period. In both pieces, despite their anatomically informed character, there is a similar exaggerated treatment of the cranium, eyes, and nose; especially striking and similar is the wildly enlarged, crescent-like mouth. These features, especially the treatment of the mouth, have antecedents in a marble head excavated at the Greco-Bactrian city of Ay Khanum in northern Afghanistan. In this case, the head was a fountain spout, suggesting a possible function of the jade and the just-discussed marble mask as well. In a general way, these objects all reveal relationships with Greek and Roman theatrical masks and representations of satyrs and fauns on the one hand, and on the other with representations from India, Afghanistan, and Central Asia (as well as China) ranging in date from the period of the above examples to the seventh to eighth century AD. One very individualistic feature of the jade mask is the exaggeratedly angular and linear outlining of the upper lip; comparison with a ca. third-century AD stucco “demon” head from Hadda in Afghanistan makes it difficult to posit much distance in time or space between the two. Taking everything into account, I believe that the jade mask must belong roughly to the region of ancient Bactria and to a period not later than about the third century.

FURTHER IMPORTANT ANCIENT BACTRIAN JADES AND OTHER HARDSTONES

In addition to the ancient jades originating from or attributable to Bactria and neighboring territories, there are other unequivocal indications that this region was home to a very highly developed lapidary tradition of long standing.

The manifestations of this tradition include the
appearance of extremely sophisticated faceting of semi-precious stones over a timespan from as early as the fourth century BC\textsuperscript{59} up into the Islamic middle ages.\textsuperscript{60} But for our present purposes, I should like to enumerate and briefly discuss, in roughly chronological order, some other notable objects that are probably products of the Bactrian lapidary industry in ancient times.

The first of these is a marvelous Hellenistic gray chalcedony ram’s head in the al-Sabah Collection. This has not yet appeared in a publication, but it is included\textsuperscript{61} in the traveling exhibition of the al-Sabah Collection, “Treasury of the World: Jewelled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals” (see n. 60), with the attribution, “Probably northern Afghanistan (Hellenistic Bactrian), ca. 3rd century BC.” It is introduced in the exhibition by the following label text:

Strikingly reminiscent of the well-exampled jade ram’s head-terminated Mughal-period dagger hilts and handles...this chalcedony example nevertheless finds its close stylistic parallels in Hellenistic Greek bracelet terminals. Whether and to what degree pieces such as this unique Hellenistic hardstone carving may have stimulated Mughal artists’ efforts along the same line remains an open question.

Although the piece is not illustrated or discussed in the exhibition catalogue, its inclusion (along with an extensive amount of other supplementary material) in the forthcoming large catalogue is planned. It may have formed the terminal of the handle of a flat dish (**patera**) of gold (or entirely of one piece of chalcedony?). Such dishes from Roman times, in bronze and with comparable ram’s head terminals, are numerous, and a hololithic alabaster **patera** of roughly the same date was excavated at Begram.\textsuperscript{62} But the chalcedony ram’s head finds its closest stylistic parallels in Hellenistic jewelry,\textsuperscript{63} for which reason I have dated it to the same period.

Next among the important and well-known ancient hardstones that I would attribute to the region of Bactria and to the Hellenistic period (despite its having been excavated in Xi’an, apparently in a Tang context), is a sublime banded brown-and-white agate antelope-terminating in the form of an antelope’s head. The authors of the recent *Xi’an: Legacies of Ancient Chinese Civilization* comment that the “shape of the horn and the material used to make it suggest that it was from Central Asia,”\textsuperscript{64} without offering an opinion about the date. Rhytons terminating in antelope- or goat-heads do appear in drinking scenes depicted in early medieval Central Asian paintings,\textsuperscript{65} but stylistically the Xi’an example would not fit into this period. Although its date could conceivably coincide with the period of manufacture (said to be the second century AD) of a silver drinking bowl from the Panjab on which an antelope-head rhyton is represented,\textsuperscript{66} it seems much more at home with earlier material, including the just discussed gray chalcedony ram’s head in the al-Sabah Collection. Both of the hardstone pieces exhibit a high level of anatomical awareness on the part of their artists, which may be observed in comparing, for example, the handling of the eyes and the horns of the two objects. And the best of comparisons for the rhyton’s antelope head is again in jewelry of the Hellenistic period, some carved of hardstones.\textsuperscript{67}

Also of brown-and-white banded agate, a powerful and menacing panther head featuring brilliant foil-backed eyes of rock crystal inlaid with green glass irises has been an ongoing source of puzzlement. It continues to be exhibited in the British Museum with the attribution “Mughal India, 17th century,” although Robert Skelton in his 1982 publication of it expressed misgivings: “…the Indian origin of the object is...not beyond doubt.” He further suggested that its “exhibition with other Mughal hardstones may help to resolve the uncertainty of its origin and date.”\textsuperscript{68} I have for some time felt that it must belong to roughly the context here suggested (probably late Hellenistic or early Kushan), a conviction that has increased with time.\textsuperscript{69} Its handling simply is not consonant with Mughal-era hardstones; these have a remote elegance and a spirit of amusing abstraction—partly a heritage from Islamic art—that is absent from, or rather foreign to the spirit of, this cat. He has a believable flesh-and-bone corporeality and glares balefully with glowing gemstone eyes, sending a shiver down the viewer’s spine. The practice of setting eyes with gemstone is not otherwise unknown in sculpture from Afghanistan, as shown by a beautiful bodhisattva head with garnet eyes, which is thought to be from Hadda and to date to about the second or third century AD. (The head is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.)\textsuperscript{70} Of course, the inlaying of the eyes of sculptures with gemstones (especially rock crystal) is a fairly widespread ancient practice, there being a particularly sizable number of published examples from Egypt,\textsuperscript{71} but the incorporation of two contrasting gemstones to differentiate the iris from the white of the eye, a feature of the British Museum panther, seems to be especially characteristic of the Bactrian region during the period in question.\textsuperscript{72}

Aside from the positive reasons to believe that this
piece is Bactrian, made between ca. the third century BC and the second century AD, there is a negative argument: if it is not Mughal, what else can it be? One may entertain the possibility that it is a work from Europe of, say, the sixteenth century, but a study of such material seems to indicate that this piece, with its very real seriousness, is as out of place there as in sixteenth- or seventeenth-century India. Finally, there are other reasons relating to material and technique that also point to the context we have suggested here, the details of which will have to await the forthcoming volume on jades.

The last ancient object mentioned here as a candidate for Bactrian origin is the rock crystal two-handled bowl excavated at Begram, which has been asserted to be of Alexandrian origin. For a variety of reasons, some of which cannot be discussed here, I am strongly of the opinion that this piece was cut in the East Iranian or the northwestern subcontinent region (again, I anticipate presenting the argument more fully in the planned volume on jades outside China). In the meantime, it is interesting to note the following passage by Teng Shu-p’ing, which strongly suggests that Bactria and/or neighboring regions were producing, in the period concerned, noteworthy hardstones, including rock crystals:

The Han (or Six-dynasties) period Hsi-ching tsa-chi...records that during the time of the Han emperor Wu-ti (r. 140–87 B.C.), the state of Shen-tu... (Sindhu) [i.e., northwest India, in the heartland of the later Kushan realm] sent tribute-gifts of a bridle made of interlocking rings of white jade, an agate bridle-bit and a lustrous white ‘liu-li...saddle that glowed in the dark.’...The San-fu huang-t'u...another Han work, along with the Tsin-period (A.D. 265–420) Shih-yi chi...both record that Han Wu-ti also received a tribute-gift from the state of Gandhara of a ‘jade-crystal’...bowl for holding ice... [the last italics are mine].

That the same region is recorded as the source in the Tang period for other rock crystal vessels worthy to be sent to the Chinese imperial court seems, along with other indications of the area as a lapidary center (and quite aside from the testimony regarding Badakhshan’s rock crystal mines), to establish the likelihood of a rock crystal industry in the area. If this is the case, the two-handled wine cup from Begram seems to me to be a very good candidate for what we might expect this industry to have produced during the period in question.

IMMEDIATELY PRE-ISLAMIC JADES FROM AFGHANISTAN (FIGS. 6–8)

The pieces illustrated by figs. 6–8 are taken to represent the phase between the ancient and Islamic eras, although there seems a good chance that the piece in fig. 6 is much closer in date to the six objects already discussed than to the medieval period. Its bilaterally symmetrical configuration in the form of pairs of sweeping acanthus fronds has very close parallels in classical art and can, once again, be closely compared with the ornamentation of the gold dagger from Tiliya Tepeh on which there are five lyre-shaped acanthus volutes; three of these (the ones nearest the quillon, at mid-grip, and filling the spatulate pommel) each feature the paired acanthus growing out of a turquoise-set collar, with the rest of the encircling “shank” being plain. The use of the paired acanthus fronds on the dagger is strikingly similar to that of the present jade piece. But other material suggests that the jade could instead belong to the late antique to early medieval, pre-Islamic, period in the same region.

That the identical type of buckle mechanism was on the regional scene in early medieval Islamic times is shown by a number of copper-alloy examples, including those excavated at Nishapur and others in the al-Sabah Collection. The Nishapur buckle is, like the present piece, in the simple form of a button, which is retained in a circular “female” half. Probably dating to the eleventh century, several unpublished copper-alloy buckles of the general type (in which the figure of a lion is formed when the buckle is closed) are in the al-Sabah Collection, and a piece of the same type has been published. That the button-and-slotted-circle belt type was in currency in the Mongol period is shown by two complete silver buckles with palmette outlines, which came from the Crimea and are now in the Hermitage. The system is further attested in the same period in the form of two silver button or “male” halves of buckles, each button being decorated in relief with the motif of a sun face above a lion’s back. And of course, a number of examples of the general type are known from later periods in China.

We can state with certainty that our palmette-frond buckle half was made in a major lapidary center in the region, in a workshop with outstanding experience and special equipment. The high tradition embodied in the piece cannot be doubted, given the very evident standard of capability and control; this is especially clear when we envisage the other half, with its void-centered
circle of jade, which would have fitted over the button and into the groove of our preserved half. The circularity and straight vertical sides of this button and groove speak almost as much about the necessarily sophisticated context of the piece as does its artistic form.

Prior to the appearance of the fragmentary hololithic seal-ring in fig. 7, we had considered the form it embodies to be characteristic of the early medieval (tenth-to-twelfth-century) Islamic East Iranian world. The Brahmi inscription of the piece, however, has been considered to date from as early as the fifth century AD, which would indicate that the form had a considerably longer-than-suspected life and a broader cultural context. Its derivation from hollow gold models stretching back into the Sasanian period in the region is, however, entirely consistent with such a finding. In any case, the form type of this piece certainly does not seem to survive beyond the eleventh (or perhaps the twelfth) century AD.

The jade (proper left) hand in fig. 8 surely belongs to a Buddhist milieu; indeed, one might naturally take it to be a “blessing hand” from a small Buddha or bodhisattva statuette. We know from literary accounts that in the centuries prior to the advent of Islam, several regions are recorded as sources of jade statuettes that sound as if they might have been of the sort to which this hand belonged. Teng Shu-p’ing informs us that “the Liang-shu... (History of the Liang dynasty, A.D. 502–557) records that... a jade statue had been sent to the Chinese emperor from the country of Singhala (mod-
ern Sri Lanka) during the Yi-hsi reign-period (A.D. 405-418) of the Eastern Tsin dynasty,” and further cites the “mention [in Chinese historical records] of tributary gifts of carved jade from the various peoples of these [western] regions,” including an account of “A.D. 541” concerning a “foreign carved jade Buddha sent from Khotan.” Schafer, writing of the Tang period, says that “images of divine beings were sometimes made of jade: in the Buddhist temple named ‘Exalting the Good’ [in Chang’ an]...there was a jade statue of the Buddha, one foot seven inches tall, with bodhisattvas and ‘flying sylphs’ of the same material.” Surely some such context must be imagined for our isolated hand.

Despite comments of the prominent authority Walter Spink that seem to indicate a problem with the left hand being so used, some Buddha and bodhisattva statues do offer blessings with the left hand. A quick survey of resources at hand has turned up at least three instances in Gansu, China’s gateway for Buddhist tradition (and so much else) coming from the West, and furthermore, contexts for hands like the one we are discussing are seen repeatedly in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Cambodian and Thai sculptures. In conjunction, the practices in these two important and widely separated regions suggest that it is hardly far-fetched to see our hand as having originated from such a statuette.

EARLIER MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC EXAMPLES

Bringing us full circle, the four T-configuration belt fittings in figs. 9a–9d are of the same general type as that 1982 milestone, the one from the Nishapur excavations (see the beginning of this article). The form of these fittings is one that allows for an elegant suspension of straps from the belt; these pendant straps typically have further fittings attached to them and may also carry a warrior’s “necessaries”—small pouches, etc.

This and numerous other types of Islamic jade fittings of the period, as well as related examples from China, have pairs of small holes drilled diagonally into the back (see, e.g., fig. 9b), which meet to give an internal passage for wires or threads that secure the fitting to the belt or strap.

The progression seen in figs. 9a–9d from most rectilinear and sober to most elaborate, curvilinear, and overtly “artistic” in outline may perhaps represent a chronological order of manufacture or may simply reflect different locales of production or individual workshop styles. In any case, it is unlikely that a great span of time is represented by the “progression,” it being probable that the type did not last much more than a couple of centuries.

Without drawing specific conclusions, it is worth remarking that these four fittings exhibit a remarkable consistency in length and height: lengths of 4.2, 4.0, 4.0, and 4.0 cm; heights of 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 cm. This is particularly remarkable given the decided variation in their profiles as well as in their method of attachment to the belt. For the record, the piece excavated at Nishapur was generally smaller in all dimensions: 3.7 x 3.2 x 0.6 cm.

The al-Sabah Collection preserves an eleventh- or twelfth-century East Iranian T-shaped copper-alloy positive matrix for forming fittings of silver and/or gold, representing what must be the later end of the popularity of the general type and showing its currency in other media.

In fact, it is likely that the jade fittings of this form are modeled on metal prototypes in the first instance. While we imagine sumptuous gold belts in which such pieces would have been set with large central cabochon-cut stones (e.g., spinel, turquoise, or white jade), we know relief-cast gilded silver and copper-alloy examples with high hemispherical bosses, including one from a tenth-century northern Chinese context; the al-Sabah Collection preserves very similar pieces in a belt set that may be of Islamic Central Asian origin.

ADDENDUM: “ARCHEOLOGY” IN THE MARKET

As long ago as 1978, during a study trip to Afghanistan, I found that the dealers in the Kabul bazaar often seemed to have specific knowledge about the find places of objects and no reluctance to share this information. They also showed no tendency to fabricate such background nor to cite the names of famous places in the trade, such as Ghazna or Nishapur. In the early 1990s, as I realized that many archeological art objects were coming from Afghanistan, it seemed to me that the correct course of action was to make the best of a bad situation by trying to gain as much information as possible about the place of origin of objects that passed our purview.

Pursuant to this goal, we have over the years collected from a great many owners hundreds of putative origins for a wide variety of mostly Islamic objects, systematically soliciting, recording, and following up such reported origins. With this sizable body of documentation, it becomes clear that there is a rather high degree...
of internal consistency and good reason to give weight to most of these assertions. It should go without saying that we have always tried, in collecting and assessing this material, to intelligently and scientifically “consider the source,” cross-checking what we learn with other collected intelligence or any other knowledge we may already have, and so forth.

There has been a tendency in recent decades on the part of the scholarly and museum worlds to over-compensate by distrusting all assertions of origin but those irrefutably documented. But to discount anything said about origins or find spots by a vendor (or other person with reason to know) is to cut oneself off from this body of “documentation” that has, I believe, considerable weight in a large number of cases, including those here reported.

Therefore, since to do otherwise would constitute the withholding of potentially significant information—would be, in the end, unscientific—I herein append a list of the objects appearing in my illustrations, with the information that we have on the reported origins of each. Despite the severely reduced selection presented, the list will surely still make a powerful circumstantial case for the general picture of the East Iranian world as a major and prolific center of jade carving in the period before the advent of the Timurids. Obviously such a listing cannot be taken as fully representative statistically, not only because of the small sam-

Figs. 9a–9d. Four T-shaped belt fittings. a. (upper left): mottled gray jade, of low translucency (length 4.2 cm; height 3.6 cm; thickness 0.9 cm); b. (upper right): translucent mottled gray jade (length 4.0 cm; height 3.5 cm; thickness 1.2 cm); c. (lower left): translucent pale green jade simulant (length 4.0 cm; height 3.7 cm; thickness 0.8 cm); d. (lower right): translucent light green jade with russet areas (length 4.0 cm; height 3.4 cm; thickness 1.1 cm). All East Iranian world, ca. ninth–eleventh century AD (perhaps in the chronological order here listed). All al-Sabah Collection (LNS 379 HS, LNS 2680 J, LNS 1843 J, and LNS 609 J, respectively). LNS 609 J published in Keene, “Pre-Timurid Islamic Jades,” fig. 2. (Photo: courtesy of al-Sabah Collection)
ple presented, but also because of a myriad of factors that might affect it, including patterns of availability, preferences of sources, etc. Perhaps the most indicative aspect is that, within a sampling that overwhelmingly has an Afghanistan connection, certain localities recur with such regularity.

**LIST OF OBJECTS APPEARING IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS, WITH PUTATIVE ORIGINS OF EACH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig. Inv. No.</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Fig. Inv. No.</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LNS 380 HS</td>
<td>“Afghanistan”</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LNS 169 HS</td>
<td>“maybe Ghazna”</td>
<td>4a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>LNS 2710 J</td>
<td>“Herat”</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LNS 2493 J</td>
<td>“Balkh”</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LNS 562 HS</td>
<td>“Afghanistan”</td>
<td>9a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>LNS 2680 J</td>
<td>“Herat or Balkh”</td>
<td>9c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d</td>
<td>LNS 609 J</td>
<td>“Peshawar market”</td>
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Examination of our table shows that, of a total of thirteen jades depicted in our nine figures (figs. 2 and 9c are in fact jade simulants), ten have putative origins in Afghanistan, with the remaining three reported to be from the Peshawar market. This is a radically truncated selection, but a generally similar pattern holds for the widest possible representation of pre-Timurid Islamic jades in the al-Sabah Collection. This is likely consistent with an overall picture of jade use in the pre-fifteenth century Islamic world, use that we see to be generally decreasing as one moves westward.

It should be noted here, in connection with the above, that pieces said to be from the “Peshawar market” are overwhelmingly likely to be from Afghanistan. This allowance is applied on the basis of consistent reports from different sources, as well as the apparently low level of clandestine excavations in Pakistan.

Of our jades (and the simulants) that are reported to be from Afghanistan, three are said to be from Balkh, one from Herat or Balkh, two from Herat, and either two or one from Ghazna. Of those with less precise pedigrees, Afghanistan accounts for two, and (as indicated above) the Peshawar market for three. It should perhaps be stressed that no piece is left out of the putative origins detailed above.

Given the severely restricted range of pre-Timurid jades presented here (especially of those representing the Islamic epoch), it is desirable to suggest the categories of jade objects that are not encountered here (but nevertheless planned for our volume on jades). All the following are represented in the al-Sabah Collection, typically in multiples, belonging to different periods and incorporating different styles, and presenting a panoply of varieties, types, and subtypes. In addition to belt fittings (one type of which is represented by those in figs. 9a–9d), we may mention: strap-end fittings (numerous pieces in jade, as well as analogous silver and gold examples); hololithics buckles (in jade as well as agate, carnelian, rock crystal, and lapis lazuli); scabbard slides; sword pommels and other weapon fittings; other types of strap and harness fittings; other fittings of uncertain context (including larger pieces that appear to belong to architectural and/or furniture settings); a variety of functional items of undetermined purpose; chess and other gaming pieces; vessels (bowls, cups, etc.); pendants of various sorts; beads of different types; hololithic finger rings; seal-stones (for setting in finger rings, etc.); stamp seals; and small animal figurines, including elephants (of which there is also an example in white glass that imitates jade), two probable civets, pigs, rodents, and birds.

**Al-Sabah Collection**

**Kuwait**

**NOTES**

*Author’s note of acknowledgment:* As ever, I owe more gratitude than I can express to Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who for so many years has patiently patronized my efforts to develop appropriate presentations for the often challenging objects that he continues knowledgeably and excitedly to seek out.

Again as usual, my colleague at the al-Sabah Collection, Salam Kaoukji, has been integral to the development of my manuscript, helping in ways too numerous and too multifarious even to suggest. Her judgment in matters aesthetic, editorial, and art-historical have clarified issues and expression, tempered my excesses, and fed importantly into the accuracy, fullness, and soundness of this effort.

Additionally, I would like to name without further comment a number of individuals who have aided me in a variety of ways with matters directly leading to the result I have submitted. Each of them knows how he or she has helped, and each has my sincere gratitude. Begging forgiveness for any oversights, I list: Adel Adamova, Karl Baipakov, Anna Ballian, Manijeh Bayani, Sophie Budden, Sheila Canby, Stefano Carboni, Sara Clemence, Dominique Collon, Anna Contadini, Giovanni Curatola, Stanislaw J. Czuma, Massumeh Farhad, Christa Fischer, Kjeld von Folsach, Ian Freestone, V. D. Goryacheva, Ernst Grube, Frances Halahan, Klaus-Peter Haase, Tohfa


4. Ibid.


Robert Skelton, “Islamic and Mughal Jades,” in Jade, ed. R. Keverne (London: Anness Publishing, 1991), p. 369, n. 15, credits Pinder-Wilson with drawing his and other scholars’ attention to the passage in question from al-Biruni’s treatise on gemstones (see n. 6, below). For the record, the passages by Pinder-Wilson are as follows: “...it is al-Biruni who provides us with the most reliable information about jade. According to him, the Turks of the steppes invested jade with magical properties. It was an amulet which served as a powerful protection against attack by robbers. It could ward off thunder and lightning; and the tribal magicians used it to produce rain. He mentions, too, that the Turks carved from it ornaments for belts and saddles.” (“Rock Crystal and Jade,” p. 122); and “Al-Biruni states that jade is obtained from two riverbeds in the district of Khotan. From one of these comes a pure white jade and, from the other, jade of various colours ranging from grey to black. Known as the ‘victory stone,’ jade was used by the Turks to decorate their swords, saddles, and belts in the belief that its presence would aid in achieving victory over their opponents. Jade was also used for its curative properties in treating stomach disorders and eye diseases. Finally, jade was thought to ward off lightning, a claim which Al-Biruni was able to support by his own experiment. In more recent times, travellers in Iran reported that pieces of jade suspended on the outside of castle turrets caused thunderbolts to fall far distant.” (“Jades from the Islamic World,” p. 36).

6. Abù al-Rayhàn Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Birûnî, Kitâb al-jawâhîr fi ma‘rifat al-jawâhîr, ed. F. Krenkow (Hyderabad [Deccan], 1936, repr. Beirut, 1404/1984). Translation by Salam Kaoukji, Layla Musawi, and Manuel Keene, from al-Birûnî, Kitâb al-Jawâhîr (1984), p. 198. Note that one here must stress the reading “finger rings and knife handles,” and not “seals and medall,” as Souren Melikian-Chirvani would have it (A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, “Precious and Semi-Precious Stones in Iranian Culture,” vol. 1: Early Iranian Jade,” Bulletin of the Asia Institute, New Series, 11[1997, publ. year 2000]: 131). In actuality, al-Biruni’s phraseology, al-khawâHitîm wa nussûbi ’sakâkînî, can refer only to finger rings (including seal-rings, from which root meaning the term is derived) and knife handles; and we know in amplitude that these are two of the most typical uses of jade in the Islamic world, early and late. Finally, T. Lentz and G. Lovory, Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century (Los Angeles and Washington, DC, 1989), p. 221 include without emphasis a translation of this particular passage that agrees with our translation in its essentials, differing only slightly in choice of words.

7. “Pre-Túmrid Islamic Jades,” April 22, 1998. This lecture was subsequently delivered in the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah lecture series (in Kuwait, an outreach activity of the al-Sabah Collection) on November 30, 1998; and a summary version, with thirteen color illustrations, was published in the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah newsletter for 2001: see “Bibliographical note,” above, with respect to this publication.


11. Ibid., caption to fig. 5–7, p. 100. Incidentally, those susceptible of being misled in the matter should ignore the comments of both Andrews and Ogden with respect to the otherwise well-established information on the sources of jade. Critical passages of both (Andrews, Egyptian Jewellery, p. 49; Ogden, Jewellery of the Ancient World, p. 100) represent misunderstandings of Lucas’s (Egyptian Materials, pp. 452–53) careful treatment of this matter.


15. According to Dominique Collon (whose kind efforts I wish to
specially acknowledge here), the British Museum preserves a second-millennium BC Mesopotamian jade seal (inv. no. ANE 89175 [piece cited by Melikian-Chirvani, “Early Iranian Jade,” p. 125 and n. 12]), which she described in her letter to me as “nephrite...First Kassite style...14th century BC.” Dr. Collon has further confirmed that the material of this seal was analyzed in the Department of Scientific Research of the British Museum. It was she as well who informed me that a drawing and a photographic reproduction of the seal’s impression are published in D. M. Matthews, *Principles of Composition in Near Eastern Glyptics of the Latter Second Millennium BC*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, Series Archaeologica (Freiburg: Schweitz und Goettingen, 1978), pp. 114 and 144.


24. See *Monuments of Culture and Art of Kirghizia: Antiquity and Middle Ages* (in Russian), exh. cat. (Leningrad, 1983), nos. 260 and 261a, respectively. The al-Sabah Collection includes several pieces of the earring-pendant type, to be represented in the planned volume on jades.


27. That more parts of the corpus can turn up unexpectedly, previously unrecognized even in distinguished public collections, is shown by my experience of seeing two medieval eastern Islamic jades when, in November 2001, through the courtesy of the curators Anna Ballian and Mina Moraitou, I was taken to the storerooms of the Benaki Collection in Athens. The first (inv. 6128, no. 1) is of the Ilkhanid period and is closely similar to two pieces in the al-Sabah Collection (LNS 1966 J b and 2113 J), to be published in the upcoming jades volume). The second (inv. 6128, no. 2) is particularly interesting: a medieval Islamic jade fitting in the form of a highly stylized elephant, it constitutes for me a thus-far unique example. Incidentally, the piece, which probably dates to the thirteenth century, would be right-side-up for the wearer (but not others) if slid onto the belt with the suspension loop downward; alternatively, it may have been affixed to a sword scabbard with its loop upward to receive the suspension strap coming from another fitting on the belt. It is decorated with an arabesque design in deeply cut lines, which probably were inlaid with gold, although none was visible to me when examining the piece.

28. See especially Manuel Keene, “The Lapidary Arts in Islam: An Underappreciated Tradition,” in *Expedition* 24, 1 (Fall 1981), passim. On the status of the region as a lapidary center in ancient times, see following sections of this paper, including n. 59.

29. We have discussed above the signet ring of Tutankhamun (third quarter of the fourteenth century BC), as well as other reports of Egyptian objects made of jade.


31. Sarianidi, *Tillya-tepe*, cat. nos. 4.8 and 4.34, especially color pls. 159, p. 215, and 161, pp. 218–19 (for cat. 4.8); and pl. 98, p. 155 (for cat. 4.34). Note that the caption for pl. 98 is misleading, suggesting that the plaque of interest to us for the sake of the dragon is cat. no. 4.4 rather than 4.34.

32. Sarianidi, *Tillya-tepe*, p. 42. The reader should be aware that the publication cited here and in nn. 30–31 above is one of two 1985 editions of this work, the other published solely in Leningrad. The wording varies between the two editions, such that, e.g., the quotation of the passage about the Bactrian dragon type may appear inaccurate to anyone consulting the Leningrad edition.


34. See Adam T. Kessler, *Empires Beyond the Great Wall: The Heritage of Genghis Khan* (Los Angeles: Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 1993), fig. 35, p. 62, where the pierced-work jade earring plaque on the right features a dragon closely related to that of Tiliya Tepeh.

35. No properly scientific determination of the material of the roundel has been carried out, but both its appearance (especially the high translucency) and its softness (well below the hardness of jade) mark it as a simulant. It is quite possibly the material, known locally as “Shah Maqsud” stone, that is exploited socially the high translucency) and its softness (well below the hardness of jade) mark it as a simulant. It is quite possibly the material, known locally as “Shah Maqsud” stone, that is exploited particularly to the dragon head’s being plaques on the right features a dragon closely related to that of Tiliya Tepeh.

36. One very early example is a turquoise-inlaid gold roundel with its loop upward to receive the suspension strap coming from another fitting on the belt. It is decorated with an arabesque design in deeply cut lines, which probably were inlaid with gold, although none was visible to me when examining the piece.
ern Mongolia, preserved in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. In this Hunic piece, dated to the first century AD (see Vladimir N. Basilov, ed., Nomads of Eurasia [Los Angeles: Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 1989], illustration on p. 52), the treatment of the face and the horns is strongly reminiscent of our roundel. Examples from Afghanistan include two gold elephant-head “spouts of a now lost glass vessel” from Bagram of the same period to which we attribute the jadesimulant roundel (see Mortimer Rice and Rowland, Kabul Museum, ill. 79, and Rowland's comments in the notes regarding the probable “non-Indian origin” of the pieces).

37. See Sarianidi, Tillya-tepe, no. 4.9, and especially color pls. 164–65 (pp. 222–23) and text on pp. 34–44. There is also in the al-Sabah Collection a heavy gold plaque depicting just such a moulene, set with turquoise; the face is treated in a way highly comparable to that of the jade-simulant roundel. Technically and artistically it is very closely related to a sizable number of the pieces from Tillya Tepe and, especially in the handling of the “folded” body, reveals its affinities with Eurasian “steppe art.”

38. Sarianidi, Tillya-tepe, cat. nos. 4.8 and 4.9—see color pls. 159–63, 166.

39. See Trousdale, Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, and “Kushan Scabbard Slide,” both passim. It should be noted here that Trousdale’s monumental, densely laden, and enormously useful Long Sword and Scabbard Slide is essential for anyone who would understand the movement of peoples and sword types, and the fittings and methods of suspension of the latter. We should mention here that several examples of sword slides in jade, as well as others in Afghani lapis lazuli and local Afghani jadesimulant stones, all with putative origins in Afghanistan, are in the al-Sabah Collection, and their publication is planned.

40. Trousdale, Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, p. 2.

41. See Trousdale, especially “Kushan Scabbard Slide,” p. 28 (specifically about the scabbard slide).

42. Two examples of copper-alloy quillons of the type of LNS 169 HS are also published by Trousdale (Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, fig. 37).

43. See Trousdale, Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, p. 114.

44. See, e.g., S. Howard Hansford, Chinese Carved Jades (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), pl. 53B; and Jessica Rawson, Chinese Jade from the Neolithic to the Qing (London: British Museum, 1995), no. 217.

45. See, in Grigore Arbore Popescu, Chiara Silvi Antonini, and Karl Baipakov, eds., L’uomo d’oro: La cultura delle steppe del Kazakistan dall’età del bronzo alle grandi migrazioni, exh. cat. (Milan: Electa, 1998), no. 387, p. 201, a dagger all of iron (including the downswept, butterfly-like forged guard), from “Pristan’ Baty, kurgan 6,” dated to the fifth to fourth century BC; and ibid., no. 331, p. 187, a dagger and scabbard ornamented with gold, with a forged iron quillon block of “fat” proportions, which is simpler (but unmistakably of the generic type), from “Kurgan Issyk, comprensorio del Semire‘e,” of the same date. The general approach is seen with special clarity in the case of a long dagger from the Varna district in present-day Bulgaria (dated to the seventh century BC), the iron quillon block in question exhibiting pronounced forging marks and having a profile roughly equivalent to the type represented by LNS 169 HS, but vertically flipped (see Ivan Marazov, ed., Ancient Gold: The Wealth of the Thracians, Treasures from the Republic of Bulgaria [New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1997], nos. 154–55).

46. Indeed, according to Trousdale (Long Sword and Scabbard Slide), “all known scabbard slides from central and western Asia and Europe...are unornamented” (p. 109). The following are representative examples of decorated Chinese quillons of the type, and may suffice to convey the situation (for brevity I adopt Trousdale’s “class” designations of decoration): “geometric class,” represented in S. Howard Hansford, Jade, Essence of Hills and Streams: The Von Oertzen Collection of Chinese and Indian Jades (Cape Town, Johannesburg, and London: Purnell and Sons, 1969), cat. B51; in John Ayers and Jessica M. Rawson, Chinese Jades throughout the Ages, exh. cat. (London: Oriental Ceramic Society, 1975), no. 159; and in Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 21:7; and “hydra class,” in Ayers and Rawson, Chinese Jade, no. 158 (both sides illustrated, albeit in different places in the volume).

47. From Uzbekistan (ancient Sogdia), for instance, comes the recently published example of a dagger with jade quillon block like LNS 169 HS rusted in place, excavated in a tomb that also contained a jade scabbard slide (see G. A. Pugachenkova, E. V. Roveladze, and Kyzno Kato, eds., Antiquities of Southern Uzbekistan [Tashkent and Tokyo: The Ministry of Culture of Uzbek SSR and Soka University Press, 1991], cat. nos. 251 and 253 respectively, attributed to the “1st–3rd centuries”; this find is cited in E. V. Roveladze, “Gopatshah of Bactria [a Nephrite Plane with Depictions of a Bactrian Ruler and a Bull-Man],” Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia 4, 4 (Dec. 1997): 305.

48. In this connection, note Trousdale (Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, p. 111), writing about a sword and its fittings found and recorded on the lower Volga in the nineteenth century: “The wooden grip into which the tang was inserted was ornamented at its upper end with a chalcedony disk pommel secured to the grip by a copper nail, the head of which was adorned with a small piece of violet-colored glass paste.... The tomb belonged to the late Sarmatian period, that is, third to fourth century.” There were as well (in China at least) iron swords with long narrow tangs that could have served to peg or pins the pommel to the end of the tang (see Trousdale, Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, p. 54, bottom, and fig. 36b). Chinese examples of decorated disc pommels, for comparison with the non-Chinese plain ones, include the following: “geometric class,” represented in Hansford, The Von Oertzen Collection, cat. B41; “geometric class” with a central openwork griffin, in Ayers and Rawson, Chinese Jade, no. 157; “combination grain and geometric class,” in Hansford, The Von Oertzen Collection, cat. B43 and C13; Ayers and Rawson, Chinese Jade, no. 156; and Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, nos. 21:3 and 21:4; “geometric class” with central rosette, in Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 21:5; “hydra class,” in Hansford, The Von Oertzen Collection, cat. B40; and Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 21:6.

49. Trousdale, Long Sword and Scabbard Slide, p. 71.

50. Ibid., especially pp. 68–71.

51. For illustrations, see Roveladze, “Gopatshah of Bactria,” figs. 1–3.

century BC, but that contained objects dating from the fifth century BC to the first century AD. The piece was again published, with better illustration, in Oeux: Tesori dell’Asia Centrale, exh. cat. (Rome: Edizioni De Luca, 1993), where the dating is given as “II secolo a.C.”

53. Litvinskiy and Pichikiyan, “Temple of the Oxus,” p. 163, offer only “teeth inlaid in paste, and spectacle-eyes,” whereas the catalogue Oeux, pp. 34–35, describes both the teeth and the eyes as “con incrostazioni di lusurite.” One can see in the catalogue illustration that the centers of the eyes contain decomposed material, and the spaces between the lapis lazuli teeth seem extremely likely to have been filled with a contrasting material, now lost, as are many of the lapis lazuli pieces.

54. For a gold piece of ca. 600 BC that shares aspects of this jade pommel, see Het Rijk der Scythen, cat. of an exh. at De Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, and the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1993 (Zwolle: Uitgeverij Waanders, 1993), cat. no. 3 (Hermitage inv. no. Ku 1909 1/73); and for a steppe-art style jade plaque sharing significant elements with the pommel (including the exaggerated round eye and the penchant for displaying large pointed teeth bared along the jaw), see Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, cat. 232:2 (also published by Angus Forsth, “Post-Neolithic to Han Chinese Jades,” in Keverner, Jade, fig. 26, p. 104). We cite a few more examples in various media of steppelands art in which such “toothy side views” are given, to give a sense of their antiquity and prevalence in this tradition: Véronique Schulz, Les Systèmes et les mondes des steppes, VIIe siècle avant J.-C.–Ier siècle après J.-C. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1994), fig. 189, a bronze harness plaque in the form of a rolled-up panther, “VIIIe–VIIe siècle [BC]” (also seen in detail, p. 18, and on front of dust cover); Schulz, Les Systèmes, fig. 8, pp. 20–21, a gold plaque in the form of a panther, “VIIe siècle [BC]”; Jenny F. So and Emma Banker, Traders and Raiders on China’s Northern Frontier (Washington, DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1995), cat. no. 28, a “tinned” bronze plaque, “Northwest China, 5th century B.C.”; cat. fig. 30.2, p. 116, a bronze “tiger yoke ornament...5th century B.C.”; cat. no. 50, a bronze belt plaque, “Northwest China, 4th century B.C.”; Schulz, Les Systèmes, fig. 204, a wooden bridle fitting with a stone head and a raptor, “IV–IIIe siècle [BC].”

55. Specifically “Tang dynasty or later”: see Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 28:3.


59. The ancient achievement in this regard is extensively represented in the material from the Taxila excavations (now in the Taxila Museum), for which see especially Horace C. Beck, The Beads from Taxila, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India 65 (Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1941; repr. Delhi: Swati Publications, 1991), to which the citations in this note refer unless otherwise specified. (Curiously, this author does not use the classic mathematical terms for the various regular and semi-regular polyhedra encountered.) From this publication, one may here single out several beads in the form of the icosahedron (one of the “Platonic” solids) and the quasi-icosahedron (these variously of rock crystal, carnelian, agate, and jasper, and dated by Sir John Marshall between the third century BC and the first century AD—see pls. III.28, IV.36, V.19, and VI.37); a bead in the form of the (small) rhombicuboctahedron (one of the “Archimedean” solids)—this of green jasper (but with an exact mate of pale carnelian in the al-Sabah Collection), dated by Marshall to the first century BC—see pl. VI.40; a bead in the form of a cuboctahedron (one of the “Archimedean” solids), but constituting a unique instance in which the faces have been broken up by deep grooves in such a way as to create the net of the rhombic dodecahedron (the piece reported by Beck as “green glass,” but taken by the present author, on seeing it in the Taxila Museum, as green jasper), dated by Marshall to the third century BC—see pl. IX.11; and several beads in the form of complexity and regularly faceted “barrels” (including garnet, agate, chalcedony, and carnelian), dated by Marshall between the third century BC and the first century AD (excluding an instance in which both the fourth century BC and the first century AD are given for one and the same bead)—see pls. II.41–II.43 and VI.30. The continuing predilection for sophisticated faceting in this milieu is attested as well by representations in sculpture, one particularly remarkable monument of which will have to suffice here. A Gandhara bodhisattva figure in the Peshawar Museum, of “circa second half of second or third century AD” (see Caroly Lyn Woodford Schmidt, “The Sacred and the Secular: Jewelry in Buddhist Sculpture in the Northern Kushan Region,” in The Jewels of India, ed. Susan Stronge [Bombay: Marg Publications, 1995], fig. 12) wears strands of beads that are not simply treated as faceted but that, when studied in detail, reveal themselves to be both perfectly believable and truly remarkable. The most significant individual bead (the upper one of the strand that comes from over the left shoulder and runs under the animal heads of the large chain necklace) is in the form of the great rhombicuboctahedron (or truncated cuboctahedron, an “Archimedean” solid). To my knowledge, no other artifact of this form has been recorded. And finally, architectural forms of the region in pre-Islamic times also exhibit a fascination with polyhedral structures, as seen in the rock-cut “caves” of Bamiyan (seventh–ninth centuries AD): see Debora Klimburg-Salter, “The Kingdom of Bamiyan: Buddhist Art and Culture of the Hindu Kush” (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, and Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1989), figs. 71, 93, 94, and 96. Most definitively presented in Keene, “Lapidary Arts,” passim. See also Jenkins and Keene, Islamic Jewelry, especially nos. 4a–c, 8a–d, 11, 20b and c; and Manuel Keene and Marilyn Jenkins, “Qawwar. ii. Jewelry, Jewelry,” The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Ed., vol. 7 (Leiden 2004, orig. publ. 1981, 1982), p. 254 and fig. 14. Actually, one sees in the region a continuing awareness and use of such sophisticated polyhedral forms through the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, as exemplified by the following examples: from sixteenth-century India, carving on a tomb in Bidar, published in G. Yazdani, Bidar: Its History and Monuments (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), pl. CXI; from seventeenth-century India, the yellow sapphire of Shah Jahan, represented in a miniature in the Freer Gallery of Art, reproduced in, e.g., Linda York Leach, Moghal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library (London:
Scorpion Cavendish Ltd., 1995), vol. 1, no. 3.67, p. 456; from seventeenth-century India, three of the rock crystal mounts forming the grip of a luxurious ankush, or elephant-goad, in Manuel Keene (with Salam Kaoukji), Treasury of the World: Jewelled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals, exh. cat. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), no. 5.7; and from eighteenth-century Iran, an enameled pendant in the al-Sabah Collection, included as a supplementary piece in the al-Sabah Collection’s currently travelling exhibition “Treasury of the World: Jewelled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals” (Section 11, “Gemstone Forms,” S11.48, inv. no. LNS 2233 J).

61. See n. 60, above. The piece is part of the supplementary material to Section 8, “Three-dimensional Expressions” (S8.1, inv. no. LNS 331 HS).

62. See Mortimer Rice and Rowland, Kabul Museum, ill. 78.

63. See, in descending order of closeness to the chalcedony ram’s head: Reynold Higgins, Greek and Roman Jewellery, 2nd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), pl. 51A: the gold repoussé-worked terminals (especially the left one) on an apparently unique “early Hellenistic” bracelet of rock crystal, “from near Salonica, late fourth century BC”; Herbert Hoffman and Patricia F. Davidson, Greek Gold: Jewelry from the Age of Alexander (Brooklyn, NY: The Brooklyn Museum, 1965), no. 58, “said to have been found at Pella in Macedonia/Later fourth century B.C.”; and Higgins, Greek and Roman Jewellery, pl. 30 A, “from Curium, Cyprus, fifth century BC.”

64. Ma Yue, Yan Zhongyi, Zhang Xizhu, and Liu Jingchuan, eds. (Eng. text ed. Wang Xinzheng), Xi’an: Legacies of Ancient Chinese Civilization (Beijing: Morning Glory Glory, 1992), p. 184. The rhyton has been published elsewhere; this source is cited for its relevance and quality of reproduction.


66. Reproduced in Elizabeth Errington and Joe Cribb, eds., The Crossroads of Asia: Transformation in Image and Symbol in the Art of Ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan, cat. of an exh. at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Oct.–Dec. 1992 (Cambridge, England: The Ancient India and Iran Trust, 1992), no. 101, a silver bowl of the “2nd century AD,” the central roundel consisting of a repoussé-worked drinking scene encircled by grapevines with bunches of grapes. This is reported to have been found in the Panjab and is clearly Indian in style. In the man who holds a wineskin in his left hand and drinks from an antelope-headed rhyton held in his right.

67. For examples carved in carnelian as necklace terminals, see Hoffman and Davidson, Greek Gold, no. 48; other good examples of such antelopes similarly handled by artists include nos. 53 and 57. (Hoffman dates none of the comparable examples outside the fourth to third century BC.) My attribution of the Xi’an agate rhyton to the Hellenistic period was reached independently, before I became aware of Parlasca’s publication (K. Parlasca, “Ein hellenistisches Achat-Rhyton in China,” Antiquity Asia 37 [1973]), where the same attribution of period if not of region had been proposed.


69. My familiarity with and focus on this object have been greatly aided by kind permission of British Museum curators Sheila Canby and Venetia Porter, and my work has been much enabled by facilities arranged for and studies carried out by Susan La Niece and Ian Freestone of the Department of Scientific Research of the same institution.

70. See Martin Lerner and Steve Kossak, The Arts of South and Southeast Asia (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), fig. 6, p. 22.

71. On the matter of ancient inlaid eyes, see Lucas, Egyptian Materials, chap. 7: “Inlaid Eyes” (pp. 120 ff.) and material there cited.

72. This is done with turquoise and carnelian in the material from Tillya Tepeh: see Sarianidi, Tillya-tepe, cat. nos. 2.4 (color pls. 105, 107) and 4.1 (color pl. 124). Incidentally, one may, despite differences of scale, material, etc., profitably compare, for proportions and handling, the agate feline head in the British Museum with the lions of the wonderful belt from Tillya Tepeh (Sarianidi, Tillya-tepe, cat. no. 4.2, color pls. on pp. 151–54).

73. This has generally been thrown in with certain of the glasses found at Begram, and was indeed taken to be glass: see J. Hackin et al., Mémoires de la délégation archéologique française en Afghani stan 11: Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bérgam (Paris, 1954), no. 121, figs. 270–73—the first publication of the object, and its most extensive illustration—and Madeleine Hallade, review article, “J. Hackin, Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bérgam (ancienne Kâpîşî) (1939–1940),” Arts Asiatiques 2, 3 (1956), caption to ill., p. 237. Rowland (in Mortimer Rice and Rowland, Kabul Museum, p. 17) describes it as “engraved crystal,” and otherwise of “crystalline fabric,” but his discussion still centers on glasses, and he still considers it as a “little masterpiece of Alexandrian workmanship.”

74. Teng Shu-p’ing, Hindustan Jade, p. 75.

75. For accounts of rock crystal and other hardstone objects sent from this area to the Tang court as royal gifts, see Edward H. Schafer, The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T’ang Exotics (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), passim, and see especially p. 227: “This quality [perfect clarity], along with unusually fine workmanship, will have enabled by facilities arranged for and studies carried out by Susan La Niece and Ian Freestone of the Department of Scientific Research of the same institution.”

76. My familiarity with and focus on this object have been greatly aided by kind permission of British Museum curators Sheila Canby and Venetia Porter, and my work has been much enabled by facilities arranged for and studies carried out by Susan La Niece and Ian Freestone of the Department of Scientific Research of the same institution.
76. The availability of raw material in the region is attested by two medieval Islamic authors familiar with this part of the eastern Iranian world. See Yaqút al-Rûmî (Shihab al-Dîn Abî 'Abd Allâh Yaqút b. 'Abd Allâh al-Rûmî), Mu'jam al-buldân (Beirut: Dâr Şadîr, 1935/1977), p. 360: according to this author's early-thirteenth-century testimony, the rock crystal of Badakhshan was of "great purity." This source of the stone is also mentioned by al-Birûnî in the 1040s (Kitâb al-jawâhir, p. 184); (he indicated that the material was plentiful in the Wákhan Valley-Badakhshan region, but said that it was "not exported." Exactly what we are to make of the latter comment is uncertain.

77. See Sarianidi, Tîlîyo-tepe, color pl. 158, p. 214 (cat. no. 4.8).

78. Notably, wooden architectural members documented in the Neolithic to Qing dynasty, 18th century AD. This piece works in exactly slightly different. See, e.g., Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 25.31, attributed to the "Qing dynasty, 18th century AD." This piece works in exactly the same manner as the previously described examples from the medieval Iranian world, the completed "image" here being, rather than a single animal, a rectangular plaque carved in relief with a composition featuring a pair of dragons.


81. See The Treasures of the Golden Horde (in Tatar, Russian, and English), cat. of an exh. organized by the Hermitage and the State Historical Museum (St. Petersburg: Slavia, 2000), cat. nos. 302 and 303—and note that in the color plate on p. 79, there is a mixing of the halves of the two buckles, which are slightly different.

82. Golden Horde, cat. nos. 134 and 135.

83. See, e.g., Rawson, Neolithic to Qing, no. 25.31, attributed to the "Qing dynasty, 18th century AD." This piece works in exactly the same manner as the previously described examples from the medieval Iranian world, the completed "image" here being, rather than a single animal, a rectangular plaque carved in relief with a composition featuring a pair of dragons.

84. See Jenkins and Keene, Islamic Jewelry, cat. no. 1b, of silver set with carnelian, excavated at Nishapur. A beautiful hololithic jade example of this form, dating to the tenth or eleventh century, is in the al-Sabah Collection and was illustrated in color in Keene, Islamic Jewelry, cat. no. 12. For in situ views, drawings, etc., of the wall painting, see Charles K. Wilkinson, Nishapur: Some Early Islamic Buildings and Their Decoration (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), figs. 2.38–2.41.

85. The inscription has kindly been read, interpreted, and dated by Prof. Richard Salomon of the University of Washington, through the good offices of Ralph Pinder-Wilson, to both of whom I owe profound thanks. According to a letter from Prof. Salomon, his reading revealed that this inscription contains a personal name, the first two syllables of which are sîn pu-‘ and the last is ‘aluh; the two in the middle are unclear. Although Prof. Salomon thought the inscription might date to "the fifth century AD or thereabouts," I remain inclined to maintain that it should be somewhat later, on the basis of the form of the ring.

86. Teng Shu-p'ing, Hindustan Jade, pp. 75–77.


88. Walter M. Spink, "Flaws in Buddhist Iconology," in Robert Skelton, Andrew Topsfield, Susan Stronge, and Rosemary Crill, eds., Facets of Indian Art (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986), p. 5: "The omission of the 'standard' varada mudra in certain other standing images at the site (Ajanta) can also be explained on grounds of expediency, involving considerations of composition rather than canonical controls. In a unique instance in Cave Upper 6's shrine...it seems clear that, in the figure at the right, the varada mudra was omitted because the very wide-shouldered adjacent Buddha, which had been started first, usurped too much room. Thus a rather warped abhaya gesture was used instead, while the proper left hand (rather than the right) was lowered in a hand position—it hardly should be called a mudra—which is not found anywhere else at the site. This hand position mirrors the expected varada gesture, but even the Buddha could hardly offer blessings to us with a left hand; instead, it is turned palm-inward and holds (unnecessarily) a portion of the garment." (The latter italics are mine.)

89. See Juliano and Lerner, Monks and Merchants, cat. nos. 52 ("Northern Wei...late fifth–early sixth century"), including the full-page color illustration of a detail on p. 294; 53 ("Northern Wei...late fifth century, possibly 496"); and 54 ("Northern Wei...fifth–sixth century").


92. For the "early Liao" set (from a tomb dated AD 959), see Kessler, Heritage of Genghis Khan, fig. 60, p. 97 (representative samples illustrated in line drawings). The al-Sabah set (inv. no. 2860 J a–q) appears in color in the auction catalogue Christie’s London, Islamic Art and Manuscripts, May 1, 2001, lot 341, where it is described (without argument or comparison material) as "probably North East Persia, 10th/11th Century."
Compiled in the Fifteenth Century from an Eleventh-Century Manuscript on Gifts and Treasures (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), the latter consisting of a translation of the former with added introduction, annotations, glossary, appendices, and indices. Many of these descriptions refer to Fatimid royal treasures dispersed in the time of famine and disorder in the reign of al-Mustansir (in the 1060s and 1070s AD). Even here, such material likely represents the influence of Turkic practice, felt either directly due to the large and important contingents of Turkic troops in Egypt, or indirectly, emanating from Persian and Persianized territories. One of the most remarkable of these descriptions (article 99) is that of a saddle featuring heavy cast-gold elements opulently set with fine, gemmy white yashb, which, to reiterate, can only be jade, since white was the most desirable color for jade, whereas white jasper is practically unknown and was certainly never prized in the same way; needless to say, the saddle’s claimed provenance from Alexander the Great via the Byzantine emperor is to be regarded as apocryphal, although it is quite possible that Alexander had horse trappings with jade mounts.
A RECENTLY ACQUIRED INCENSE BURNER IN THE KHALILI COLLECTION

Openwork metal incense burners¹ in the form of felines have long been known and are represented in several private and public collections in Europe and North America. They vary considerably in structure, dimensions, and decoration. Among the several vessels of this type in the Khalili Collection, a recently acquired example (MTW 1525) is outstanding for the fineness of its decoration, the elegance of its proportions, and the naturalism of its stance (figs. 1 and 2). From its ears the feline represented is readily recognizable as a caracal (Persian, siyāh gūsh), a species of lynx widely used as a hunting animal in the Iranian princely tradition.

The animal, 27 cm in height and 24 cm in length, is an affectionate portrayal based upon careful observation from nature, though with much decorative stylization.² It has exaggeratedly large paws (in other examples these are treated almost as hooves) and an upraised tail terminating in a half palmette.³ Its head is slightly raised and its hind legs slightly bent, giving it the appearance of a creature pawing the ground and about to jump, as if to capture its prey on the wing—an ability for which, according to the classical Arabic authors, the caracal was especially prized. The modeling of its features is particularly crisp. Its broad, luxuriantly whiskered face and slightly parted jaws with protruding canine teeth convey an impression of good humor, almost as if it is smiling (fig. 3). Its nose is faceted, and the nostrils are pierced. Its large, pointed oval eyes, which terminate elegantly in engraved scrolls, may once have been filled with turquoises, as was often the case with other felines of this type. Its ears, with their schematically rendered black tufts, are concave and pierced; its eyebrows are lightly engraved; and its forehead is an openwork lozenge. Eyebrows and ears are contoured by rouletted braids, and the creature’s elaborately plaited mane falls to its shoulders (fig. 4).

The tail, while immovable, is otherwise incongruous as a handle: although pierced with an undulating scroll, it would have been too hot to hold with comfort were the body filled with burning coals. Thus the vessel would most probably have been carried on a tray. The head is now removable but was originally attached by a hinge. Like the body it is most probably of quaternary alloy and was piece-cast. Both head and body bear panels of interlacing decoration filled with trefoil- or palmette-scrolls, their backgrounds pierced. These panels are in the form of almond-shaped medallions to either side of the creature’s mouth and roundels, each with a six-fold knot pattern, below its ears. After casting, the holes were drilled and the decoration enhanced by engraving and polishing, possibly with the addition of some inlay in black composition. At the base of the head is a short Kufic inscription reading al-mulku li ‘llāhi ‘l-wāhid (Dominion belongs to God,
the One), a formula characteristic of Shi’i seals,4 and a longer inscription in rather crabbed script, which appears to read “O Muhammad, may we ask you, as a nation and as a tribe. Affliction is the guardian of him who is victorious.”5 Strikingly, given the masterly workmanship, the piece does not seem to bear either a signature or a date.

To the best of my knowledge, only one published feline incense burner has an archaeological provenance6—a rather incongruous lion figure from Khul’buk in Tajikistan (all the other extant examples are of the caracal or lynx type). Nor have any excavated fragments been published.7 Scholars generally concur that these objects were made in Khurasan (the present piece is thought to be from Afghanistan), and on the basis of the enormous and finely decorated but ungainly creature in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,8 which is dated 577 (1181–82),9 they are generally attributed to the later twelfth century. According to its inscription, the Metropolitan Museum example was made for an amir, Sayf al-Dunya wa’l-Din Muhammad, by Ja’far b. Muhammad b. ‘Ali. James Allan has suggested that it is a copy of an earlier piece, and that incense burners of this type were falling out of fashion by the later twelfth century; in any case the taste for them did not survive the Mongol invasions. Two other pieces that are somewhat closer to the Khalili caracal are in the Cleveland Museum of Art10 and the Hermitage.11 The former is

Fig. 2. Incense burner in the form of a feline, front view. London, Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, MTW 1525.

Fig. 3. Detail of Khalili incense burner, face and chest.
different in many respects, but its pierced scrollwork is very similar. The latter is closer in stance and also has similar scrolls, though these are in a more regular, hexagonal reticulation. Such regularity and the much more pronounced use of inscriptions, including the craftsman’s name inlaid in silver on its chest, suggest that the Hermitage example developed from a prototype exemplified by the Khalili caracal. It is interesting that both the Metropolitan “monster” and the Hermitage piece have short, inelegant, stumpy tails that, even if they had not been broken at one time or another, would have been totally useless as handles.

Caracals, like cheetahs, were readily tamed and could be trained to ride pillion. As such they appear on pre-Mongol pottery figurines, though, curiously, not in early paintings. Their habit of felling their prey and going for the jugular was seen by the ulema as a prototype of halāl slaughter and led to their sanction as hunting animals, in accordance with the Qur’anic precept (5: 4): “…Reply [to them]: lawful are foodstuffs good to eat and any [game] that, at your wish, is captured by beasts of prey which you have trained as you do dogs, according to the method which Allah has taught you, after you have spoken the name of Allah over it… .” The choice of caracals as models for incense burners doubtless relates to their status as pets.12

The Khalili caracal is a masterpiece of metal casting.13 Its clarity and crispness suggest that the mold used to cast it was in mint condition. However, the absence of a patron’s or a craftsman’s name suggests that, fine as it is, it was not manufactured as a unique object, and the fact that the mold was very probably of stone reinforces this. It would be an exaggeration to speak here of mass production, but the patent resemblances between vessels of this type suggest either centralized production or a workshop in continuous production, perhaps over two or three generations, that was able to vary and develop earlier models.

The Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic Art
London

NOTES
1. Rather than incense burners, these may possibly have been intended as pomanders—pierced vessels made to contain a fragrant paste of ambergris and other scents.
2. It is, for example, difficult to decide whether the flanges above its paws represent anklets (something of a hindrance to a hunting animal) or are of purely decorative significance. For what it is worth, however, the feline in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, certainly appears to have decorative anklets.
3. Dr. Pedro Moura Carvalho draws my attention to an Anglo-Norman or Romanesque lion surmounting a buckle, its tail ending in a similar half-palmette, that can probably be attributed to an Islamic prototype. (Reproduced in Janet Backhouse et al., The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art, 966–1066, cat. of an exh. at the British Museum and the British Library, London [London, 1984], cat. no. 271.) The only other incense burner with a comparable tail appears to be a piece of much coarser quality sold at auction in London in 2001: Bonhams and Brooks, sale of October 17, 2001, lot no. 349.
4. Believed to have been the legend on ‘Ali’s seal, this formula is common on pottery from Nishapur, where there was a large Shi‘i colony, and also occurs on Fatimid coinage.
5. The language of the inscription is highly ambiguous and the interpretation therefore provisional. I am grateful to Manijeh Bayani and Nahla Nassar for their help in deciphering it.
6. Oxus: 2000 Jahre Kunst am Oxus-Fluss in Mittelasien, cat. of an exh. at Museum Rietberg, Zürich (Zürich, 1989), cat. no. 93.
The latter refers to a fragment, still unpublished, of a small incense burner of this type found in excavations at Dmanisi in Georgia.


10. E. Kühnel, *Islamic Arts* (London, 1963), p. 161, fig. 127, inv. no. 48.308. The head here seems to have been attached to the body by a bayonet fitting.

11. Allan, “Metalwork,” fig. 4; Orbeli “Bronzovaya kuir’nitsa” and *Izbrannye trudy*, inv. no. Iran 1565. The craftsman’s name, which is now invariably cited as al-Taji (sometimes followed by a question mark), is given by Orbeli as al-Taki/al-Tagi.

12. Compare the red-legged partridge (*chikor*), which was also a favorite pet and served as a model for incense burners. This handsome bird was even more appropriate, for it was popularly believed to eat fire.

13. It is difficult to specify the technique. *Cire perdu* casting was widespread in the late antique and early Islamic periods, but it may be no coincidence that al-Jazari’s treatise on automata, *Kitb fi ma’rifat al-iyal al-handasiyya*, describes a process of sand casting that, he states, was used to make the facing and dragon-knockers of the doors of a mosque. Al-Jazari was in the service of the Artuqids of Diyarbakir in the final decades of the twelfth century, and the earliest known copy of this work (Topkapı Saray Library A. 3472) was completed in Sha’ban 602 (April 1206). See Rachel Ward, “Evidence for a School of Painting at the Artuqid Court,” in *The Art of Syria and the Jazira 1100–1250*, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 1 (Oxford, 1985), pp. 69–83.
THE PAINTINGS OF THE PRE-ISLAMIC KA‘BA

In ca. 608, the holiest shrine of Mecca, the Ka‘ba, the Bayt Allāh, was burned down in a fire caused by a careless worshipper with an incense burner, and the ruling Quraysh were compelled to rebuild it.¹ It was this rebuilt Ka‘ba of ca. 608 that was to become the direction of Islamic communal prayer after the revelation of Sūrat al-Baqara² in ca. 624, and it was the same Ka‘ba that was cleansed of all trace of pagan practice when the Prophet Muhammad victoriously entered Mecca in 630.³ This eradication of sculptures and paintings inside the Ka‘ba at the time of the conquest affected all that the Prophet regarded as unacceptable. A statue of Hubal, the principal male deity of Mecca, was taken out of the Bayt and destroyed, as were the other pagan deities in and around the Ka‘ba.⁴ Apart from these statues, there were also paintings, undefined decorations (hilya), money, and a pair of ram’s horns inside the Ka‘ba, the last said to have belonged to the ram sacrificed by the Prophet Ibrahim in place of his son, the Prophet Isma‘il.⁵ Most of these paintings were erased. The ram’s horns survived until 683.

With the pictures and statues of the jāhilyya removed, the Ka‘ba continued in its role as the direction of Islamic prayer but now also became a central part of the rituals of the Islamic pilgrimage, the hajj. The Ka‘ba remained in the form it had acquired under the Quraysh until it was rebuilt by ‘Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr after the Umayyads had bombarded it with catapults, demolishing its walls and setting it on fire as they besieged Ibn al-Zubayr in the Holy City in 64 (683). This latter date marks the final destruction of any paintings that survived the coming of Islam in 630. If 630 is the terminus ante quem for the Ka‘ba paintings, the fact that the Quraysh work entailed a total reconstruction of the building also makes it clear that none of the paintings could predate ca. 608.

Al-Azraqi records in some detail the events surrounding the rebuilding of the Ka‘ba by the Quraysh. Baqum al-Rumi, a foreigner present at Mecca, was a carpen-
picture of the angels (al-malāʾīka), upon them be peace, all of them. And when it was the day of the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered, and he sent off al-Fadl b. al-ʿAbbas b. ʿAbd al-Muttalib (his cousin) to come with water from [the well of] Zamzam. Then he called for a cloth, and he ordered [them] to rub off these pictures, and they were obliterated.11

The manner of construction with alternating courses of wood and stone has long since been discussed by K. A. C. Creswell, and while the origin of the building technique remains open to discussion, the character of the construction does not (see Appendix below). Al-Azraqi makes it clear that a system of alternating courses was used, sixteen of stone and fifteen of wood. The method of building involved locking the rounded ends of the wooden tie beams into each other at the corners, the rounded tie beam ends being termed “monkey-heads” in Ethiopia.12 Inside the Kaʿba were two rows of columns ranked in groups of three—six in all—serving to support the flat roof. As to the wood, no mention is made of its type, but given that it was from a boat, it was possibly teak, the normal wood used for traditional boats around the coasts of Arabia. Teak was used subsequently at Mecca and Medina in the early Islamic period when the roofing of the Haram Mosque and the Mosque of the Prophet was renewed by the third Caliph, ʿUthman b. ʿAffan.

The walls and columns would have to have been coated with plaster, since they carried paintings that hardly could have been applied directly to the stone and wood. We still encounter the use of thick plaster on the coral buildings of old Jidda and elsewhere on the Red Sea coast, and in some cases on the stone-built architecture of the highlands of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.13

While the painted decoration of the Kaʿba covered much or all of the interior of the building, the exterior was without paintings, adorned instead with the kiswa, a cloth cover. Its origins are said to be Yemeni, the first kiswa brought to Mecca by the Yemeni Tubbaʿ Āsād Abu Karib Himyari some time before the advent of Islam.

As we have seen, al-Azraqi states that on the day of the Islamic conquest of Mecca, the Prophet ordered that the pictures in the Kaʿba should be destroyed, but several sources also cited by al-Azraqi record that the painting showing ʿIsa b. Maryam and his mother was spared on the Prophet’s instructions:14

Further on, al-Azraqi says on the authority of his grandfather that Daʿud b. Ṭabariyān from Sulayman b. Musa from Jabir b. ʿAbd Allah, that the Prophet suppressed the pictures, i.e., those in the Kaʿba, and that he ordered ʿUmar b. al-Khattab at the time of the conquest of Mecca to enter the Bayt Allāh (the Kaʿba) to obliterate the pictures.15 There is also an account that says the Prophet refused to enter the Kaʿba until the evidence of pre-Islamic worship had been removed. This could be taken to contradict the story of his protecting the picture of ʿIsa b. Maryam and his mother. However, it may be that he refused to enter the Kaʿba until the removal of the portable idols inside it: the paintings,16 being murals rather than portable works, could not be removed in the same way, as they were on the columns and walls. The episode involving Fadl b. Ṭabariyān collecting water from Zamzam for use by the Prophet’s Companions to wipe off the pictures implies this. It was around the column with the picture of ʿIsa b. Maryam and his mother that the Prophet put his arms to protect it while letting his Companions erase everything else.17 This account suggests that the Prophet indeed entered the Kaʿba despite the presence of the pictures.

THE PAINTING MATERIALS AT THE KAʿBA

Al-Bukhari uses the phrase “so they took out [the two] pictures of…” (fa-akhrajū surātay), which implies that the paintings were portable, but al-Azraqi’s Meccan sources consistently indicate that the Kaʿba paintings were on the columns or the walls of the building, and that they were erased by rubbing them off, as we have seen, rather than carrying them out for breaking or
burning. It is possible that al-Bukhari conflates the removal of sculptures from the Ka’ba with the destruction of the paintings.

As explained above, the likelihood is that the interior walls of the Ka’ba were coated with plaster and that this plaster would have carried the paintings. The Prophet is said to have ordered that the paintings in the Ka’ba should be wiped out with a cloth soaked in water drawn from the well of Zamzam.18 That water was sufficient to wipe off the pictures strongly suggests that the medium of the paintings was water-based.

The practice of painting interiors of houses still persists in the southern Hijaz highlands and in the ‘ushrūš, or huts, that were still found all along the Red Sea coast of Arabia in the 1970s. The information that we have about the painting of the interior of the pre-Islamic Ka’ba suggests that this decorative tradition in the southwest of Arabia is one of great antiquity.19 However, the paintings done today use industrial oil-based paint on plaster and are far more impermeable than those in the seventh-century Ka’ba.

**THE TREES**

Nothing is said by al-Azraqi of the trees that decorated the interior of the Ka’ba, other than that they existed. Pictures of trees (ṣūra al-shajara) formed part of the mosaic decoration on the walls of the cathedral of al-Qālis in Sanaa.20 Subsequently, they were to appear as a principal subject in the Umayyad mosaics in the Dome of the Rock, the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, and the Great Mosque of Damascus. The accounts recorded by al-Azraqi imply that the tree pictures were wiped out along with the other pictures that he deemed unsuitable for the Islamicized Ka’ba.

**‘ISA B. MARYAM AND HIS MOTHER**

Of the picture of ‘Isa b. Maryam and his mother, al-Azraqi gives the following information on the authority of his grandfather, whose own source was Da’ud b. ‘Abd al-Rahman, who said that Ibn Jurayj had said that Sulayman b. Musa al-Shami asked ‘Ata’ b. Abi Rabah the following:

I have heard that there was set up in al-Bayt (the Ka’ba) a picture (timthāl) of Maryam and ‘Isa. [‘Ata’] said: “Yes, there was set in it a picture of Maryam adorned (musāw-waqan); in her lap, her son ‘Isa sat adorned.”21

This text indicates quite explicitly that Maryam was shown with ‘Isa in her lap, suggesting that he was a child. The term “in her lap” (fi ḥijīhā) is very specific and strongly implies that she was seated. This iconography of the seated Virgin with Jesus in her lap, which was to become universal in Christian art in later times, was already widespread in Christian lands by the seventh century, although the depredations of Byzantine iconoclasm and the repainting of older pictures have greatly reduced the number of extant images. At Saqquara in Egypt, a painting of the Virgin holding the Child appears in an apse,22 while there is a fourth-century seated Virgin from Madinat al-Fayyum in Egypt now in Berlin, in the Staatliche Museen.23 A Virgin and Child appears on a fragmentary papyrus leaf from the Alexandrian Chronicle in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, dated to ca. the fifth or sixth century.24 A sixth-century ampulla from Palestine, now at Monza in the Treasury of the Collegiale, also shows the Virgin and Child in the same posture,25 as does a Syro-Palestinian ivory panel now in the British Museum, also dated to the sixth century, which depicts the Adoration of the Magi with the seated Virgin and Child.26 In the wider Christian world, the same iconography occurs in a mosaic of the Virgin and Child in the chapel of San Zeno in Santa Prassede in Rome, of 817–24 (fig. 1). It is to this family of images that the adorned Maryam with ‘Isa in her lap in the Ka’ba seems to have belonged.

From a much earlier date there is a south Arabian prototype of the seated Maryam hinted at in a votive alabaster panel (fig. 2), dated to the first century AD and now in the British Museum, of the lady Ghalilat with a musnad inscription stating: “Image of Ghalilat, daughter of Mafaddat, and may Attar destroy him who breaks it.”27 Ghalilat is playing an instrument like an oud, but her posture and the way she holds the instrument strongly suggest the later Christian motif of the seated Virgin with the Child in her lap. The Ghalilat panel may indicate Yemeni awareness of an Egyptian tradition of portraying Isis as the mother of Osiris, itself an antecedent of the Virgin and Child image.

An interesting additional point of information is derived from al-Azraqi. As we have seen, the pictures in the Ka’ba also included prophets (al-anbiyā’) and angels (al-malā’īkā), the latter mentioned twice by al-Azraqi. It is possible that the prophet paintings were really either of the apostles of ‘Isa/Jesus or of other figures associated with him and with Maryam. An early seventh-century icon of the Virgin and Child at St. Catherine’s on Mt. Sinai shows Mary seated with Jesus on her lap and angels and saints surrounding her,28 and an
apse painting at Bawit in Egypt shows the Virgin and Child enthroned with apostles; it dates to the seventh century, although it may have been repainted in later times. Further south, in Nubian Christian churches from an early date, pictures (mainly found in apses) show Jesus accompanied by other figures. Thus in eighth-to-tenth-century apse paintings at Nobatia and Dongola are found representations of Christ, sometimes with Mary and always attended by his disciples. These paintings may give us some guidance as to the nature of the lost paintings of sixth-century Aksum, one of the closest Christian centers to Mecca and a plausible source of the iconography—and perhaps the style—of the painting of 'Isa b. Maryam and Maryam in the Ka’ba.

Was the Prophet able to identify the picture because he was familiar with it before he left for Medina in 622? If so, this would locate the execution of this particular Ka’ba painting between ca. 608 and 622. Alternatively, he may have seen such a painting in the north during his youth when he visited Bostra, or, less likely, in 630, when he visited Tabuk, apparently a former Byzantine garrison, where he also received a Christian leader from Ayla.

He certainly knew people who had seen Christian paintings. Some of his wives and Companions became familiar with Christian art during their sojourn as the first Muslim muhajirün in Habasha (Ethiopia), having departed from Mecca in 615. When the Prophet was on his deathbed, his wife Umm Habiba described to him the paintings that she had seen in the Church of St. Mary Zion at Aksum.

An interesting statement from that rarity, a female
authority for a pre-Islamic episode, Asma’ bint Shiqr is preserved by al-Azraqi; it suggests that the ‘Isa b. Maryam and Maryam painting in the Quraysh Ka‘ba was readily recognizable as such to early-seventh-century Christians as well as to the Prophet Muhammad. It appears that the following episode took place in the context of the pre-Islamic hajj, presumably after ca. 608 and before 630. Al-Azraqi reports, according to Ibn Shihab:

Asma’ bint Shiqr said: “A woman from Ghassan made the pilgrimage during the [pagan] pilgrimage of the Arabs (hijjata fi hajj al‘arab), and when she saw the picture of Maryam in the Ka‘ba she said: ‘By my father and my mother, you belong to the Arabs.’” 32

This appears to be independent confirmation of the identity of the figures in the picture that the Prophet spared. Whether the figure of Maryam looked Arab, stimulating the Ghassan woman’s response, or whether the woman was surprised that the Arabs of the Hijaz had a respected picture of Mary/Maryam in Mecca’s holiest shrine is unclear. The Ghassanid woman certainly might be expected to recognize a painting of the Virgin, given the depth of Christian influence among the Ghassan Arabs, whose churches and shrines were scattered across Syria.33

On another level, one cannot but wonder what a woman of the Ghassan was doing visiting a pagan shrine in the Hijaz so late as ca. 608 to 630, when the Ghassan had long been officially Christian. Yet she was not alone among the Ghassan in respecting pagan faith. The treasury at the pagan goddess Manat’s shrine of al-Mushallal at Qudayd in the Hijaz owned two swords that the Ghassanid prince al-Harith b. Abi Shamir al-Ghassani had dedicated to the idol. Al-Harith led an expedition to Khaybar in 567, and he apparently was very involved in Hijaz matters.34 Despite being a Christian, he had no compunction about presenting gifts to Manat: presumably old pagan habits died hard, although Al-Harith’s action may have had a diplomatic element to it. The Ghassan retained a trading presence at Mecca under the Quraysh, and they may have felt it worthwhile to pay their respects to the Meccan shrine.

THE PROPHETS IBRAHIM AND ISMA‘IL

Al-Azraqi says that among the paintings in the Ka‘ba was another that showed the Prophets Ibrahim and Isma‘il. Ibrahim was shown as an old man (shaykh). In other versions preserved by al-Azraqi, both Ibrahim and Isma’il are said to have been represented holding arrows.

The Qur’an specifically rejects arrow divining, and, given the rejection of idolatry that characterizes Ibrahim’s faith as portrayed by the Qur’an, it was entirely inappropriate in the Prophet Muhammad’s view that either Ibrahim or his son should have been associated in a painting with this forbidden practice. The rejection of arrow divination in Sūrat al-Mā’ida is specific:

O ye who believe!
Intoxicants and gambling,
(Dedication of) stones,
And (divination by) arrows [al-azlām]
Are an abomination—
Of Satan’s handiwork:
Eschew such (abomination),
That ye may prosper.35

The same sura also lists divining with many other practices that are forbidden:36

(Forbidden) also is the division
(Of meat) by raffling37
With arrows [tastaqsimū bi ’l-azlām]: that is impiety.”

According to al-Azraqi:38

...Shihab (said) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered the Ka‘ba the day of the conquest, and in it was a picture of the angels (malā‘ika) and others, and he saw a picture of Ibrahim and he said: “May Allah kill those representing him as a venerable old man casting arrows in divination (shaykhan yastaqsim bi ’l-azlām).” Then he saw the picture of Maryam, so he put his hands on it and he said: “Erase what is in it [the Ka‘ba] in the way of pictures except the picture of Maryam.”39

Al-Bukhari (d. 256/870) records the episode as follows:

It was related that Ibn ‘Abbas said: “When the Prophet came to Mecca he refused to go into the Ka‘ba as idols (al-¸lihatu) were still inside it. He ordered them removed and so they were removed. The people took out the pictures of Ibrahim and Isma‘il holding arrows (fa-amara bi-hā fa-akhrajat, fa-akhrajat suratay Ibrahim wa-Isma‘il fi aydi-himā al-azlām) and the Messenger of God said: ‘May God obliterate these people. By God! They knew well that neither Ibrahim nor Ismail ever divined with arrows.’ Then he entered the Ka‘ba and said ‘God is Great’ at its corners, but he did not pray in it.”40

Al-Azraqi reports the Prophet as saying something similar and declaring in anger, “Allah will kill them [who
portrayed Ibrahim and Isma'il thus], for they never cast arrows (lām yastaqsamā bi 'l-azlām).”

It has been suggested by T. Fahd that in pre-Islamic Mecca Ibrahim was subsumed in some way into Hubal. Since arrow divination constituted a central aspect of Hubal’s cult, and Hubal’s statue stood inside the Ka‘ba, it seems plausible that one of the arrow-bearing figures inside the Ka‘ba was in fact Hubal rather than Ibrahim. If the figure of the venerable old man with arrows was indeed Hubal, then the second figure no longer needs to be identified as Isma’il, but it is unclear whom it would have represented.

This point about the identity of the figures in the paintings and the Prophet’s understanding of them is important and may contribute to a more complex interpretation of the question of the dating of the painting cycle. Why should the Prophet have taken the figure with arrows in the Ka‘ba to be Ibrahim if it was really Hubal, Mecca’s greatest male deity and one we know to have been associated with arrow divination? As a Meccan, the Prophet might be expected to have been aware of the identity of the painting of Mecca’s principal pagan god in the Ka‘ba, and he would have been familiar with the deities with which the Quraysh had filled the Haram of Mecca in the period when he was powerless to oppose them, before he departed on his hijra in 622. Although he was the Prophet of the Muslim community, as a theologically knowledgeable Meccan he presumably had detailed experience of the beliefs of the pagan Quraysh, even if he resoundingly rejected their whole belief system. The accounts of his suppression of the shrines of paganism throughout western Arabia in his Medinan years show his knowledge of the Hijaz jāhilyya shrines and their cults, and if he knew of more distant shrines and their practices, he certainly must have known a great deal more about those of Mecca, where he had lived for so long.

One could argue that the painting said to be of Ibrahim was executed after the Prophet had left Mecca in 622. If this were the case, then he would have seen it for the first time in 630 and interpreted a picture that actually represented Hubal with arrows as representing Ibrahim. We are unlikely ever to ascertain the answer to any of this, and we will always be trapped in the realm of speculation. But if the figure of the old man with arrows was indeed painted between 622 and 630, then this would constitute evidence that the Ka‘ba paintings gradually accumulated after the Ka‘ba was rebuilt, rather than being the product of a single campaign of decoration in ca. 608, as al-Azraqi implies.

THE SOURCES OF THE KA’BA PAINTINGS

While we have lost the Ka‘ba paintings themselves, we know enough of the ‘Isa b. Maryam and Maryam picture to attempt, in a very general sense, to put it in context of contemporary paintings of the Virgin and Child in the Christian world. For the pictures of Ibrahim and Isma’il the case is far harder.

We know that Ibrahim (or Hubal) was portrayed as an old man and that he had arrows for divination. Pictures of old or bearded men abound in Byzantine-related art, but pictures of arrow diviners do not. The figures of St. John the Baptist in the Baptistry of the Orthodox (440–520) and the Arian Baptistery (ca. 520), both in Ravenna, the sixth-century figures of Abraham in San Vitale at Ravenna and of the prophets in the apse of St. Catherine’s at Sinai, and the conventional representations of apostles and church elders that appear ubiquitously in Byzantine-related art all could be called shaykhan. Shaykhan figures also appear in an entirely different context in the Umayyad secular paintings at Qusayr ‘Amra; they apparently stem from an older Syrian tradition of which we are ignorant. But while all such figures in Byzantine and Umayyad art are venerable and old and could be described as being shaykhan, there is absolutely nothing to link any of them to the Ibrahim/Hubal painting, not least because none are associated with arrows and divination, the only visual attribute we know of these particular Ka‘ba representations.

We know too little of any of the pictures in the Ka‘ba—whether of ‘Isa b. Maryam and Maryam, of Ibrahim and Isma’il, or of the trees—to make any estimate of their specific style. Thus, discussion of the likely inspiration or source of the Ka‘ba paintings can only be a matter of reciting the possible contemporary parallels, with no firm conclusion as to the origin of the artist (or artists) who painted them. Furthermore, the Ka‘ba paintings coincide with a period for which there is a paucity of extant paintings from Arabia and the Near East as a whole.

Within Arabia, our knowledge of the Christian mosaics and paintings of Najran and Sanaa in Yemen is entirely dependent on literary sources, although the paintings excavated at Qaryat al-Faw and Shabwa give us some idea of motifs circulating in southern Arabia in the early first millennium AD. Of Christian painting in eastern Arabia and the Gulf we know nothing.

The Sasanian world presents a total loss of painting, Nestorian or otherwise, while in the Byzantine Empire,
the carnage of iconoclasm has deprived us of icons and most other work dating to before 726, and we have to look to Italy for the survival of murals of any sort in this period. In Syria and Palestine, between the Dura Europos paintings of the third century and the Umayyad paintings and wall mosaics of the eighth, there are no great murals extant, while later repainting has contributed to the loss of many early Christian murals in Egypt, Nubia, and Ethiopia. St. Catherine’s at Mt. Sinai is unique in terms of the preservation and quality of its mosaics and icons from this period.

The range of motifs circulating in the Near East in the early seventh century is emphasized by the diversity of subject matter preserved at the deeply eclectic Qusayr ‘Amra (after 712). But the very wealth of motifs also serves to remind us of the extent of our ignorance of late antique secular painting in Syria. For all we know the arrow-divining old man represented in the Ka’ba could have been a common motif in the region, but with such loss of immediately pre-Islamic painting in the Near East we have no means of ever demonstrating the point.

A source of the iconography used in the Ka’ba that cannot be excluded is the illuminated codex, for there is shadowy evidence that books circulated in some contexts in Arabia before Islam. Most telling in this respect are references to books that appear as imagery in pre-Islamic poetry. For these poems to have significance to an Arabian audience, that audience must have been able to conjure up something meaningful when the term “book” was used by a poet. The Qur’an also reflects a knowledge of books, in the sense of texts written on sheets (suḥūf), in the early suras revealed to the Prophet when he was still at Mecca. From this, one may infer that those hearing these Meccan suras had some idea of what suḥūf were. The question of where such putative books at Mecca may have originated leaves us with the same range of possibilities as do our attempts to seek antecedents for the Ka’ba paintings in murals or mosaics beyond Mecca: given the commercial contacts of the Quraysh, it is Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and Ethiopia that suggest themselves once again.

Whatever art was circulating in Mecca and western Arabia, it must also be considered that the trading connection of the Quraysh took them regularly to lands where paintings, mosaics, and illuminated books were common, and that any of these places could have provided the inspiration and perhaps the models for the Quraysh paintings in the Ka’ba. The winter and summer caravans of the Quraysh—the one to Yemen, the other to Syria—and their trading connections with Ethiopia since the time of ‘Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet’s grandfather, all provided any number of opportunities for the Meccans to have encountered paintings including the Virgin and Child image. Evidence of visits to Palestine is provided by the death at Gaza of Hashim b. ‘Abd al-Manaf in the pre-Islamic period, while the Prophet as a child is said to have visited Bostra in southern Syria, and ‘Amr b. al-‘As visited Egypt before Islam. In these circumstances, many possibilities offer themselves for the Meccans to have seen pictures that could have influenced their choice of paintings in the Ka’ba.

The fact that the architect of the Ka’ba, Baqum, has been associated with Ethiopia or Egypt favors the possible impact of the painting tradition of either place on the Meccan paintings. While the accounts of Baqum’s skills only refer to him as an architect and carpenter and never suggest that he was a painter, his involvement provides the circumstances that would have favored the influence of painting from his own place of origin. The case for this would be weaker, however, if at least some of the Ka’ba paintings accumulated over time, rather than being produced immediately after the completion of the building.

While Ethiopia and Egypt are candidates for the source of the Ka’ba paintings, a barely understood channel of influence that could have affected Mecca is the internal Arabian tradition of painting. Early Muslims encountered paintings in the churches of Najran, a point made clear by a report from al-Hasan b. Salih preserved by al-Baladhuri, who records the Prophet’s treaty with the Christians of Najran, in which security was promised for their images (amthila): “The state they previously held shall not be changed, nor shall any of their religious services or images be changed.” However, one cannot assess what the Quraysh knew of Najran and its Christian pictures before Islam, although since it was a major caravan town of Southwest Arabia they would possibly have visited it. They certainly knew of the great church of al-Qalis at Sanaa, which was decorated with mosaics.

We know nothing of what, if anything, the Meccans knew of the very few examples of southern Arabian painting that have survived or the traditions to which they belonged. All of these that have been published, as far as I am aware, are from excavations at Shabwa in Hadramut and from Qaryat al-Faw on the western edge of the Empty Quarter in Saudi Arabia. The Shabwa painting, which was in the National Museum at Aden, is dated to the third century and is from the royal pal-
ace. It shows the large-eyed face of a figure with a quite well-defined robe that has echoes of classicism, or at least of the late antique. The far more varied group excavated at Qaryat al-Faw is dated to before the early fourth century; it is now in the archaeology museum in King Saud University in Riyadh. Since the first publication of the Qaryat al-Faw paintings by A. R. al-Ansary, yet more have been found at the same site.

Between them, Shabwa and Qaryat al-Faw provide the only extant evidence for the existence of a pre-Islamic Arabian painting tradition and, while incompletely published, furnish a unique body of information about the nature of painting in Arabia in the centuries that precede the execution of the murals in the Ka‘ba.

The wall paintings at Qaryat al-Faw vary stylistically, indicating different hands and probably different periods. The finest of the published paintings from Qaryat al-Faw is fragmentary, and it shows the face of a man accompanied by two small figures to either side, perhaps further back spatially but more likely of lesser status. A cluster of grapes and a vine branch forms part of the background. The painting is insufficient in extent to allow estimation of the subject, but the name “Zky” is inscribed in musnad (epigraphic South Arabian) to the right of the smaller figure. The face of the youthful Zky has a strongly reddish tone, curly hair, large and emphatic eyes, an emphatic straight nose, and full lips framed by a finely defined moustache. A short beard runs around his chin.

Unfortunately, we know too little to assume that painting circulating at Qaryat al-Faw and Shabwa was matched at Mecca or elsewhere in western Arabia. Furthermore, the terminus ante quem for Shabwa and Qaryat al-Faw (respectively the third century and no later than the early fourth century) leaves a considerable time gap before the rise of Mecca as a relatively prosperous town, apparently some time in the sixth century. This puts us at present on very insecure ground in trying to demonstrate any connection of Qaryat al-Faw and Shabwa with the lost Ka‘ba paintings.

THE KA‘BA AND THE ARABIAN CONTEXT

If the Ka‘ba really was a pan-Arab shrine under the Quraysh in the way the Islamic tradition insists, it should have been in wealth with other neighboring pagan shrines. We have seen that it had its own treasury (mâl), and that those seeking divination with Hubal’s arrows in the Ka‘ba paid a donation of 100 dirhams to the sâhib of the arrows of Hubal: it thus had some level of income. The pious expenditure of the Quraysh on the Ka‘ba and its deities is reflected in the gold that was used to repair the lost hand of the Hubal statue, in the donation of the kiswa, and, indeed, in the whole project of rebuilding the shrine in ca. 608.

We cannot assess how typical the painted decoration of the Ka‘ba may have been, as we have no detailed knowledge of the decoration of the other pagan shrines of early-seventh-century Arabia, such as the apparently major haram of al-Lat, Manat, and Hubal at al-Ta‘if, or that of Dhu‘l-Khalasa at Tabala, or the rest. Furthermore, while the relative wealth of some shrines is implied in accounts of their destruction on the orders of the Prophet, it is difficult to assess what constituted great wealth in pre-Islamic western Arabia.

Certainly, the nature of the work of the Quraysh on the Ka‘ba does not suggest great expenditure in absolute terms, and indeed, for all their trade, the Quraysh seem to have had limited resources for the embellishment of the shrine in their custody. One is left with the impression that the rebuilt Ka‘ba of ca. 608 was a modest affair, built with the best of the means available to the Quraysh. The limit of these means is reflected in the use of recycled wood from the fortuitously wrecked Byzantine boat that foundered on the Red Sea shore at Shu‘ayba. The use of the cheap medium of paint for the decoration of the interior of the Ka‘ba suggests a similarly economic approach, and even their principal deity, Hubal, was represented by a damaged sculpture in need of repair. It is not until the Islamic period that sumptuous gifts accrued to the Ka‘ba, from the riches won by Islam with the fath.

On the other hand, the Quraysh seem to have done their best to build the Ka‘ba in as solid a manner as they could, using a foreign Rümi specialist, Baqm. In Aksum, the system of alternating courses of stone and wooden tie beams seems to have been used especially for the aristocratic and ecclesiastical architecture of the sixth century, and the building of the Ka‘ba in such a manner may of itself have made a statement about the Bayt’s high status. But nevertheless, the wood was recycled, rather than specially imported. The use of painting in Arabian buildings of high status has parallels in the murals of the royal palaces at Shabwa and the Umayyad paintings at Qusayr ’Amra, Khirbat al-Mafjar, and Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi.

The resources were simply not present at Mecca in ca. 608 to produce anything of the scale of Abraha’s great cathedral at San’a, al-Qalis, which in the early sixth century had set a standard of lavish shrine embel-
The paintings of the pre-Islamic Ka’ba seem to have been the result of the desire of the Quraysh to ensure that the Ka’ba was possessed of as great a degree of sumptuousness as they could provide, but lacking access to the mosaics that Abraha had been able to extract from the Byzantine emperor for al-Qalis, the Quraysh did what the less well-funded did in many other parts of the late antique world and resorted to the cheap and rapid medium of paint to decorate the walls of the Ka’ba. Ibn al-Zubayr, isolated in the Hijaz while his Umayyad enemies held everything to the north, was still aware of the luxury of al-Qalis some seventy years later, when he scraped the mosaics off the walls of the Sanaa cathedral to reuse in the Haram mosque at Mecca after the Umayyad bombardment and destruction of the Ka’ba in 683. But this was the first time that Mecca aspired to the luxury of mosaics: in ca. 608 they had been beyond the capacities of the Quraysh, however much they may have resented the pretensions of the ornate al-Qalis as their great competitor in the Yemen. Restricted to Mecca, Ibn al-Zubayr was only able to recycle the al-Qalis mosaics: Mecca’s resources were still deeply limited, with access to the broader Islamic world cut off by the Umayyads.

The painting tradition at Mecca dies with the advent of Islam. Oleg Grabar has argued that murals at Mecca may have been associated with a wealthy social elite, and for this reason paintings may not have found favor with the lower economic group that formed part of the Muslim muhājirūn who accompanied the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. That Islam disapproved of sumptuary expenditure is made clear by the Qur’an, and the Prophet himself disliked lavish expenditure on buildings. In such circumstances it is not difficult to see that the early years of Islam offered little opportunity for the continuation or revival of painting in Mecca. However, the Quraysh taste for murals was to reemerge on a far greater scale under their Umayyad descendants in Bilad al-Sham. Whatever the changes in style that a greater landscape of reference gave to the Umayyad caliphs in Syria and Palestine, it could be argued that their desire for mural paintings had its roots in the works of their aristocratic Quraysh ancestors, known to us as little more than shadows through our meager knowledge of the decorative schema of the Ka’ba of ca. 608.

APPENDIX

The technique of building the Ka’ba in alternating stone and wood courses is still preserved skeuomorphically at Aksum on two sixth-century steles (nos. 1 and 3) in the Central Stelae Park, and on the Aksum stele (no. 2) in Rome (fig. 3). It seems also to have been the method of building at other early Ethiopian sites, including the Palace of Dungur, known as Sheba’s Palace (sixth century), Enda Semon (ca. fourth century), Enda Mikáel (ca. fourth century), and Taaka Maryam (possibly sixth century). A hypothetical reconstruction of the Cathedral at Aksum has been made in an attempt to show how it would have appeared before its destruction by Ahmad Gran b. Ibrahim, a Somali from Harar who conquered much of Ethiopia for Islam in the sixteenth century. This reconstruction suggests again a building

Fig. 3. Stele from Aksum, Rome. (Photo: G. King)
that incorporated alternate stone and wood coursing. Extant examples of the technique survive at Debra Damo (founded in the sixth century with subsequent rebuilding), and in the skeuomorphic monolithic Giorgis Church at Lalibela (rebuilt in the thirteenth century, but probably older).

The same technique of alternating masonry and wood courses is also encountered in western Arabia down to the twentieth century at Jidda, Mecca, and elsewhere. It is difficult in our present state of knowledge to know whether the Arabian or the African coast of the Red Sea takes precedence in the development and use of this technique, but there is no doubt that it is a system occurring on both sides of the Red Sea. To this extent, the Ka’ba of ca. 608 was a building deriving in its construction from the mutually interpenetrated milieu of the Red Sea coastal lands.

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NOTES


5. Al-Azraqº, Akhbºr Makka wa mº jº’º fºhº min al-ºthºr, ed. R. S. Malhas, 4th printing (Mecca 1983/1403), vol. 1, p. 166. Serjeant records the use of ibex horns as trophies that are set on the doors of houses and on the tombs of holy men in southern Arabia (R. B. Serjeant, South Arabian Hunt [London, 1976], pls. 4, 7). The present writer has seen in Yemen the custom of placing unusual bones at a tomb. At the shrine of Muhammad ‘Ali Abu Sa’d at Mawzº on the Yemen Tihamá near Mocha, the saw of a sawfish and other large fish bones were laid on the tomb of the holy man. Nor did this seem unique to this particular tomb. It is probably in the context of retaining striking, respected, or trophy horns and bones in shrines that the rami’s horns of the Ka’ba should be seen.


7. A. F. L. Beeston points out that the ruler of Yemen, Abraha, had been a slave of a Byzantine merchant resident at Adulis, the port of Aksum in Habasha (Ethiopia): s.v. “Abraha,” EF. People defined as Byzantines or Rumi frequently could have lived as expatriates, especially in trading towns like Adulis.


9. I am indebted to Dr. Niall Finneran of the Department of Art and Archaeology at SOAS, who drew my attention to this point and also to recent research on Ethiopia cited elsewhere in this paper.

10. Estimating a dhºra’ at about 50 cm, the building in ca. 608 was therefore about 9 m high.

11. Al-Azraqº, Akhbºr Makka, vol. 1, p. 165. Other less precise versions preserved by al-Azraqº repeat the reference to the wiping or rubbing out of the pictures, without referring to the use of water from Zamzam.


15. Ibid.


18. Ibid.


27. BM WA S.O.C. 125041.


30. At Medina the Prophet also received Christian delegations of monks coming from Najran, and the Christian prince Ukaydir of Dumat al-Jandal also came before him, but these episodes gave no scope for him to have seen more than the crosses that these delegates wore. The same is true of the leader of the Ayla delegates who came to him at Tabuk.

31. Imam Muslim, Sahib, trans. A. Zidan and D. Zidan (Cairo, n. d.), vol. 1, p. 268. One of the muhajirun to Habasha, ‘Ubayd
Allah b. Jahsh, even converted to Christianity while he was at Aksum.


33. There appear to have been sufficient Christians or Christian visitors at Mecca to justify a cemetery (J. S. Trimingham, Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times [London and New York, 1979], p. 260). What impact their beliefs had on the pagan Quraysh leadership and their art is impossible to estimate.


35. Qur’an 5:93.


37. “Casting lots with arrows” would be a better translation than that offered by A. Y. Ali. The Arberry translation has “partition by the divining arrows.”


42. T. Fahd, s.v. “Hubal,” EJ.

43. Early Christian Ethiopian painting is lost. The pagan queen Godwit raided Tigre in about 1000, and this appears to have had a devastating effect on the monuments. What was not destroyed by her suffered from the sixteenth-century depredations of Ahmad Gran b. Ibrahim, who conquered Ethiopia and completed the damage begun six centuries earlier. Furthermore, such wall paintings as did escape seem to have been replaced by later works that obliterated them. Further north, Nubia may provide some idea of the lost paintings of Ethiopia, but even there the earliest extant examples in Nobata, at Fares and Qasr Brim and at Old Dongola, are dated to ca. eighth to tenth century and thus are somewhat later than the vanished Ethiopian works that could have influenced the Ka‘ba paintings.

44. Qur’an 53:36–37; 87:18–19, referring to the subḥaf (sheets, written texts) of Musa and Ibrahim.


46. W. Daum, ed., Yemen: 3000 Years of Art and Civilization in Arabia Felix (Innsbruck and Frankfurt/Main, 1988) p. 94. I do not know their subsequent fate, as the Aden Museum was ransacked by northern Yemeni forces after the civil war of 1994.

47. Initially the site was dated to the second to fifth century AD, but subsequent research by the Saudi team concluded that settlement at Qaryat al-Faw did not extend beyond the early fourth century (communication from Dr. Asem Bargouthi).


49. The Arabian painting tradition persisted, as the excavations at al-Rabadha to the east of Medina have shown. Paintings with fine inscriptions and “Sasanian” beads were excavated by this writer in the mid-1980s. They were in a context that seemed to be early Abbasid or possibly—but less likely—late Umayyad. Other simple figurative paintings around what may have been a shop were of Abbasid date, probably dating to the ninth to tenth century. They remain unpublished.


The metaphor "the sky of wine" belongs to Abu Nuwas (762–813), the favorite poet of Caliph Harun al-Rashid. Being a good judge of wine, he as no one else excellently united the temperament of a man of merry feasting with the wittiness and ingenuity of a literary artist. I. Y. Krachkovsky likens the subjects selected by Abu Nuwas to become the heroes of his poems to the decoration of Sasanian gold and silver bowls on which representations of royal feasts, hunting, and military scenes are concealed under the wine. In the figurative array of the poetry of Abu Nuwas, who was much esteemed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we are attracted by a particular poetic image that through the magical phrase "...the sky of wine, on which stars are like bubbles..." allows us to perceive and closely approach the authentic meaning of separate pictures decorating the glazed banqueting vessels of the Crimea—quite distant from Baghdad. It may seem strange that we have turned to the Abbasid period to explain the subjects on wine vessels remote from the poet's own period by three or even four centuries. In explanation we can note only that the "wine cycle" poems of Abu Nuwas were also popular at the end of the twelfth and in the thirteenth century; they were more than occasionally commented on by the Arabian historian Ibn al-Athir (1160–1233), who gathered the first rumors about the invasion of the Mongols. Information about the poet was also preserved by such biographers as Yaqut al-Hamawi (1179–1229) and Ibn Khallikan (1211–81). Even if we do not see Abu Nuwas's favorite subjects—Khusraw's court entertainments, Bahram Gur's hunts, or Christian clergy with their Gospels—in the decor of the glazed bowls from the Crimea, it is impossible to give up the idea that the joy of the street with its Crimean warmth, Levantine tolerance, and bravery of bold local youths might have left their traces here. It is clear that this article will be about the attribution of separate pieces and the series to which they belong, though it should be noted that the repertory of Crimean sgraffito vessels of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, in contrast to those of Nesebur in Bulgaria or Famagusta in Cyprus, is quite narrow, and that the vessels themselves were very seldom decorated by compositions with images of human figures.

For analysis we will take three vessels. The first two are small bowls for wine, made from fired clay covered with greenish yellow or, sometimes, brown glaze, each with a body in the form of a truncated hemisphere on a short ring stem. It is best to begin with the bowl discovered at the site of the ancient Byzantine settlement Chersonese (Khersones); this vessel is now in the State Hermitage Museum, inventory number X. 369. One of a number of non-registered finds, it was first described by A. L. Yakobson. Preserved is the bottom part of the hemispherical bowl on a stem (3.9 cm in height), covered on the inside by greenish-yellow glaze over an en-gobe background, and on the outside by green glaze with manganese stripes. On the interior is an image of a personage in an animal mask, with a sword in his right hand and what is quite possibly a buckler in his left (fig. 1). The hero's posture suggests that he is brandishing the unsheathed sword. He is clothed in a tight caftan with folds to his knees; his waist is encircled by a girdle with a sheath at his side. On the hero's right is a distinctive three-part flower, like his figure depicted by incised lines combined with carved-out ground. In the opinion of Yakobson, the animal mask of the hero identifies him as a buffoon. V. N. Zalesskaya has assessed the picture differently: defining the hero as a dog-headed personage, she first suggested that he represents a prototype of the warrior-saint Christopher Cynocephalus, and later on that he is the saint himself.

To my mind, there are insufficient grounds for such an identification. We cannot find any clear delineation of a nimbus on the preserved part of the picture. Moreover, it is unlikely that an image of the warrior-saint would be considered appropriate for the bottom of a wine bowl, which was not designed for liturgical purposes. There is no attestation for such an interpr-
tion in the ceramic tradition of Byzantium and its provinces. At the same time, masked personages played an important role in carnival and theater, which are characteristic features of the Byzantine festival, both in palace chambers and in town squares. A considerable role was also imparted to the cynocephalus here: the image of the dog-headed man with a spear on a fresco decorating the wall of the north stairway of a tower of the eleventh-century St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev attests to this, as does a twelfth-century Byzantine miniature from Nazianzus. The images of actors with dog-head masks and even swords in hand can be found in the Armenian literary tradition. Therefore, the opinion of A. L. Yakobson about the image of the masker seems preferable. Nevertheless, we share V. N. Zalesskaya’s view of the connection of the Chersonese find with the manufacturing centers of Asia Minor, on the grounds that the image of the warrior-cynocephalus itself was more familiar and understandable to the townsfolk of Chalcedon and Trebizond (Trapezus), where churches dedicated to St. Christophoros were situated. This is also true for the peasants living near the monasteries of the Bithynian Olympus, whose heavenly protector was St. Christopher. The fragment from Chersonese, in our opinion, should be dated to the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, but it remains a puzzle whether the decor of the bowl is connected specifically with the image of St. Christopher. It is worth noting that European cosmographical culture at least since Adam of Bremen was full of rumors about dog-headed human beings. The images of cynocephali are also found in the Near East, for instance in
metalwork of Ayyubid Syria. In one of thirty quatrefoil medallions decorating a silver-inlaid basin made at the end of the 1230s by the craftsman al-Dhaki al-Mawsili for the sultan al-Adil Abu Bakr II (r. 1238–40), one can see a scene with two cynocephali conversing with each other at a table (or by a potter’s wheel?). Depicted on the upraised palm of one of the interlocutors is a goblet. Recently A. Yurchenko reminded us that in Central Asia, among the Uighurs, a legend about men with dogs’ faces has been known since the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century; among the Chinese it has been current since the tenth century, though it comes down to us in a thirteenth-century collection. Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the author of “The History of Armenia,” mentions a legend about a land inhabited by men with dog heads that was heard in 1254 by Hetum, the king of Armenia Minor, at the court of the Great Khan of the Mongols. Seven years earlier, in 1247, a Franciscan friar, Benedict, had come to believe that his interlocutor, an ethnic Mongol, had known a woman who bore a dog-boy by a Tartar (i.e., a Mongol).

The favorable totemic content of the dog (or wolf) image in Turkic and Mongolian tradition fires our imagination in interpreting the image of the dog-headed man in the Turkic milieu of Chersonese at the time when the Crimea was ruled by the Golden Horde. Nevertheless we must be cautious, if only in deference to the memory of the ingenuous Friar Benedict.

By the type of the small wine bowl on the ring stem, and by the nature of its pale yellow glaze and the style of its sgraffito outlines, where dotted lines are combined with dark brown spots on the areas of removed engobe, the vessel with the cynocephalus is close to a bowl from Sugdeya (Sudak), which depicts a male figure standing frontally. Besides their shared general approach to form and decor, the two bowls are connected by the characteristic drawing of the three-part blossoming shrub on each figure’s right (fig. 2).

On the bowl from Sudak, a youth (without headdress according to Byzantine tradition) is clothed in a striped, fitted caftan with an axial slit and elbow-length sleeves tapering almost to knee level. One can see a garment with tight sleeves under his caftan; this undergarment and a wide band across the caftan are reproduced in reserve, as is a geometrical figure above the right shoulder of the youth. To his left is a stylized tree. His face is schematically portrayed en face. A loss in the area of his head makes it impossible to describe his haircut, but above his right shoulder an earring is clearly discernible. The young man’s left hand is raised to his breast; his right arm is bent at the elbow and he holds a wine horn in his right hand. On the exterior the bowl is decorated with an arcaded motif typical of the thirteenth century.

A whole series of intact bowls and fragments of glazed sgraffito ceramics with images similar to the find from Sudak is known. As early as 1914 one fragmented bowl of this type was found in Constantinople. Other finds come from the Byzantine provinces, but predominantly they are connected with the territory of northeastern Bulgaria and originate from medieval Varna, Nesebur, and Caliacra, the Caliacra examples from the time of the second Bulgarian kingdom, and all dating from the thirteenth century. Actually, in all bowls of this type, the personages depicted wear cloth-
ing nearly identical to, or sometimes with small variations from, the dress of the youth on the bowl found at Sudak. All of them have wine horns; since the level of wine filling the horn is indicated, one may surmise that these horns were made of glass.

A series of vessels with the very same personage dictates that we think about the reason for choosing this type of hero. We can suppose him to represent a cupbearer, whose traditional function at a feast is not only to pour out or ladle, but also to bring wine. The Umayyad poet al-Akhtal, a Christian by parentage and a recognized “master of wine poetry,” had a youth who served as a cupbearer (al-saqi): “A garland [probably of flowers] and earrings are used for his embellishment...his dress is tucked up.... The color of his skin is reddish...it is possible that he is a Greek by birth....” Of these four formal tokens of a cupbearer in Arabian wine poetry, only one—an earring in the right ear of the youth—remains common to our vessels. Although in the Arabian East peasant girls are also well known to have been cupbearers, it is beyond any doubt that the hero depicted on our bowls is male. In the verses of Abu Nuwas, who was Muslim, the jacket of a beautiful cupbearer “complains of the squeezing caused by the two pomegranates of her breasts,” which by no means could be said about our hero.

The meaningful center of the composition of the Crimean find as well as of those to which it is related is the wine horn. At the time for draining “the sky of wine,” the figure of a cupbearer with a horn, repeated again and again on the surface of the goblet surface glossed by fragrant moisture, is an invitation to continue friendly merrymaking and a symbol of an unquenchable thirst for life. This state is timeless; as Osip Mandelstam has said, “If you are a cupbearer and a scooping fellow / Give me power without empty froth / To drink to the health of the revolving tower / Of close and wild azure.”

At first sight it might appear strange that we take recourse to the foreign cultural experience of an Arabian and a Russian poet to explain the image of a cupbearer on a Byzantine vessel. However, our subject deals with a deep-seated aspect of culture. Furthermore, the categorizing of ceramics into “Byzantine” and “non-Byzantine” is rather a matter of convention, and one might add that in the post-Golden Horde Crimean town of Solkhat/Eski-Krym, where it seems the Islamic vector prevailed in the city’s development up to the middle of the seventeenth century, “Islamic” ceramics were manufactured by “all the infidels,” i.e., by the local Greeks, Armenians, and Jews.

Nevertheless, let us return to our main idea. Perhaps one may wonder that the universality of the subject of wine and the human weakness for merrymaking and the hospitable table so characteristic of the Byzantines did not call into being a Byzantine poetry of wine. This distinguishing feature was brought to our attention by the famous translator and commentator of the Alexiad, Professor Yakov Lyubarsky, who drew attention to the wine motifs in the poems of Ptochoprodromus. Nevertheless, a lack of wine poetry as a genre cannot overshadow the obvious inclination of the Byzantines for the heathen feast. It is no accident that Gregory of Nazianzus (330–390), in a poetic dialogue with his own soul, wrote:

It is possible to say that our material, if we do not take it as a fancy of the potter’s excited imagination, responds to the call of St. Gregory’s soul by the “ardent Bacchus” with consent rather than negation.

Another expressive example of the polyphony of the Golden Horde’s street is a large bowl glazed in pale yellow with green drips, which we found in 1986 (fig. 3). This bowl was discovered in a closed complex with coins of the first half of the fourteenth century during the exploration of the central sector of medieval Solkhat. Regarding its function, it is likely that the vessel should be attributed to the class of pouring vessels. To understand its place on a festive table it is essential to note that the inner sides of the bowl were decorated, in sgraffito technique, with a fish swimming towards the bottom, between pomegranate bushes. On the exterior the bowl features a banquet scene in a pomegranate garden (figs. 4, 5), with five or six young men participating (the presence of one figure is in doubt because of the chipped surface). Clothed in tunics (kamis) and elegant turbans rolled in the wide and sumptuous Arabian fashion, the young men differ in their hairstyle. Two with single braids are undoubtedly Turks. Another, with a short haircut, imitates an acrobat; he juggles three goblets, drinking up the last one (fig. 5). The participants of the banquet on the Solkhat bowl are emphatically young, adventurous equals at the feast. It
Fig. 3. Wine bowl (?). Found in Crimea, Solkhat. Golden Horde, first half of fourteenth century.

Fig. 4. Wine bowl (?). Detail of exterior.
is natural to suppose that they are representatives of the association of young men calling themselves fitâyı̇n (singular fitan, "young man" or "youth").

As early as the ninth century unions (clubs) of the fitâyı̇n sprang up in the Near East, where they were called futuwwa (youth, adolescence, knighthood, chivalry). The fitâyı̇n followed a certain code of honor, vowing faithfulness in friendship, generosity, nobleness, courage, and chastity (only unmarried men were admitted to the brotherhood). Born in the cities of Iraq and Khurasan as associations outside the state, the futuwwa movement was used by Caliph al-Nasir in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries for expansion of the caliphate’s authority beyond the bounds of Iraq. In 1208 a decree was issued declaring the caliph the head of the movement, thus laying the foundation for the court futuwwa. “But the Mongol catastrophe,” G. von Grunebaum writes, “swept away the court futuwwa before it became firmly established and left only the ‘bürgerlich’ futuwwa, which ran the lesser political risk and had no relation to any one system of government. It persisted in various local forms in different periods, being particularly stable in Turkic territory.”27 The ideas and ceremonial rites of the futuwwa reached Asia Minor in the time of Izz al-Din Kaykawus I (1210–19), who was the father-in-law of al-Nasir. However, of more importance is that its popular form was picked up by the Akhī (brotherhoods), in which the main role was played by the handicrafts guilds. Ibn Battuta reports: 28

The Akhī live throughout the country populated by the Turks, in every province of Asia Minor, in every town and in every village. Through all the [Muslim] world there are no people like them, full of such care about foreigners, so striving for hospitality, restraint of tyrants, killing of the accomplices of tyrants and malefactors who act in concert with them….This community is also called futuwwa...

The brotherhoods of the Akhī, having crossed the borders of the southern Black Sea coast in 1222 with the Seljuks of Amir Husam al-Din Choban, about whom the chronicle of Ibn Bibi reports, put down roots on the northern coast and are known by the materials of the Golden Horde. In 1333, in Azak, Ibn Battuta came across a representative of the local association of the Fityā̇n Akhī Boçakçıl. The famous Moroccan arrived in the Golden Horde from Solkhat (the Venetian part of the town was called Tana), where, according to the Turkic epitaph of a gravestone of 1374, there lived and died an alemdar (standard bearer) of the local (?) Akhis.29

Thus there are positive grounds for the presence of “men of the futuwwa” in a feast scene from the Solkhat
find. Hence this is the first known image of Akhhi towns-
men in the medieval ceramics of the entire Muslim East. The bowl itself was made in the first half of the fourteen-
teenth century by a local potter who has learned the
texts of the Seljuk ceramic school of Anatolia.30

Our finds, as well as the logic of design evolution of the subject in sgraffito ceramics independent of the confessional affiliation of skilled ceramics masters, indicate growing attention to the subject of the new hero—the man of the town—in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whether he was a resident of the privileged quarters or a “knight of the side street.” Our investigations in Solkhat show that in the local East Crimean school both the Byzantine and the Seljuk traditions live in harmony without constraint among the potters manufacturing table vessels with graphic sgraffito drawing.

Living under the same sky, personages represented on ceramics of the Crimean, Bulgarian, and Anatolian finds, as well as their prototypes from Solkhat, Varna, or Amasia, were closer to each other than it would seem. K. Matschke notes the youth institutions similar to the Amasia, were closer to each other than it would seem. On ceramics of the Crimean, Bulgarian, and Anatolian manufacturing table vessels with graphic sgraffito drawing.

31 Their associations of the K. Matschke notes the youth institutions similar to the Amasia, were closer to each other than it would seem. 32 Their associations of the K. Matschke notes the youth institutions similar to the Amasia, were closer to each other than it would seem.

The State Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia

NOTES


2. I. Y. Krachkovsky, “Sasanidskaya chasha v stikhakh Abu Nu-

vaska” in Izbrannye sochineniya, vol. 2 (Moscow and Leningrad, 1956), p. 347. Betsi Shidfar, emphasizing the originality and uniqueness of the images in the verses of Abu Nuwas, cites as an example one of his wine poems with the lines “Here [on the wine goblets of silver] there are priests and crosses. / The priests are reading the Gospel, and above them / there is the wine sky, where stars are bubbles of air, / or small pearls, which were dropped into wine / by the hands of girls.” See B. Y. Shidfar, Abu Nuwas (Moscow, 1978), p. 75.


4. For the Bulgarian ceramics, see n. 17, below.

5. For the vessels of Famagusta in the collection of the Hermit-
tage, see N. V. Venyutseva, “Srednevekovaya glazurovannaya keramika iz sobraniya Ermitazha,” in A. N. Kirpichnikov, ed., Pamyatniki stary, Konsepitsi, Obktiyta, Versi: Pamyati V. D. Be-
letskogo (St. Petersburg, 1997).


noe iskusstvo Vizantii IV—XII vekov (St. Petersburg, 1997), p. 35; V. N. Zalesskaya, Prklednoe iskusstvo Vizantii IV—XII vekov v ego otnoshennii k antichnomu naslediyu. Dissertatsiya v vide nauch-
nogo doklada na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni doktora iskusstvovedeniya (St. Petersburg, 1998), p. 47.

8. V. P. Darkevich, Svetskoie iskusstvo Vizantiii: Proizvedeniya vизan-
titskogo khudozhestvennogo remesla v Vostochnoi Evrope XII—XXII vv. (Moscow, 1975), pp. 214, 215; N. N. Nikitenko, “Freski bashen Sofi Kievska o dinasticheskom brak Vladimirina i Anny: Ino-
strantsi v Vizantii,” in Vizantitzy za rubezem svoego otchestva: Tezisy dokladov konferentsii (Moscow, 1997), pp. 34, 35.

9. A. Georgyin, Remesla i byt v armianskikh miniaturakh (Ere-
van, 1973), tabl. XLI,1–4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.


13. Yurchenko, Imperia i kosmos, p. 126; A. Yourtchenko, “Ein asi-
atisches Bilderrätzel für die westliche Geschichtsschreibung: Ein unbekanntes Werk aus dem 13. Jh. (Der ‘Tschings Khan-

14. V. V. Radlov, “K voprosu ob uygurakh: Iz predisloviya k iz-
daniyu Kudatku-Bilik,” Zapiski Imperialskoy Akademii Nauk 72, prilozenie 2 (St. Petersburg, 1893); L. N. Potapov, “Volk v starinnykh narodnykh pover’akh i primetkah azbekov,” Kratkie soobshcheniya Instituta Etnografii AN SSSR 30 (Moscow, 1958).

15. M. G. Kramarovsky, “Vizantskaya i sel’dzhukskaya keramika sgraffito s temov vina i veselya kon. XII–perny pol. XIV v. (po materialam Kryma i Chernomorskogo poberezh’ya Bolga-


23. Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, 10 vols. (Istanbul, 1928–38) vol. 7, p. 662. According to the information of the Turkish traveler, in the middle of the seventeenth century the city of Eski-Krym numbered 500 houses and included four Muslim quarters, one Jewish quarter, and five quarters populated by Greeks and Armenians. In twenty shops, tilers and potters were “...all infidels, and they make earthenware pots to put honey and butter into. There is a pure clay similar to the Chinese white clay here. It is used for manufacturing various kinds of jugs, pots, dishes, and bowls for fruit drinks.” I am grateful to Prof. A. P. Grigoryev, who put at my disposal a copy of the translation of Evliya Çelebi’s report on Eski-Krym.


To many connoisseurs of the art of the book, the Sarre manuscript of *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā* of Jami is already well known from the numerous publications of parts of it in the twentieth century.¹ With its fineʿunwān (fig. 1), masterly nastālqīq writing (figs. 1–10), and superb margin paintings (figs. 2–10) and binding (fig. 11), the manuscript has always been considered to be of Persian origin due to its dated colophon of 964 (1557), published here for the first time (fig. 3). Usually, folios of the manuscript were published singly because of the quality of their margin paintings.² This paper attempts to discuss the much more complicated nature of this manuscript.

**HISTORY OF THE MANUSCRIPT**

Friedrich Sarre acquired the manuscript early in July 1906 from the book dealer and antiquarian Rudolf Haupt, of Halle an der Saale, for the sum of 1,200 marks.³ It is not certain whether the manuscript was complete, as it was already in single folios when acquired, probably due to the deterioration of the paper, which had loosened from the spine in earlier days; nevertheless, the folios were still with the binding (fig. 11). Martin Hartmann first published a note on it after its appearance at the Halle bookseller.⁴

The manuscript was first mentioned by Sarre in the catalogue of an exhibition on the art of the book at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin in the spring of 1910. Seventy-two single folios were exhibited at that time. The Berlin catalogue entry gives the complete number of folios as 139.⁵ Later in 1910 some folios were also shown in the Munich exhibition “Meisterwerke Muhammedanischer Kunst.” The catalogue entry this time gave the number of folios as 360, which is in marked contrast to folio counts in all earlier and later entries and thus must have been a printing mistake.⁶ Two folios and part of the binding of the manuscript were reproduced in another publication related to the Munich exhibition.⁷

Fig. 1. *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā*, illuminated ʿunwān (folio 1 verso) with the beginning of the text. Central Asia, probably Bukhara 964 (1557). Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (I. 1986.105). (Photo: courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
Following this, the manuscript and binding were exhibited in Frankfurt in 1932 along with other works of art from the Sarre Collection, and, for a last time before World War II, thirty folios and the binding were included in 1938 in a small exhibition of Islamic art of the book from the Sarre Collection in the Islamische Abteilung in Berlin. In the war years until 1945 the manuscript remained intact. Ernst Kühnel tried to acquire the portion of the Sarre Collection comprising the arts of the book for the Islamische Abteilung, but Friedrich Sarre was reluctant to sell under the difficult war conditions. Before Sarre died in Neubabelsberg in 1945, this part of the collection had already been transferred to southern Germany and later to Switzerland and thus survived the Second World War. The manuscript later on had to be dispersed by Maria and Marie-Luise Sarre to finance their life in exile in Switzerland. Numerous single folios are now in different collections, and the manuscript thus is one of the large number of books dispersed in the twentieth century. Under these circumstances it is impossible to give the exact number of single folios or the complete list of collections with single or multiple leaves in their charge.

In 1986 the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin was able to acquire fifty-four folios of the manuscript from the Sarre Collection, including both title pages. In 1988 the museum received the colophon folio (figs. 2–3) as a gift from Irene Kühnel-Kunze, wife of the late Ernst Kühnel. It had been presented to Kühnel by Maria Sarre on the occasion of his eightieth birthday in 1962. The Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin thus now houses fifty-five folios of this manuscript. At least twenty-five are known at present to exist in other collections, many more are still unaccounted for. A representative number of the folios in Berlin were shown in a studio exhibition, “Randmalereien in der islamischen Buchkunst,” in the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin in 1995.

THE MANUSCRIPT YÚSF VA ZULAYKHÁ

The manuscript seems to have consisted of 139 folios when acquired by Friedrich Sarre in 1906. The folios measure 26.3 cm x 15.4 cm. The ʿunwān folios, of which one is illustrated here (fig. 1), have rather small ansas projecting from the outer, dark blue border filled with lozenges. A thin border with cartouches encloses five rectangles partly framed by a gold border. The two horizontal rectangles contain golden cartouches, which were not inscribed with the title of the book.
The center vertical rectangle of the ‘unwân on folio 1 verso (fig. 1) has six lines in nastâ’iql, which are here quoted from the translation by David Pendlebury: 18

Lord, let a rosebud of hope blossom forth from eternal gardens, [lines 1–2]
to grace my garden with its smile [line 3]
and send with its scent my senses into raptures. [line 4]
In this abode of unceasing affliction, let me be ever mindful of your mercies. [lines 5–6]

The text continues on fol. 2a of the ‘unwân:

No thoughts in my heart but gratitude to you, no work for my tongue but uttering your praise. [lines 1–2]
Split open the musk pod of my genius and spread its fragrance from east to west! [lines 3–4]
You have made my heart a vast treasure-house of word-gems for my tongue to weigh. [lines 5–6]

The Persian text that follows is written with black ink in nastâ’iql, in two columns of fourteen lines each on burnished paper of superb quality, which has a brownish tint and gilded sprinkling. The text columns measure 14.3 cm x 6.7 cm. Headings are most often in two lines set in the center, and are written in gold, black, blue, or, most commonly, red ink. Besides two-line headings, those with one or three lines also occur. With the usual two-line headings, the folios have twelve lines of text. Around the text of the two ‘unwân folios and the following two folios, there is delicate abri painting in cloud form, including diagonal lines together with small spirals.19

**THE CALLIGRAPHER**

On the last folio (fig. 3) of the text, one line in Persian appears in each column: “Take your pen from the desolate plain of the page, and close your book on the melancholy business of writing.” Within the colophon triangle, two further lines follow: “Bid your tongue be silent, for silence is worth more than anything you could ever say” (lines 2–3). The following lines (4–7) are in Arabic and read “This copy has been penned by the noble servant, the sinner Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi in the year 964.”20

Fortunately the calligrapher Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi is one of those mentioned by the biographer Qadi Ahmad because his nastâ’iql script was highly prized not only among the Shaybanid Uzbek rulers but also in Iran among the Safavid rulers and, as will be seen later, in India.21 According to Qadi Ahmad, Mahmud b. Ishaq came from a village near Herat and may have been born there between 1510 and 1520. His father, Khwaja Ishaq, became mayor of Herat but was forced to leave with his family and children in 1528, when the city was seized by the Shaybanid ruler ‘Ubayd Khan Uzbek. The famous calligrapher Mawlana Mir ‘Ali was traveling with the same group of captives from Herat to Bukhara and took as his pupil Khwaja Mahmud, who received education and made such progress in Bukhara that his writing was preferred by some to that of his master, Mir
‘Ali, who may have died around 1533–35. By 1530–31, Mahmud b. Ishaq had already written a major work, The Collection of Wise Sayings of ‘Ali. Khwaja Mahmud spent some time in Bukhara but after the death of Ubayd Khan in 1539 evidently took up residence in Balkh, where he is said to have joined the service of Shah Husayn Balkhi Shihabi and thus added the title Shihabi to his own name. Qadi Ahmad writes, “Many people assembled round him and he had no need of making inscriptions and producing specimens; therefore his writing is scarce.”

However, apart from the Collection of the Wise Sayings of ‘Ali of 937 (1530–31) and the Yūsuf va Zulaykhā manuscript of 964 (1557) upon which we focus here, he wrote a further manuscript after having returned from Balkh to Bukhara to work for the Shaybanid ruler Abu’l Ghazi ‘Abdullah b. Iskandar (1557–98). Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi thus seems to have been rather productive, since he also wrote numerous single calligraphic specimens. He may have died in 991 (1583), when he was in his late sixties or early seventies.

The paper on which the text of the Yūsuf va Zulaykhā is written is in marked contrast to that on which the margins have been painted. The nastaʿlīq text of Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi, including the ‘unwān folios, seems to have been written in Bukhara in 964 (1557) and must have been remargined at a later date.

The ‘unwān folio, 1b (fig. 1), consists of two folios glued together, as it has been covered on the back by the same tan-colored paper as was used for the margin paintings. On all following folios, remargination was achieved by inserting the written text into new folios of a different color. The lines framing the text were ruled in gold, green, or red. The recto side of the colophon folio (fig. 2) has a margin painting of a landscape with animals on gray paper. The verso (fig. 3), shows a deliberate alteration of the folio paper. The upper third still has part of the original gray paper with scrollwork painting common throughout the manuscript and to be expected on this folio. The lower third of the folio, however, has been covered by light brown paper with landscape and animal painting. As a complete folio was used for this operation, without space for a text column, it could originally have come from either the beginning or the end folios of the manuscript. The purpose for covering the colophon folio was to hide numerous stamps and inscriptions, the text of which is given in the Appendix.

THE MARGIN PAINTINGS

The margin paintings, in gold on folios of different colors, have always been considered to be of Persian origin, and the date of 964 (1557) has likewise been accepted for them. There is universal agreement on their exceptionally fine quality. In 1910 Sarre viewed them as highlights of Persian painting; for Schulz in 1914, they belonged to the best of Persian painting, for B. W. Robinson they were “the work of an artist of the first rank,” and he believed them to have been executed in Qazvin. This was refuted in 1978 by A. Welch, who believed their artist to be “an unsigned master of great talent” and thought Bukhara to be their place of manufacture. In 1986 S. C. Welch called them “borders of royal quality.” As far as I can see, ever since Sarre professed the opinion in 1910, the margin paintings have been believed to be by one hand, namely, that of the calligrapher, Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi. Succeeding writers did not propose other artists’ names, nor did they consider a provenance differing from that of the text.

A number of folios of the ornamental group show sketch lines of a preliminary design that was not followed later on. This seems to hint at a fairly fast process of drawing the margins. As a result there can be little doubt that the margin painting of the folios was completed within a short time by an artist well acquainted with this sort of work.

Despite the numerous observations on the outstanding quality of the margin paintings, the general topic of margin or border paintings has been considered less important than others. In 1988, in his article “Manuscript Illumination,” Ettinghausen named a certain type of marginal drawing “a specially Safawid contribution” and called the repertoire of the Sarre Jami manuscript “wide.” Knowing the complete manuscript, he already saw the importance of its ornamental folios in comparison to art forms with similar designs, such as carpets, and he referred to almost all other important manuscripts with extraordinary border paintings. In 1979 S. C. Welch called attention to the extraordinary quality of the border drawings of a Sa’dī Gulistān of 1525–30 and also to those of a Khamsa of Nizami of around 1540, which were thus the Persian ancestors of the Sarre Jami margin paintings. Mughal artists must have known these and similar margin paintings. In 1983 Norah Titley gave a well-balanced introduction to both Persian and Mughal border paintings. Milo C. Beach has written on both late Akbar- and early Ja-
hangir-period border paintings and thus has shown the best parallels for the Sarre Jami Yūsuf va Zulaykhā.\textsuperscript{37} In 1987 Marie L. Swietochowski wrote on the decorative borders of the Kévorkian album of the Jahangir and Shah Jahan period, which due to its overwhelming use of flowers and its stylistic differences is of a later period than the Sarre Jami.\textsuperscript{38}

The paper used for the gilded margin paintings of the Yūsuf va Zulaykhā manuscript was tinted in different shades. Besides light and dark brown, shades of light and dark blue, light and dark gray, greenish,\textsuperscript{39} pink, ochre or tan, and whitish paper occur. Due to the process of discoloration, perhaps because of aging and exposure to light, the original appearance is at times difficult to reconstruct. The gold painting definitely looks more attractive on the darker shades such as dark brown or dark blue than on the lighter tones. The sequence of paper shades cannot be determined until a complete reconstruction of the manuscript is possible. As already noted by Sarre in 1910, the general layout of the manuscript was such that the folios confronting each other were designed as pairs.

Besides landscapes with various animals, there are arabesque decorations, but human beings are absent. The landscape drawings with animals thus can be seen as rectangular compositions enclosing two text panels. The artist was careful to set the landscape and animals on facing folios into a dramatic exchange around the two panels. On the ornamental folios, the pattern of scrolls and arabesques or vine leaves was complete only when the manuscript was opened and two adjoining folios made a symmetrical design. This compositional principle has unfortunately been destroyed due to the dispersal of the folios.

**MARGIN PAINTINGS WITH ORNAMENTAL COMPOSITIONS**

A first group of compositions consists of stylized flowering plants with additional arabesque designs. This is one of the main compositional groups in the manuscript, related to some details in the Jahangir album in Berlin\textsuperscript{40} and to folios from a Sa’di Gulistān published by Schulz,\textsuperscript{41} and showing more distant similarities to some folios of the Kévorkian album,\textsuperscript{42} which are of a different style and use other types of flowers. Carpet designs must also be seen in this context, as “the artists of the book atelier...developed the patterns of ornamentation that were then adapted for use in all other media...”\textsuperscript{43} Three different types from this group are illustrated here.

**Ornamental symmetrical composition with flowers (fig. 4)**

The folio has a composition of single-spiral S-scrolls set with rosettes and single leaves. Each scroll is intertwined with an adjacent one. While the spirals have ample space on three sides of the page, they are smaller in the narrow border near the spine. The meeting points of the scrolls are set with large, palmette-like flowers alternating in direction and framed by additional cartouche forms made of arabesque leaves, which are placed atop the scrolls. Each cartouche is crowned by a fleur-de-lis leaf. The cartouches thus point in the same direction as the palmettes—either diagonally outward toward the corners, or inward toward the text panel. In the narrower inside margin of this verso folio are three half-cartouches with half-flowers that would have been completed on the adjoining recto folio. The place where the scroll changes direction is set with twin rosettes with an additional lanceolate leaf on top. Depending on the color of the adjacent page, the composition would be more or less impressive.

**Ornamental symmetrical composition with fish (fig. 5)**

A second group of ornamental compositions of different designs has additional animals set into symmetrical compositions. This group seems to have been extremely popular; birds and fish especially are typical.\textsuperscript{44} One example has been chosen to represent this group. The composition of this folio consists of two systems of scrolls, one on top of the other. The secondary system uses spiral scrolls similar to those of fig. 4 but reversed in direction and with additional leaves, creating a different sense of space. On top of this scroll system is placed a second scroll made up of lanceolate leaves and arabesque tendrils. Atop the lanceolate leaves are fish that seem to swim into the leaf stems. The composition of this folio gains its tension from its combination of two different scrolls, which make up a harmoniously filled space. Fish are a common motif on these folios, either as parts of tendrils or as whirls. Fish of a larger shape occur on borders of the Berlin Jahangir Album.\textsuperscript{45}
Ornamental symmetrical composition with animals and mythical creatures (fig. 6)

A third group of ornamental compositions consists of scroll designs set with animals, birds, and mythical creatures. One of the best examples of the compositions of this group is the verso of a folio in the David Collection (fig. 5).\footnote{46} Two scroll systems cross each other. Points where they intersect are set with the heads of animals (bears) or beasts (kilins) swallowing palmette flowers. Single tendrils end in dragon heads that bite into other tendrils and in white-dotted animal heads swallowing fleeing birds. The repertoire of this folio is, of course, well known from both Persian and Mughal miniatures\footnote{47} and carpets with fantastic beasts.\footnote{48} The creatures whose heads are represented here also occur in complete form on many of the pages with animals and mythical beasts (fig. 9).
MARGIN PAINTINGS WITH ANIMALS AND MYTHICAL BEASTS IN LANDSCAPE SETTINGS

Landscape settings follow a common pattern. Trees with very different kinds of leaves grow from rocky grounds. Large single trees have straight trunks; small ones on hills are perhaps meant to be far away. Consistent perspective is absent, however, because “faraway” details can be found anywhere on the margins. Plants are diverse, with different types of blossoms or none at all. Numerous trees with bush-like leaves have parallels in Mughal miniatures painted in Lahore in the late Akbar years. Clouds are always the highly stylized cloudbands of Chinese origin.

Typically in very small scale at the top corner of certain folios are inserted small architectural images, such as domed buildings partly hidden behind trees, which have at times been called “hermitages of shaykhs”—perhaps an indication that these landscapes were seen as real. Small-scale architectural images can be found in both Safavid and Mughal paintings and seem to hint at European influence. The best parallels can be found in Mughal paintings of the late sixteenth century.

Animals on a single page are usually rendered in pairs or even as small families. Their motion within the natural surroundings shows the artist’s extremely fine eye for detailed life studies. This is lively painting at its finest, and in a way it can be called an encyclopedia of its time for animal representation and ornamental pattern.

Usually the atmosphere is one of calm, but on many pages one can find animals either chasing each other or in combat, while others simply look on or rest (see, for example, fig. 2). If a bird is shown attacking a hare, a second hare appears running away but looking back at what is happening. Details exhibit wit and humor, as when a duck or heron hisses at a phoenix chasing it or a dragon in a tree snarls at the phoenix above while two young birds remain oblivious in their nest. An especially successful folio depicting a fight between dragon and phoenix is in the David Collection. Its virtuosity bears witness to a great artist, and it should be compared with an identical but less successful illustration on a page of an illuminated Shāhnāma in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. The animals can be grouped into mammals, birds, snakes—specifically the cobra (Naja naja)—fish, and insects. Among the mammals numerous different species can be identified, of which the hare is the most frequent and the caracal, wild goat, antelope, and deer are also common. Among the larger animals the lion, tiger, hunting-leopard, moufflon, and zebu are also frequent. Birds are very common, especially herons, snake-birds, ducks, and parrots, among many others.

*Folio with a reclining lion (fig. 7)*

This folio belongs to those with a typical mixture of animals resting or running. In the center of the left margin a lion has killed a wild goat while a second...
goat is fleeing. A second lion rests in very typical fashion, its head turned back and one front paw across the other. In certain details such as the paws this lion corresponds with a resting lion on a single folio of Mughal Indian art dated by S. C. Welch to the early Akbar period, around 1585.59 On other folios of the Berlin manuscript lions are shown attacking or killing zebu or buffalo, chasing other animals, or resting in seemingly calm pairs.

Fig. 7. Margin painting with reclining lion. India, Mughal, ca. 1590–1610. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (I. 1986.153). (Photo: courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)

Fig. 8. Margin painting with turkey cock and two turkey hens. India, Mughal, ca. 1590–1610. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (I. 1986.125). (Photo: courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)

Folio with a turkey cock and two turkey hens (fig. 8)

The turkey cock and two hens are drawn on the lower half of a verso folio. The cock is advancing from the right towards an alerted hen, while a second hen watches the action. It seems that this scene could only have been drawn by someone who had actually seen these animals. The artist must have been proud of it, as it recurs in mirror image on a recto folio.60 The scene immediately suggests the famous turkey cock of 1612
on Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi’s manuscript of Yūsuf va Zulaykha of 964 (1557)

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painted by Ustad Mansur for Emperor Jahangir. It is known that this animal reached Akbar’s court in 1577; therefore the margins could not have been painted before that date.61

Folio with two rhinoceroses (fig. 9)

Another indication for the Mughal origin of these paintings can be seen in the inclusion of two rhinoceroses at the top of a recto page.62 The animals are shown in side view facing left; one of them is grazing while the other looks backward. They have identical features, namely one small curving horn apiece and a sort of saddle cloth with a square grid pattern meant to indicate the mail of their hide. Their rendering is thus very similar to that of two Indian rhinoceroses on a painting of around 1590 in the Bahārnāma in the British Museum63 and very different from those in a Persian Shāhnāma of 1605.64

Although this has never been discussed in earlier publications, the types of animals that appear in the Berlin folio margin paintings—for example, the turkey cocks and hens (fig. 8), which appear twice, the two rhinoceroses (fig. 9), and the cobra—and the way in which the resting lion (fig. 7) is depicted, both find their closest parallels in Mughal miniature painting of the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. In addition, the lively nature of the drawing reflects the Indian artist’s preference for more naturalistic, less conventionalized representation.65

Folio with mythical animals (fig. 10)

Appearing in company with real animals are those from the mythical world, such as dragons, phoenixes, kilins and winged lions. These creatures appear in combat both with other mythical animals and with real animals and thus belong to the same world. Phoenixes are shown in close combat with kilins or dragons and also attack ducks or carry antelope away (fig. 10); kilins attack wild goats and dragons; lion-kilins attack deer-kilins; and tiny lion-kilins chase birds. As already mentioned, dragon heads also appear at the end of scrolls (fig. 6) in inhabited foliage.66 In comparison with Safavid border paintings, however, mythical animals play a less prominent role here, which probably is a further indication of the Mughal origin of these margins.67

THE BINDING

The binding of the manuscript was first published by Sarre in 1923.68 In 1949 it was acquired by the Islamic Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.69 The exterior consists of varnished painting on a paper-maché ground; front and back covers both have central rectangular panels, each with a different landscape-and-animal scene surrounded by a border of elongated, lobed cartouches filled with symmetrical scrolls in gold.

Fig. 9. Margin painting with two rhinoceroses. India, Mughal, ca. 1590–1610. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (I. 1986.127). (Photo: courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
on a red ground. The ground color of the panels is dark red, against which most animals appear in white. Plants have dark leaves, and blossoms are rendered in red. The interior of the binding is red leather with a gilded floral design.

At the center of the front cover (fig. 11) appears an animal combat in which a lion attacks a nilgai. Disturbed by the combat, two lynx run in opposite directions, while in the top register another nilgai, the mate of the lion’s prey, is also fleeing. In both the upper and lower registers, birds chase each other, while the lower lion seems to be annoyed by a pair of herons.

As Sarre noted, the design of the binding—both front and back—is closely linked to that of the margin paintings of the manuscript. The zigzag movement on both covers is typical of the composition of the margin paintings in general, and the animals’ liveliness is also characteristic.

Although limited in number, the animals shown on the covers seem intended to suggest to the reader what was to follow on the manuscript folios. Thus the reclining lion (fig. 11) resembles the resting lion on one of the margin paintings (fig. 7), and the two cranes appear in nearly identical form on another of the folios.
However, the mythical animals that feature prominently in the manuscript are absent from either cover of the binding.

In addition to pictorial elements that link it closely to the margin paintings, the binding shows marks of deterioration, such as worm holes and missing parts at the sides, that are consistent with damage to the folios. The binding thus can be considered original to the remargined manuscript, and this in turn would hint at a kitāb-khana in which both it and the paintings were produced.

All aspects of this manuscript so far described would seem to indicate that the text written by Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi was transferred from Bukhara sometime after its completion in 1557 and remargined somewhere in Mughal India—probably in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, during the late years of Akbar’s reign, or in the first decade of the seventeenth century, during the early reign of Jahangir. At the same time a binding was also made. Since the state of the manuscript before it reached Mughal India is not known, one can only speculate that it had margins that were not accepted by the new patron. According to the seals and inscriptions on the colophon folio verso, remargination and binding must have been completed before 1642 (see Appendix, below).

The artist who painted the margins is presently unknown, but he must have belonged to a generation trained by Iranian artists at the Mughal court or by the pupils of this generation. The margin paintings suggest that the manuscript, highly esteemed due to the calligraphy of the famous Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi, was remargined for a high-ranking patron in Mughal India in the fascinating period when Safavid artists had already laid the foundation of the Mughal school and the work of Iranian artists was newly appreciated and blended into the Mughal style. Due to the numerous parallels of these margin paintings not only with manuscript painting but also with Mughal carpets of this period, one wonders whether there was not a kitāb-khana in which designers worked in the arts of the book and other media as well.

**APPENDIX**

By Claus-Peter Haase

There are seal prints and reading notations under the illuminated paper pasted over the lower part of the colophon folio verso (fig. 3) so as to leave free only the triangular colophon of the manuscript.

Special infra-red photography makes visible not only the part of the verso side of the colophon page that is now covered, but also—in reverse—the text on the other (recto) side of the page, which shows through an effect less pronounced in the colophon area, thus complicating the reading of what is covered. The painted illumination on the paper used to cover the seals and inscriptions also makes deciphering them more difficult.

Of eight (?) round and two (?) oval seal prints on the margin as well as on the original text folio the following are readable:

1. Seal in the margin, lower middle: bandā-yi Shāh Jahān / ʿtimād-i Jahān, “servant of the King of the World [Shah Jahan], ʿtimad-i Jahān” [title of courtier], to which belong at least the following two notations:

   a) seven lines, pointed: sana 31 / bist ù hashtum-i shahr-i/ Muharram-harām / ʿIbrāhīm Khān (?)/ 31 arkhās al-ʿibād /...khavās-i sultān...(the year 31 [of the rule of Shah Jahan], 28 Muharram, Ibrahim Khan, the lowest of the servants [of God], courtier to the Sultan...).

   b) to the left of this, in nastālīq script: 28 Zi Ḥijja sana-yi 27 / az vujāh-i Hasan Khān (?)...khavās-i sultān.../ qimāt 1 Lek (28 Zi-l-Ḥijja of the year 27 [of the rule of Shah Jahan], what lay before Hasan Khan, courtier to the Sultan...worth one lek). The year 27 of Shah Jahan corresponds to 1064 (hence Nov. 8, 1654) but since the date is the twenty-eighth day of the last month (Zu l-Ḥijja), this could well mean the year 1063 (hence Nov. 19, 1653).

2. Below, in nastālīq script: bist ù shishum-i Zi Qa’dā az nazār-i,..., with oval seal print Fazlak. Seal print no.1 is repeated above to the right, with the reading notation above it in Diwani script: sana 31 / al-faqūr / 25 (?)/ Rabī’ / `arz-i itidā shuda (year 31 [1068/1657–58], it has been viewed).

3. Two older seal prints have been set close to the point of the colophon. The lower one is legible: jānim (?) Sāliḥ Khān /.../ sana 1052 (?) (1642?). Reading note to the left in Diwani: Sāli (?)/ 7 shahr-i Muharram sana-yi 32 `arz shuda...2 (7 Muharram of the year 32 [1069, i.e., Oct. 4, 1658], it has been looked at).

Below this, crossing over towards the added margin paper, in nastālīq script: wāqi-a-yi šdzah (?)-i Rabī’ ul-avval sana 31 / `arz-i itidā tajwīd.../ Mahmūd... (happened 13[?] Rabī’ 1, year 31 [Dec. 19, 1657], Mahmud...viewed the well-done [copy]).

Small note to the right of the point of the colophon: bistum-i shahr-i Rabī’ ul-avval sana-yi 31 az vujāh...and
right next to it: shishum-i shahr-i Rabi’ ul-awwal / tahvîl-i Muhammad banda-yi kamârîn-i Khânâzâdân-i / Muhammad rasîl (?) (20th Rabi’ I of year 31 [Dec. 26, 1657], what lay before . . .) and (6th Rabi’ I, the altering by Muhammad, the humblest of the offspring of [the Prophet] Muhammad).

4. Next to an illegible seal print, in the middle margin, a note in Diwani: hizdhaḥ 18 shahr-i Zî l-Qa’dâ sama-yi 14 / ‘arz-i dîdâ shud (it was viewed on 18th Zu-l-Qa’dâ, year 14 [?], [i.e., Feb. 14, 1642]).

Further below, there are more dates, in the system corresponding to the years of Shah Jahan’s rule, and names of courtiers, e.g., Muhafiz Khan, with the note banda-yi ‘amm-i pâdshâh ‘Abdulkâhiq Khân . . .

The quality of the Diwani script reveals the hand of a scribe of the chancellery, and for the other notations, scribes of this rank are well imaginable. Therefore we believe that these notes represent reading notations for this manuscript by courtiers of Shah Jahan. The meaning of the indication tahvîl (alteration, change) is too unclear to bear theories on what aspect of manuscript production it refers to.

Museum für Islamische Kunst
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

NOTES

1. The calligraphy, history of the manuscript, margin painting, and binding are considered here in grateful recognition of Michael Rogers’s numerous contributions towards the knowledge and understanding of Islamic art, of which I became aware during his frequent visits to Berlin, and in remembrance of his friendship with Klaus Brisch, who was able to acquire many of the pages of this outstanding Sarre manuscript during his tenure as head of the Berlin Museum of Islamic Art in 1986. I gratefully acknowledge the help of two individuals on questions about this manuscript since its acquisition in 1986: Joachim Bautze first mentioned the idea of a Mughal origin of the margin paintings to me in 1986–87. It is to his credit that I followed this path, and I thank him for his help. Elke Niewöhner discussed, read, and translated all relevant text passages, for which I am also extremely thankful. The help of Claus-Peter Haase is gratefully acknowledged as well, since it is to his credit that the stamps and inscriptions were deciphered and could be integrated at the very last stage into the Appendix, above. Numerous further individuals in museums or private collections helped me to obtain a better knowledge of this dispersed manuscript, and I thank them all.

2. F. Sarre and F. R. Martin, Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910, 4 vols. (Munich, 1912), vol. 1, pl. 31 (no. 693, vine-leaf decoration), and pl. 32 (no. 693, erroneously ascribed bookbinding), and vol. 4 (Supplement), no. 693, title folio and page with margin painting with animals. Ph. W. Schulz, Die persisch-islamische Miniaturmalerei (Leipzig, 1914), pl. 124 (title folio) with exchanged captions, and pl. 125 (two folios). Pl. 125 right has a margin painting that was drawn by a different hand than were the others. E. Köhnel, Miniaturmalerei im islamischen Orient (Berlin, 1922), fig. 71. E. Köhnel, Islamische Schriftkunst (Berlin and Leipzig, 1942), fig. 67. B. W. Robinson et al., Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book (London, 1976), p. 183, pls. 55–56. A. Welch, Collection of Islamic Art (cat. of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection), 4 vols. (Geneva, 1978), vol. 3, pp. 184–87 (calligraphy 8–8C).

3. A card file by Sarre noting the place of acquisition and price of his illuminated and illustrated books does not include this manuscript. The bill for the manuscript and a further item, a Persian saddlecloth, was sent by R. Haupt to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum on May 31, 1906 (Erwerbungsakten F. No. 81/1906, Zentralarchiv der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin). On May 23, 1906, these objects had already arrived by courier. On June 23, 1906, R. Haupt was keen to know the decision of the museum, as he had another interested customer in Berlin. On July 9, 1906, the saddlecloth was returned, and Sarre was asked about the manuscript by the museum administration; by this date he must have made up his mind to acquire it.

4. After its appearance in Halle, the manuscript was dealt with in May 1906 in a short paper by Martin Hartmann, “Eine persische Miniaturenhandschrift,” in Orientalistische Literaturzeitung 9 (1906): 281–83. Hartmann read the colophon correctly and stated that the manuscript had been in complete disarray when he first saw it. Therefore he restored it to its original order. A remark written on the inside of the binding is said to have stated that there originally were more than 136 folios. As the original count could not be read with complete certainty, however, some pages may have been missing, according to Hartmann: he was of the opinion that pages 88.17 to 98.6 in the Bombay edition of 1893 were missing. However, he also noted that this lacuna could not be detected on the basis of any evident asymmetry of the margin paintings. The Berlin newspaper Berliner Lokalanzeiger of June 3, 1906 (no. 278) included a short note on the appearance of the important manuscript and of Hartmann’s research.

5. Kö nigliche Museen, Berlin Kunsthistorisches Museum, Katalog der Sonderausstellung orientalischer Buchkunst, Handschriften, und Miniaturen aus den Ländern des Islam und aus Ost-Turkest an (Berlin, 1910), no. 145. The count of 139 folios was written on a torn and stained page of the binding now in the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (49.140). The page was detached from the binding and could not be located in October 2003. However, the information from which I am quoting was written on a file card: “Sarre 11. . . Text auf 139 Blättern Zier- und Pflanzen- motive in Goldzeichnung umrahmt…” This also shows that the manuscript had the number “Sa 11” in the Sarre manuscript collection. I am extremely grateful to Marilyn Jenkins-Madina and Navina Haidar for their help in this matter.

7. Sarre and Martin, *Meisterwerke*, no. 693, pl. 31. In pl. 32, no. 693, a binding is erroneously shown as belonging to the manuscript.

8. *Sammlung F. u. M. Sarre. Katalog der Ausstellung im Städelischen Kunstinstitut* (Frankfurt am Main, 1932) nos. 315 (folios) and 394 (binding).

9. Staatliche Museen in Berlin, *Islamische Abteilung: Sonderausstellung Islamische Buchkunst aus Privatbesitz, August bis November 1938*, p. 4. According to a loan list dated June 30, 1938, all items included in this exhibition were from the Sarre Collection. Thirty folios were loaned by Sarre, including the binding, numbered KF 315. At that time the single folios were sandwiched between glass panels in boxes. Apparently thirty folios made up one box. This method of conservation was still the one seen by the author in 1986 on acquisition of the Berlin folios.

10. The details are to be found in the correspondence between Ernst Kühnel and Friedrich Sarre in the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin.


12. A letter by María Sarre has the details of this gift, which was one of at least two miniatures presented to Ernst Kühnel on this special occasion. The folio was inventoried as I. 1988.18. It had been transferred to the Museum für Islamische Kunst in 1986. María Sarre and Ernst Kühnel had known each other at least as early as 1910, when both Friedrich Sarre and Ernst Kühnel were involved in the preparation of the exhibition in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin mentioned in n. 5, above.

13. These collections include the following: the David Collection, Copenhagen (see K. v. Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection* [Copenhagen, 2001], cat. no. 17 [32b/1987]). The David Collection owns two further folios (32a/1987 and 32c/1987). The help of Kjeld von Folsach in this matter is much acknowledged. The Sadruddina Aga Collection, Geneva (see Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art*, vol. 3, pp. 184–87, calligraphy 8–8C), acquired at Christie’s London, Dec. 4, 1975, lots 99 and 102. The Keir Collection, London (see Robinson, *Keir Collection*, vol. 3, pp. 228–31, pls. 55–56). Of the four folios in the Keir Collection, only two are shown in the plates. I am extremely thankful to Edmund de Unger for the help he provided in a letter of May 17, 1995, in which he stated that he had acquired the folios from María Sarre in 1970. Los Angeles County Museum of Art M. 85.146 (acquired with funds provided by the Nasli M. Heeramanek Collection, gift of Joan Palevsky, purchased in 1985 from Spink and Sons, Ltd.). The Brooklyn Museum, New York (see Brooklyn Museum, *The Collector’s Eye: The Ernest Erickson Collections at the Brooklyn Museum of Art* [New York, 1987], no. 184). Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des antiquités orientales, inv. no. MAO 343: the folio was bequeathed to the Louvre in 1957 by Stéphanie de Neuville and was published by Jean David-Weill in *La Revue des Arts* 4 (1957). I am very grateful to Sophie Makariou for providing these details to me in a letter dated Mar. 14, 1995. Linden-Museum, Stuttgart (see J. Kalter, *Abteilungsführ-


16. This is probably due to where the Sarre count began. The colophon folio has the number 136. However, just as the folio I. 1986.105, with the recto of the ‘unwîn, has a completely illuminated folio following it, a further folio after the colophon folio could also have existed. In his publications in 1910 (see note 5, above) and in a later work (F. Sarre, *Islamic Bookbindings* [Berlin, 1923]) Sarre mentions 139 folios.


20. I. 1988.18 verso. The recto side of the folio has the usual fourteen lines.


23. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art*, vol. 4, pp. 63–65 (Ms. 17); Welch, *Calligraphy in the Arts of the Muslim World*, pp. 175–76, no. 74.


25. I am much indebted to Hans-Casper Graf von Bothmer for enabling me to recognize remargined folios.

26. Due to the kindness of the photographer Gerald Schultz of the Gemäldesammlung und to the help of Claus-Peter Haase of the Museum für Islamische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, it has become possible to see and interpret different stamps and numerous inscriptions on the colophon folio. The Appendix, above, gives the results of Haase’s readings.


31. S. C. Welch, in his expert opinion on the Sarre collection in a letter of September 29, 1986: “Another important series of folios with borders of royal quality.... The nasta‘îq script is of exceptional quality and the many borders drawn in gold of arabesques and flora and fauna set in incredible landscapes offer a veritable encyclopedia of Safavid ornamental motifs.
Moreover, with the Gulistan borders, they provide the source of many ideas later elaborated in the ateliers of the Mughal emperor Jahangir."

32. Schulz, *Miniaturmalerei*, pl. 125 (right) has a folio by a different artist. It seems that only a few folios were given new margins by a different hand, probably because they were damaged.


34. S. C. Welch, *Wonders of the Age: Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting, 1501–1576* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), nos. 43–46, 52, and 60. A compilation of this important manuscript and its very diverse margin paintings is still lacking.

35. Schulz, *Miniaturmalerei*, pl. 122 illustrates a folio from the *Gulistan* of Sa’di with a border painted in Mughal India, probably by the same artist who painted the Sarre Jami, due to the use of identical flowers and lions’ heads in both works. Pl. 121 has a Mughal overall design that does not belong to the repertoire of the Sarre Jami but seems to be by the same hand. Schulz’s pls. 69–70 could be by different hands: pl. 70 has geese on the top margin related to the Sarre Jami. Research into the authors of the margin paintings in this manuscript is needed, because borders by different artists seem to have been used for its separate folios.


39. According to A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art*, vol. 3, no. 8. This color does not appear on the folios in Berlin.


41. See n. 35, above.

42. Swietochowski, "Decorative Borders," pp. 45–78, where these compositions fill the margins much more densely and thus clearly depart from the style of the Sarre Jami.


44. This has already been noted by Robinson (Keir Collection, p. 185) and by A. Welch (*Collection of Islamic Art*, vol. 3, pp. 186–87).


46. Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam*, no. 17 (the side of the folio not illustrated).


50. In contrast to Safavid cloudbands (cf. Gierlichs, *Drache–Phönix–Doppeladler*, no. 23, pl. 3, a folio from the famous Sa’di *Gulistan* of 1525–30, probably painted by Sultan Muhammad), they tend to become rather small, schematic ornaments always drawn from the left side as seen in figs. 6–10, above.


56. Due to the help in April 1995 of the zoologist D. Jung, then at the Institute of Zoology of the Free University of Berlin, it was possible to identify a large number of the animals depicted on the folios in Berlin. His help is gratefully acknowledged.

57. These species are lion (Panthera leo), tiger (Panthera tigris), leopard (Panthera pardus), hunting leopard (Acinonyx jubatus), caracal (Caracal caracal), red fox (Vulpes vulpes), desert fox or corsac (Alopex corsac), jackal (Canis sp.), genet (Genetta etta sp.), brown bear (Ursus arctos), hare (Lepus sp.), stag (Axis axis), red deer (Cervus elaphus), nilgai (Boselaphus tragocamelus), antelope (Antilope cervicapra), moufflon or wild sheep (Ovis ammon), wild goat (Capra sp.), yak or ox (Bos [Bos] mutus), arni or water buffalo (Bos [Bubalus] arnee), zebu (Bos [Bos] primigenius taurus), rhinoceros (Rhinocerotidae).

58. Brahminy kite (Haliastur indus), heron (Ardeidae), snake bird (Anhinga sp.), crane (Gruidae), ibis (Ibis sp.), pelican (Pelecanus sp.), ducks (Anatinae), bankiva hen (Gallus gallus), peacock (Pavo cirtatus), turkey cock and hen (Leleagris gallopavo), pheasant (Phasianinae), short-tailed and long-tailed parrots, quail (Coturnix sp.), pigeons (Columbridae), jay (Garulus glandarius).


60. I. 1986.150, a reverse copy of the theme.


on Mahmud b. Ishaq al-Shihabi’s manuscript of Yusuf va Zulaykha of 964 (1557)


Enderlein and Sundermann, Schahname, pls. 163 and 166.


64. Quoted after Walker, Flowers Underfoot, p. 31.


68. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, p. 19 (pls. 25–26), mentions 139 folios. The back cover of the binding was also published by E. Gratzl, “Book Covers,” in Pope and Ackerman, Survey of Persian Art, p. 1985, pl. 968.


70. Two Mughal lacquered bindings, though different in general outlook, show that the technique was common at the Mughal court during this period. One of them is from a Khamsa of Nizami dated 1595 (see Beach, Early Mughal Painting, pp. 103–4, fig. 69, and B. Brend, The Emperor Akbar’s Khamsa of Nizami [London, 1995], p. 69). The second is from a Khamsa of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi dated 1597–98 (see S. C. Welch, India, p. 179, cat. no. 111). However, both are in a style different from that of the Jami Yusuf va Zulaykha.
One of Michael Rogers’s inspiring ideas is his conception that the eleventh century AD was a turning point in the history of Islamic art. However, the dated art objects of this period are very rare in comparison with those of the following century. Therefore in the sale catalogues one can see many bronze vessels of various types more or less similar to dated specimens but carelessly attributed to the twelfth century. In my book *Silberschätze des Orients*, I tried to demonstrate that there are several silver vessels of the eleventh and the early twelfth centuries, and that their epigraphic, floral, animal, and geometric decoration can be considered a missing link in the history of the decorative arts in Iran, Tokharistan, and Khorazm.

Recently one more silver bottle of this period has been acquired by the State Hermitage Museum (figs. 1–4). Its previous owners were a Khanty family living in the Yamal-Nenetz National District in Northwest Siberia. Dr. Arcady V. Baulo, a prominent ethnographer from Novosibirsk, wrote in his report to the Hermitage Museum that the bottle over several generations was a “holy object” in the family of S. G. Eprin in the village of Evrigort (in the Synya River basin). This bottle was one of the silver vessels brought to the lower Ob’ basin from the ninth through the early twelfth century by Muslim merchants from Central Asia and Volga Bulgaria. There these merchants sold silver vessels and steel swords to the local Ugrians (the Khanty and the Mansi), who were hunters and trappers, and bought from them excellent earring furs. In the system of Eurasian trade routes the “Fur Road” was comparable with the famous Silk Road.

The height of the bottle is 22.1 cm and the diameter of its body is 11.7 cm. The bottom and the handle are gone. The body and the sidewall of the base are made of one piece of silver. The neck consists of three tubular parts joined with disks. The handle, in the form of an animal (?), was soldered to the upper disk and the shoulder. The surface of the bottle is well preserved; it seems never to have been cleaned. Some other medieval vessels kept in the heathen Khanty home shrines and never hidden in the earth are also very well preserved. There are several Arabic inscriptions on the bottle. Around the upper part of the neck is an incised niello Kufic (to use a conventional term) inscription (figs. 5–8):

رقة وثناء ونصر وعَلْوَه و

“Elevation, and praise, and victory, and the highest limit [of happiness?], and...”

On the lower part of the neck there is a band of floral ornament in reserve against a background filled with many small niello spirals. Around the shoulder is a beautiful naskhi inscription, also in reserve on the spiral niello ground (figs. 9–12). The scribe missed no diacritic dot:

عزّ دائم وقابل ودولة ونعمة وسلامة في صاحبه

“Lasting glory, and prosperity, and power, and happiness, and safety to its [the bottle’s] owner.”

Similar benedictory formulas were widespread in the tenth to thirteenth centuries. For example, on the upper lid of a Khurasanian bronze inkwell of the second half of the twelfth century, there is a Kufic inscription:

عزّ دائم وقابل ودولة ونعمة في صاحبه (داًتّما)

and a naskhi one on the lower lid. (The first words of the latter are al-izz wa l-īqāb, typical of the naskhi inscriptions on twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iranian bronzes. Allan thinks that the upper lid is as early as the ninth or tenth century.

A twelfth-century date for the bottle seems doubtful, however, considering its other, more archaic features. Naskhi inscriptions of the eleventh century are not rare: for example, the Ghaznavid inscriptions may be mentioned. In one of them, of 447 (1055), even the ornamental motifs are similar to those on the bottle. In both cases the high hastae of the letters written
on the line interlace with one of the few letters raised above this line. In comparison with the free, dynamic style of the inscription on the bottle, the Ghaznavid inscriptions seem rather dense. Nevertheless, the shape of the bottle finds several parallels among earlier silver vessels of the eleventh century (such as another Hermitage bottle) or even the late tenth century (a bottle in the Freer Gallery). There are also several naskhi inscriptions decorating eleventh-century buildings.

Especially important for the date of the new Hermitage bottle is the decoration of the body, consisting of four sections of Kufic text divided by four roundels, two of them with foliate and the other two with interlaced starlike ornaments. The first words of the inscription are baraka wa-yumn, “blessing and bliss” (fig. 9). This word order, typical of well-known tenth-century Samanid pottery, is also seen on bronze and silver vessels of that period or of the early eleventh century. In the eleventh century, however, silversmiths preferred to write bi 'l-yumn wa 'l-baraka, “with bliss and blessing.” From the twelfth century on this formula became the standard initial part of the Kufic inscriptions on the bronze vessels of Khurasan. In this respect both the naskhi inscription on the bottle and the Kufic inscriptions on some other silver vessels can be considered the prototypes of the epigraphic decoration of the Khuraskanian bronze vessels of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Allan is quite right in considering silver the key to bronze of the Seljuq period. The entire inscription on the body includes a long row of benedictions:

بِرَكَةٍ وَبِسَرَورٍ وَبِسَعَادَةٍ وَبِسَلَامَةٍ وَبِكَرَامَةٍ وَبِعَافِيةٍ وَبِثَّانِهٍ وَبِبَلَاءٍ لِّصَافِحِهُ
Blessing, and bliss, and joy, / and happiness, and peace, / and honor, and health, and praise, / and exaltation, and long life to its owner."

The three initial nouns are those of the inscription on the Freer Bottle. The distribution of the roundels and the text fragments, the small incised Kufic letters, and the style of the niello incrustation in the blank parts of the body are similar to those of the bottle inscribed li ’l-shaykh al’amid al-Sayyid Abi ’Ali Ahmad ibn [l] Mu’in ibn Shadhàn; this could be Abu ’Ali Ahmad b. Shadhan, an ‘amid of the Seljuqid Chagry-bek Da’ud in Balkh in the mid-eleventh century. The script of the latter in its turn is almost identical to that of a tray bearing the title of Kwarazm Shah [Isma’il] Abu Ibrahim (killed in 1041). The date of our bottle could not be much later than these analogues datable to the second third of the eleventh century, but it is still a little later because its main decorative inscription is the naskhi one, and the Kufic text, though legible, has a defect: a strange initial ‘ayn, written as a short slant stroke preceding a small circle above a horizontal line, is repeated several times (figs. 8, 11, 12). Such a circle (instead of an arch) is an abnormal form of this letter. The naskhi inscription demonstrates that the craftsman was an excellent calligrapher, but for him Kufic script was nothing more than a secondary element of decoration. However, the Kufic text on the neck and the body includes several words otherwise absent on eleventh-century silver vessels and rare on Khurasan bronzes: ‘alâ’, ‘uluwa’, thana’, and rif’a. These could have penetrated into eastern Iran from some more western parts of the Seljuq state. Small volutes at the edge of the niello zones are attested not only on the bottle in question but also on a Volga-Bulgar silver plate datable to the eleventh century that is a
partly altered replica of an Iranian model.\(^ {18} \)

Thus the date of the bottle must be the last third of the eleventh or (less likely) the early twelfth century, the period of the Great Seljuqs. At that time the mixture of features previously typical of different regions was characteristic of the art of the newly established Seljuq empire. The shape and decorative scheme of the bottle’s eleventh-century prototypes mentioned above belonged to the Ghaznavid craftsmen’s heritage. However, the background of Ghaznavid vessels was filled with small vinescrolls and leaves but not spirals. A spiral background in the eleventh century was more “western”: in particular, it is often found on the objects of the Harari hoard found in Iran,\(^ {19} \) and similar motifs were widespread as far west as Spain.\(^ {20} \) In Antioch, ornament including small niello spirals is attested in the 970s.\(^ {21} \) Niello ornament on silver objects made in Syria,\(^ {22} \) Egypt, and Spain\(^ {23} \) consists not only of spirals but also of some miniature palmettes. The still-unknown immediate predecessors of both the western and eastern Iranian and the Central Asian groups could have been decorated with similar ornamental compositions. The masters of these groups were inspired by two different elements of the original motif. In the regions of Balkh, Tokharistan, Khorazm, and Mawarannahr, silversmiths produced objects of the eastern group, whereas those who lived in Iran made the western works. However, we do not know the boundary between these huge regions.

There are two correlated features of the more western group of silver objects that differ from two likewise correlated features of the eastern group. The spiral background and the inscription ‘izz wa iqb̲al are typical of the western group, whereas the vineleaf background
and the inscription bi ‘l-yumn wa ‘l-baraka are characteristic of the eastern. The formulas beginning with ‘izz and iqbal, although absent on eleventh-century vessels of the eastern group, may be noted on the Saint-Josse hanging (tenth-century, woven in Khurasan or Bukhara), on a silver bowl made for a Ziyarid queen of Gurgan (ca. 1040s, now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art), and on other vessels with spiral backgrounds, including several Iranian vessels from the Harari hoard and from North Russia. Darkevich suggests that the spiral background developed from the vineleaf type in the twelfth century, but his own date for the Myshelovka hoard, in which both background types are represented on silver belt plaques, is the second half of the eleventh century. As one could expect, iqbal is written on those plaques with spiral backgrounds, but bi ‘l-yumn appears on the plaques with vineleaves.

Only once on a later (early-twelfth-century) rectangular silver tray do both the vineleaf background and the ‘izz wa iqbal formula appear together, an example of the Seljuq-period interaction of two different artisinal traditions. The inscription on this rectangular tray is still Kufic, but a circular tray of the early twelfth century, also in the Hermitage, bears only a naskhi inscription. Here the letters, images, and floral ornaments are distributed very densely, with no niello spirals between them except in a few spots where there are rudimentary spirals. In contrast, the spiral background of the naskhi inscription on the new Hermitage bottle is almost independent of the blank, reserved decorative elements. This is an archaic feature supporting a date still in the eleventh century. On the Gurgan bowl of the 1040s mentioned above, the foliate scroll has already become an important element of the epigraphic frieze,
Fig. 9. Silver bottle, detail showing inscriptions and roundels on the body.

Fig. 10. Silver bottle, detail showing inscriptions and roundels on the body.
Fig. 11. Silver bottle, detail showing inscriptions and roundels on the body.

Fig. 12. Silver bottle, detail showing inscriptions and roundels on the body.
but there is still enough space for small spirals. Such blank-reserved scrolls never decorate epigraphic friezes of the eastern group. However, on another eleventh-century bowl a frieze contains a Kufic (Arab and Persian) text and small spirals but no foliated scroll at all. There the first words of the Arabic part of the inscription are ‘izz wa iqbal.34

The history of the silver plate in Iran and Central Asia from the eighth to the twelfth century deserves a long monograph. Here I can only briefly relate its main points of development.35 Several schools of silversmiths were reworking the Sasanian and the Sogdian heritage during the eighth and early ninth century. The most important of these schools was that of Khurasan, where Sasanian themes were rendered by means of the Sogdian and, to a lesser degree, the Tokharistanian artistic languages. Buddhist motifs such as lotus buds and lion thrones were borrowed from Tokharistan. New compositions invented in the ninth century, such as the throne scene showing a king seated cross-legged or the hunting scene showing a king as falconer on horseback, were still popular later on in the tenth through thirteenth centuries.

From the mid-ninth century on, Near Eastern vessel shapes, floral arabesques, and Kufic inscriptions enriched the thesaurus of the East Iranian silversmiths,36 and all the old Sogdian decorative elements totally disappeared soon after AD 1000.

The quasi-architectural composition of friezes and medallions set against a blank ground as well as the nielloed backgrounds of these decorative zones is attested from, probably, the late Samanid period. In this respect a silver bowl showing a lute player seated on a throne is very important. (It is now in the Berlin Islamic Museum but was found in Russia.) Its frieze bears a Kufic benedictory inscription.37 Between the central medallion and
the frieze are four roundels filled with interlaced arabesques. Several silver belt plaques with similar ornaments were found in Varby (Sweden) in a hoard also containing dirhams of 916–17 and 937–38. It is well known that the tenth-century dirham hoards in Scandinavia and Russia can be dated closely to the date of the latest coin. Thus the Berlin bowl cannot be much later than 1000. This is the earliest example of an eastern-group vessel bearing a Kufic inscription:

{izz and iqbal are absent from its benedictory inscription, whose embossed niello letters on a ring-matted background are a close analogue to the Kufic inscription on an amulet case from Nishapur. }39 Allan’s date of this amulet case is 950–1050, but it finds no parallels in other eleventh-century silverware datable to 1030–75. The relief ornament and figures on the Freer Bottle are also unusual and archaic. While their style is too stiff for the eleventh century, the spiral background in its mature form is already present. The date of this bottle must not be later than the early eleventh century, and one cannot exclude its being from the late tenth.

The latest example of an entirely figurative composition is a scene on an early-eleventh-century saucer showing a king with Mongol facial features seated on a lion throne between two servants wearing the typically Ghaznavid two-horned headgear. (It is worth mentioning that there are several elements shared by the relief figures of this king and of the lute player on the Berlin bowl.) In practice, this flat “saucer” was not a vessel but an honorary gift, like a big medal. It could have been made for a special event, as when in 999 Mahmud Ghaznavi became the King of the East. It shows the king seated, like Mahmud, “with mace and throne” as mentioned by his court poet. The style of this relief composition resembles those of early-ninth-century Khurasan or even Sasanian silver. However, on the Berlin bowl only the figure of the lute player was executed in the old sculptural manner, the other details being flat and ornamental.

Another silver bowl showing a lute player was produced later on, but also in the eleventh century (fig. 13). Its diameter is 26 cm, its height 6 cm. It belonged to the “holy objects” of the same Khanty family who possessed the bottle, but I do not know its present location. Photographs and a description of it were kindly sent to the Hermitage Museum by Dr. Arcady V. Baulo. The enthroned lute player is a well-known symbol of royal life, also represented on a tenth-century Buyid medallion. On the Siberian bowl a kneeling servant holding a wine ewer is added. The central roundel and the three surrounding birds are gilded. Many details are very similar to the corresponding ones on the Berlin bowl. The niello background is also filled with small leaves, but the execution is not as fine as on the other objects of the group. The epigraphic frieze has become more crowded, like that on the silver cup made for an Eastern Qarakhanid khan who ruled in the 1060s and 1070s in Ferghana and Semirech’e.

On the bowl is a Kufic inscription:

“With bliss, and power, and success, and multitude, and abundance of good omen, and glory (?) , and aid, and...”

It could be a shortened provincial, possibly Mawaran-nahr, version of the full formula. Usually between bi ‘l-yumn and al-dawla we see at least the word al-baraka (or al-baraka wa ’l-surur). A defective text where the words al-yumn wa ’l-d(awla) are repeated twice is attested on a Mawarannahr bronze bowl of the twelfth century. The datable inscriptions on silver vessels with niello background are of the eleventh century only, although some such vessels bearing no historic names and titles could be a little later.

The middle and second half of the twelfth century was a period of luxurious bronzes, whose master-craftsmen adopted, with some alterations, many of the inventions of silversmiths. Later on, in the thirteenth century, silver vessels again became popular, but their style had changed radically. The earliest specimen of
this new wave is the famous Keir bowl, which is much more similar to silver vessels of the Mongol period than to those of the Great Seljuk epoch.

The four centuries (from 750 to 1150) of the history of eastern Iranian and Central Asian silver can be divided into four periods: the Abbasid period up to the first half of the ninth century, when pre-Islamic traditions dominated; the Samanid period, when local and western Islamic traditions met in Khurasan and Mawaran-nahr; the very end of the tenth century and the first half of the eleventh, when several local schools of silver-smiths adopted western Islamic *vermiculé* backgrounds and developed their own variants of niello ornament; and the second half of the eleventh century and beginning of the twelfth, when, under the rule of the Great Seljuqs, local traditions actively interacted in Khurasan and probably in western Iran. The bottle newly acquired by the Hermitage Museum is an excellent work of Iranian art at this time of interaction.

The State Hermitage Museum
St. Petersburg, Russia

NOTES


5. One can see many such inscriptions in A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World, 8th–18th Centuries* (London, 1982); the initial words *al’izz al-dâ’im wa l-iqbal wa…* are also not rare, especially in the thirteenth century: see G. Fehérvári, *Islamic Metalwork of the Eighth to the Fifteenth Century in the Kier Collection* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), pp. 72, 73, 75, 76; cat. nos. 76, 78, 81, 82.


**بركة و بين و سرور و سعادة و بقاء لصاحبي**

Atal also published a photograph of a bottle from the “Harawi hoard” in the L. A. Mayer Memorial Museum of Islamic Art, Jerusalem (fig. 31). Several vessels of the hoard are represented in Arthur Pope, ed., *Survey of Persian Art, 6* vols. (London and New York, 1938–39), vol. 3, figs. 827–28 and vol. 6, pls. 1350–52. Among them is another bottle (pl. 1350). Two more silver bottles from the same collection have been published by James Allan in “The Survival of Precious and Base Metal Objects from the Medieval Islamic World,” in Michael Vickers, ed., *Pots and Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese, and Graeco-Roman World, Oxford 1985*, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art, 3 (Oxford, 1986), pp. 57–70, fig. 3, where he suggests the correct eleventh-century date for them. In the hoard there are several objects of the western group.


10. Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World*, p. 34, fig. 8, a bronze cup with a handle, from the Herat Museum; fig. 10, the bronze shaft of a stand, from the Kabul Museum; and a silver jug, in the Hermitage. See also Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyi metall Vostoka, pl. 36.6; and Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 100–101, fig. 126.


13. Smirnov, Vostochnoe serebro, ill. 147; Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyi metall Vostoka, pl. 30, cat. no. 86; Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 108–9, ills. 138–39; Marshak, Sokrovishcha Priob’ia, cat. no. 61. In this inscription, *la* is merely a decorative motif filling the empty space in the compartment.

14. See Smirnov, Vostochnoe serebro, ill. 150; Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyi metall Vostoka, pl. 35.5, 35.6, cat. no. 87; Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 109–10, ill. 140; Masterpieces, p. 14, cat. no. 20; Marshak, Sokrovishcha Priob’ia, pp. 26–27, cat. no. 60.

15. Both *uluwa* and *al’ia*, but with the definite article, appear on the famous Bobrinsky bucket of 559 (1163); see *Masterpieces*, p. 17; see also the word *al’-al’ia* on the Khurasanian late-twelfth-century candlestick in the Freer Gallery (Anl, *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer*, p. 96, cat. no. 13). On a ninth-to-eleventh-century East Iranian (?) bronze mirror in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the word *uluwa* is also attested (Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World*, cat. no. 9).

16. In the form *atshanaw*, this word is written on a Hermitage bronze inkwell made in Khurasan in the twelfth century (*Masterpieces*, p. 16, cat. no. 29).

17. This word also appears on the mirror mentioned in n. 15, above; on a thirteenth-century pen case in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World*, p. 125, cat. no. 53); and on thirteenth-century
cast mirrors showing two sphinxes, probably non-Iranian.

18. Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyy metall Vostoka, pl. 55; Marshak, Silberschätze, p. 100, ill. 125.

19. See above, n. 8.


26. Pope, Survey, vol. 6, pl. 1350 (Unz al-Qabāl wa dōla ... lāsāhimū ...), and pl. 1352 B (... lāsāhūm ...). Should it be lāsāhūm instead of lāsāhimū?

27. A bowl showing a banquet scene: see Marshak, Silberschätze, ills. 135–37 (the inscription includes two parts: Persian عِنَزْ لَخْصَ بِذِي سِيْر مَعَ جَمَاعِ جَيْهُمْ يَذَّرُ عَلَى نَزْرَهُ بِحَام (ان کًک کبکب بیش این جاف ان جم جاک بازی ی وجام کم) and Arabic وَعِنَزْ لَخْصَ بِذِي سِيْر مَعَ جَمَاعِ جَيْهُمْ يَذَّرُ عَلَى نَزْرَهُ بِحَام (وَان کًک کبکب بیش این جاف ان جم جاک بازی ی وجام کم) ): a jug decorated with roundels: Darkevich Khudozhestvennyy metall Vostoka, pl. 37, cat. no. 881 (Unz al-Qabāl wa dōla ... lāsāhimū ...); a jug without roundels, ibid., pl. 35.1–35.3, cat. no. 82; there are many mistakes in the inscription:


29. Ibid., pp. 54–55, pls. 40–41, cat. no. 105.

30. Ibid., pls. 40.5, 40.6.

31. Ibid., pls. 41.2, 41.9, and 41.10. Many famous pieces of jewelry like the Freer Gallery gold ring were also probably made in the eleventh century (compare Atli, Islamic Metalwork in the Freer, pp. 81–82, cat. no. 9).


33. This Hermitage tray, which belonged to a noble lady, has been published several times: see Smirnov, Vostotchnoe serebro, ill. 151; Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyy metall Vostoka, p. 20, cat. no. 27, pls. 35.1–35.4; Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 111–12, ill. 141. Melikian-Chirvani (A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Silber in Islamic Iran: The Evidence from Literature and Epigraphy," in Vickers, Pots and Pans, pp. 89–106) reads the name of the owner’s father: اژسمم (unz al-Qabāl wa lāsāhūm ...). "This hermitage tray could be one of Sultan Sanjar’s amirs.

34. See above n. 27, above.

35. Approximately twenty years ago the present author tried to write a brief history of the silversmith’s art in Iran and Central Asia (Marshak, Silberschätze), but many issues have now become clearer.


37. Smirnov, Vostotchnoe serebro, ill. 146; Pope, Survey, vol. 6, pl. 1353 B; Darkevich, Khudozhestvennyy metall Vostoka, p. 61, cat. no. 119, pl. 34.1–34.4.


40. Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 77–78, ill. 35; Masterpieces, cat. no. 19; Marshak, Sokrivschica Priob’ia, p. 125, cat. no. 59; Ettinghausen, Islamic Art and Architecture, pp. 122–23, fig. 194.

41. Marshak, Silberschätze, pp. 77–78.

42. Ibid., ills. 30, 32.


45. Melikian-Chirvani, Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World, p. 93, cat. no. 25.

46. Fehervari, Kar Collection, pp. 102–3, cat. no. 127; A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Essais sur la sociologie de l’art islamique: I. Argenterie et feodalité dans l’Iran médiéval," in C. Adle, ed., Art et société dans le monde iranien, Institut Français d’Iranologie de Téhéran, Bibliothéque iranienne, no. 26 (Paris, 1982), pp. 143–72, see p. 130; Melikian-Chirvani, Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World, pp. 96, 100, fig. 1; Marshak, Silberschätze, ills. 154–55; B. I. Marshak and M. G. Kramarovsky, "A Silver Bowl in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (Thirteenth Century Silversmith’s Work in Asia Minor)," Iran 31 (1993). I am now not sure that this bowl must be as late as I thought it was in 1993, because some features of the future Mongol style of metalwork had already appeared during the empire of the Khwarazmshahs. The contacts with the Far East increased under the Western Liao, whose vassals were both the Muslim state and the nomadic tribes of Central Asia in the second half of the twelfth century.
The technique of leather filigree work is an ancient one; it was known to the Copts and has been found on binding fragments from Turfan dating from the eighth and ninth centuries. Within the Mamluk realm, leather filigree makes its appearance on late-fourteenth-century bindings where, placed on a textile backing, it was used to decorate covers. It then seems to have been discontinued and reappears on fine or “extra” bindings at the end of the fifteenth century, during the reign of Sultan Qaytbay (1468–96), when it is used for the decoration of covers and doublures; this use continues until the end of the Mamluk sultanate in 1516.

In the later Mamluk period, such filigree work closely follows the style and techniques of filigree doublures produced for Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, who ruled in Baghdad and Tabriz between 1382 and 1410. The doublures of the Divān of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, dated to 1407, represent the earliest example of this type. On this ruler’s demise, his calligraphers, binders, and illuminators went on to find employment with the Timurid courts, where leather filigree was used extensively for the doublures of bindings—in particular those produced at the court of Iskandar Sultan in Shiraz (1395–99, 1409–14) and Sultan Baysunqur in Herat (1399–1433). Associated with the technique of leather filigree in the Timurid period is the use of polychromy to highlight segments of the patterns and of increased tooling in gold.

Until recently, in much of the literature, the invention of filigree work was attributed to Master Qivam al-Din, a bookbinder at Baysunqur’s court in Herat. This assumption resulted from the translation of the word munabbāt as “filigree” in Dust Muhammad’s preface to Qadi Ahmad’s Gulistān-i Hunar, written in 1544, which mentions that Qivam al-Din had been brought from Tabriz to the atelier of Baysunqur in Herat and charged with the task of preparing a bookbinding in the style of those made at the court of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir. The term munabbātkar was interpreted as “filigree work”; however, recent exploration of the meaning has suggested that, in view of the existence of filigree before this period and the meaning of munabbāt as “relief work” in its association with metalwork, the term must refer to the technique of pressure molding, which was first used on the cover of the Divān of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir.

A relationship can also be discerned between the developments in Ottoman binding of the fifteenth century and the filigree bindings of the later Mamluk period. Filigree work in the Shirazi style occurs on the doublures of Ottoman bindings before the 1460s; a binding of this type is usually distinguished by an oval centerpiece filled with arabesques and framed by a floral border on a blue and gold ground. After this period, what Raby and Tanndæ term the “Fatih style” appears on bindings produced for Mehmed II that draw on motifs occurring in Timurid work of the first half of the fifteenth century. The filigree doublures of this period are made up of borderless lobed centerpieces with what Raby and Tanndæ describe as “sinuous and prehensile arabesques” on gold grounds.

The filigree technique then passed into the European binders’ repertoire and was first used for the doublures of Italian bindings, the earliest dated examples being the Marconova and Bruni codices of 1465, probably produced in Bologna. According to Hobson, the segmented borders and corner motifs used on these bindings suggest Mamluk influence. However, both these covers employ the cloud collar profile that appears on Ottoman bindings before the 1450s and does not appear on Mamluk bindings until the middle of the fifteenth century, so this may suggest Ottoman, rather than Mamluk, influence.

One of the earliest Mamluk examples published to date that uses filigree for the outer covers is a binding that contains a manuscript dated to 1336 and most probably produced in Damascus. The manuscript is entitled Manāzil al-abbāb wa-manāzīh al-ālāb; it was copied by Hasan b. Yusuf b. Ibrahim al-Ansari, sāhib divān al-inshāʾ bi-Shām.
The date of 1336 has to be treated with some caution, as the binding has been repaired at the spine and edges, which may indicate rebinding. The cover is blind tooled overall with spiraling palmettes, and gold is used sparingly for the simple chain border, corner pieces, and outline of the central medallion, which lies on a ground of pale blue silk. However, there are elements that may support this early date: the doublure is blind tooled with a variety of small stamps, and the corner pieces are simple quarters with densely tooled infill rather than the repeat filigree corner pieces that usually occur on later bindings. The profile of the central medallion can best be described as a lobed lozenge with small pendant escutcheons, which appear more in keeping with those used on Mamluk bindings of the mid-fifteenth century. However, this binding can be compared to covers without filigree produced in Bursa before 1453 and to the overall tooled palmettes that appear on the flaps of the 1306–8 and 1338 Ilkhanid Qur’ans. To confuse the matter even further, a comparison may also be drawn with the binding of a Qur’an now in the Bibliothèque Nationale that carries a waqf inscription of Sultan Qaytbay; it has a lobed medallion cut in filigree on a blue silk background. However, the cusped corner pieces are also in filigree and more in keeping with a later date. Filigree bindings first begin to appear in some numbers in Cairo towards the end of the fourteenth century. During this period, filigree was used for the covers, which had a textile backing (fig. 1); the doublures were usually tooled, block printed, or made of blue or green silk. They do not bear any resemblance to Iranian filigree bindings of the period and seem to be an attempt to transfer the technique of filigree to the rosette-with-pendant type that had dominated Mamluk binding from the middle of the fourteenth century, the rosettes of which were filled with geometric shapes made up of stars, octagons, and squares. Examples include a widely published series of juz’ of a Qur’an made for the amir Aytimish al-Bajasi (d. 1400) and endowed to his madrasa in Tripoli (fig. 2). A binding of the same type, published by Raby and Tanndæ and now in Finland, was made for the Sultan Faraj b. Barquq (r. 1399–1412) and donated to his madrasa. The earliest known filigree binding of this type contains a manuscript dated to 1391—a copy of the al-Shifafat tarif huq al-Mustafā copied by Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Balisi (fig. 3). The central panel of the binding is tooled with large floral forms outlined in gold. These floral forms also appear on Ottoman bindings of the 1460s and later, albeit exhibiting more refined workmanship, on the bindings associated with the period.

Fig. 1. Cover and flap of a Qur’an, juz’ 10, 36.5 x 26.6 cm. Chester Beatty Library ms. 1474. (Photo: courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library)
of Qaytbay. The central medallion lies on a ground of green silk, and the doublures are likewise of textured green silk, also found on a loose cover with filigree work in Chicago. There are three other bindings that differ only slightly from that described above; on them the floral background of the central panel has been replaced by blind-tooled knots. Two of these are juz’ of Qur’ans with identical bindings. The binding of the juz’ in the Bibliothèque Nationale carries a waqf inscription to Sultan Barquq (r. 1382–99).

After this period the technique of filigree seems to have been discontinued, but it reappears on bindings produced during the reign of the Sultan Qaytbay. The covers of these bindings have central lobed lozenge medallions with cusped corner pieces, usually outlined in gold, with filigree arabesques on colored pasteboard backgrounds replacing the textile backing that had previously been used. This provided a firmer base to fix the filigree and allowed for the use of several colors to highlight different parts of the pattern.

One of the earliest covers in this style can be dated to 1484 by its manuscript, an al-Durra al-mudhiyya wa ‘l-

Fig. 2. Cover and flap of a Qur’an, juz’ 28, 37 x 27 cm. Chester Beatty Library ms. 1495 (Photo: courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library)

Fig. 3. Cover of al-Shifā fi ta’rif huquq al-Mustafā, 26.5 x 17 cm, dated by the manuscript to 1391. TKS A. 317.
‘arûs al-mardiyya copied by Qasim al-Hanafi for Qaytbay’s library.20 The binding (fig. 4) is of red leather and has a lobed filigree central medallion filled with small arabesques outlined in gold. It is segmented into small cartouches on alternating blue and silver grounds. This treatment is repeated on the corner pieces and the flap, which are also segmented to produce the same contrast. The use of silver is very unusual and occurs again on the tan doublures, where it is used for the contour of a small oval medallion filled with blue and silver knotwork (fig. 5). Blue pigment is also used for the two tooled borders of the central panel. Raby and Tanûndî compare this binding to the filigree doublures of an undated medical manuscript copied, sometime between 1475 and 1480, by Şeyh Hamûddûla for Mehmed II, which may suggest Ottoman influence.21

The illumination of the al-Durra al-mudiyya wa ‘arûs al-mardiyya frontispiece uses a palette of blue, gold, white, and black (fig. 6). Floral sprays in gold on a blue background meander along the two side borders of the title panel. These floral sprays, which belong to the Timurid decorative repertoire, also occur on the covers of Ottoman bindings after the 1460s.22

Another example of these developments is to be found on a Kitûb al-furûsiyya copied in 1376 by Muhammad Sawûkh al-Faqiyya (fig. 7). This has a finely illuminated title roundel dedicated to the Mamlûk sultan Abu Sa’îd Qansuh, who ruled briefly between 1498 and 1500 and was the brother of Asalbay, the favorite of Sultan Qaytbay and the mother of Sultan Muhammad. The manuscript must have been bound or rebound during Abu Sa’îd Qansuh’s reign.23

Fig. 4. Cover of al-Durra al-mudiyya wa ‘arûs al-mardiyya, 32 x 21.5 cm. Manuscript copied by Qasim al-Hanafi for Qaytbay’s library. 32 x 21.5 cm, TKS A. 2829.

Fig. 5. Doublure of al-Durra al-mudiyya wa ‘arûs al-mardiyya, 32 x 21.5 cm. TKS A. 2829.
The binding in dark brown leather has segmented borders of densely tooled knotwork in gold, with tooled blue squares at the center of each unit. The central medallion and its two finials in filigree arabesque lie on a blue background. The central element of the medallion provides contrast: its petals are on alternating green and gold grounds, with additional gold lobes at top and bottom. The corner pieces, each with gilded floral sprays on a blue ground, are nearly identical, suggesting the use of stencils. The flap, with two corner pieces and half a cloud-collar profile, echoes the treatment of the central panel. The central medallion may be compared stylistically to that on the doublures of a History of Isfahan of Hamza b. al-Hasan al-Isfahani copied for Baysunqur in 1431, which is now in the British Library (fig. 8). The doublure (fig. 10) has a large central medallion with arabesques on a background of gold leaf. Four filigree fleurs-de-lis on a blue ground extend from the points of a small central medallion of brown leather. The corner pieces, tooled in gold, incorporate large split palmettes within leaflike forms that occur on numerous other covers of the period and in the corner illumination of title pages. The flap, also in filigree on gold leaf, has a blue cloud-collar cartouche at the center. This design is repeated on the front cover of a copy of the second volume of the Šahih of al-Bukhari, tran-
scribed in 1462–63, indicating the use of stencils and possibly the same binder.26

The apogee of filigree work during the Mamluk period is to be found on the doublures of a large-volume Qur’an made for Sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri while he was an amir: he is cited as 

\begin{equation}
\text{al-amir al-kabir al-sayf Qansuh amir al-malik al-ashraf.}
\end{equation}

The binding is remarkable for including his name and titles and the dedication to his library, beginning in a cartouche on the medallion of the doublure of the front cover (fig. 11) and continuing on the doublure of the flap of the back cover, even including a small cartouche on the spine that reads 

\begin{equation}
\text{Qansuh amir ahhir kabir.}
\end{equation}

The lobed central roundel and pendants, of gold outlined in blue, are filled with gilded filigree within a blue-ground cartouche with two pendants above and below it. The lobed corner pieces have filigree arabesques in red leather on yellow and blue grounds marked with small three-dot punches. In composition, the central element of the roundel closely follows the profiles used on Turkman bindings in the 1470s and later found on Ottoman bindings at the end of the fifteenth century.28 In terms of the palette, the combination of red burgundy leather with golden yellow can be compared to the filigree doublures of the binding of a manuscript prepared for Mehmed II, dated to 1476,29 which consist of lobed roundels and pendant escutcheons on gold grounds filled with burgundy arabesques detailed with veins and droplets. (In contrast, Mamluk arabesques are plain.) The Ottoman doublures exhibit the same attention to detail in their repeated small punches, in groups of four instead of three, on the pasteboard backing of the filigree.

The cover of the al-Ghawri Qur’an has a large lobed medallion with spade-like escutcheons; the medallion is filled with floral forms and arabesques (fig. 12). Shaded in gold, the arabesques stand out from the intertwining flowers and buds, which are outlined. Simple gold-
tooled chainwork surrounds the segmented borders, whose meander of flowers and buds appears in relief on a background of gold; the leather of the background is gently stippled to give a textured effect.

These intertwining bud and flower forms also appear on the binding (fig. 13) of a Qur’an that has no date or title roundel but bears the name of a scribe who, between 1475 and 1513, copied several manuscripts in Cairo for various patrons, including Sultan Qaytbay.\textsuperscript{30} The doublures of this binding are also filigree.

Such floral and bud forms can also be compared to those on the outer covers of a Persian treatise on Sufism, Kit\=ab-i kimit\=ay’-i sa’\=adat, produced in 1379 for Prince Mal Hushang, one of the Shirvani Shahs.\textsuperscript{31} The covers of the binding have central medallions filled with flowers and elegant arabesques, which stand in reserve on a stippled ground. However, the composition and size of the medallions on the front and back covers are different. The front cover has a broad central medallion (12 x 10 cm) with an oval centerpiece filled with elegant arabesques bordered by a meander of floral forms. The back cover (fig. 14) has an elongated medallion filled only with arabesques (11.2 x 6.0 cm). The borders of both covers are composed of cartouches with the same bud and flower forms; both have cloud-collar corner pieces. Barbara Brend has pointed out that the stamped decoration of the cover and corner pieces indicates that the binding must be later than the date of the manuscript, as such stamp work is more in keeping with bindings of the fifteenth century. She has also compared this to a freehand-tooled binding in the Chester Beatty Library dateable to 1397 and pro-
diced in Shiraz. In addition, Raby and Tannüdî have indicated that the cloud collar first seems to appear in illumination in Shiraz in the same year.32

One wonders, however, why the binders would use a different stamp for each cover, although it was often the case that bindings had different covers when tooled freehand. In fact, Raby and Tannüdî note that the introduction of stamping on Ottoman binding standardized the back and front covers.33 Thus, it seems that the binding must be later and may be an Ottoman rebinding, since its lobed leaves, rosettes, and lotus blossoms occur on “Fatih-style” bindings. Raby and Tannüdî mention a feathering tool that was used to create a sense of three dimensionality by leaving a small depression on the centers of leaves and buds: the evidence of the use of such a tool can easily be seen on this binding.34 What is important, however, is that these techniques now appear on
fine Mamluk bindings during the later period, marking a departure from what had gone before.

To conclude, the filigree bindings of the later Mamluk period drew on developments in both ornament and technique that originated at the Jalayirid court in Baghdad and were later refined and pushed to new heights of virtuosity in the Timurid court ateliers. Parallels may also be noted with Ottoman bindings, particularly of the 1460s, which also seem to have influenced these developments, although the exact nature of the relationship has yet to be unraveled. It is during the reigns of Qaytbay and al-Ghawri that these influences manifest themselves in the variety of styles that are found on fine bindings of the period. However, in adopting these techniques, the binders also adapted them, using leather filigree for both covers and doublures, a more limited and subdued use of polychromy, and no figural decoration.

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NOTES


2. Leather filigree on a backing of green silk was used for the doublures of a binding of a music manuscript for Sultan Murad dated to 1439–40; see J. Raby and Z. Tanândæ, Turkish Binding in the 15th Century, ed. T. Stanley (London, 1993), pp. 29–30.

3. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (hereafter TIEM) 2046.


6. Raby and Tanândæ, Turkish Binding, p. 13, for a full description of the technique of pressure molding, see Appendix 1, p. 216.

7. Ibid., p. 50.


9. Raby and Tanândæ, Turkish Binding, p. 42, figs. 40, 41.


14. Raby and Tanândæ, Turkish Binding, p. 10, fig. 8: 37 x 27 cm.


16. Raby and Tanândæ, Turkish Binding, p. 53, figs. 51 and 52.

17. TKS A. 643, 27.5 x 15.8 cm.

18. Bosch, Carswell, and Petherbridge, Islamic Bindings, no. 71. The same type of textured textile doublure in blue is to be found on a binding published in F. P. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings (London, 1925), pp. 13, 14, pls. VII and VIII.

19. Juz 21, Bibliothèque nationale ms. Arabe 5845, no. 346, 37.4 x 26.4 cm: see Splendeur et majesté, p. 45; Chester Beatty Library, ms. 1474, 36.5 x 26.6 cm: see James, Qur’ans and Bindings, p. 127. James notes that there is another section in the Cincinnati Art Museum but is not sure if its binding is identical to this.

20. TKS A. 2829, 32 x 21.5 cm; Weisweiler has also published another manuscript by this scribe, dated to 1446: see M. Weisweiler, Der islamische Bucheinband des Mittelalters (Wiesbaden, 1962), p. 186.


22. Ibid., pp. 52–53, figs. 51 and 52.


24. History of Isfahan, dated equivalent to 1431, British Library Or. 2773.

25. TKS A. 649/1, 36.5 x 26 cm.

26. TKS 247/2, 43.5 x 31.5 cm.

27. TIEM 508, 62 x 38 cm.

28. Raby and Tanândæ, Turkish Binding, p. 97, figs. 81, 82.

29. Ibid., cat. 22, p. 164.

30. TIEM 436, 42 x 24 cm.

31. A. Sakisian, “La reliure dans la Perse occidentale, sous les
Mongols, au XIVe siècle au début du XVe siècle,” *Ars Islamica* 1 (1934): 180–91; TIEM Y1999, 20.5 x 29.7 cm. This must be Hushang Kay Kavus (r. 1378–82), the last ruler in the first line of Shirvani Shahs: see E. von Zambaur, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l’histoire de l’Islam* (Hanover, 1927), pp. 181–82.

34. Raby and Tanndi, *Turkish Binding*, p. 51.
CHAGHATAI ARCHITECTURE AND THE TOMB OF TUGHLUQ TEMÜR AT ALMALIQ

The architectural legacy of the Chaghatayids is meager. Yet they ruled over lands that had seen extensive and varied architectural patronage under the Buyids, Ghaznavids, Saljuqs, Qara-Khita, and Khvarizmshahs. Why the paucity under the Chaghatayids? The answer probably lies in their more or less successful attempts to remain true to their nomadic heritage. Their peers in this venture were the Mongols of the Golden Horde, who have left even less of an architectural heritage. Fortunately, the urge to commemorate oneself need not be motivated solely by supramundane considerations, and a substantial number of Chaghatayid mausoleums were erected, the best known being those of the Shah-i Zinda and that of the Chaghatayid ruler Buyan Quli Khan at Bukhara. These include some of the finest masterpieces of tilework, and the tilework of the nearly contemporary tomb of Tughluq Temür, further east at Almaliq, is indeed one of its most attractive features.

In contrast to the tomb of Buyan Quli Khan, that of Tughluq Temür has been virtually ignored by historians of Islamic architecture. This is due not so much to the (admittedly) lesser quality of its tilework as to the accident of history that situated it within the borders of Xinjiang in western China, next to the land border with Kazakhstan, an area of political sensitivity that until recently has precluded travel in the vicinity.

The Chaghatayid dynasty retained power until the coming of Temür Lang in the 1370s, their ulus (dynastic clan) stretching from Transoxiana as far east as Turkistan (also known as Moghulistan), where a branch survived until the sixteenth century. They also made various successful incursions south of the Oxus, with most of Afghanistan being under Chaghatayid rule at the time of Ibn Battuta’s travels through their territory. The principal settled part of the ulus was its western half, including the cities of Urgench, Bukhara, and Samarqand, with their substantial Muslim populations. As is to be expected, most surviving Chaghatai architecture is within their vicinity. Friction between the settled population of this area and the more shamanist eastern dominions led to the division of the ulus Chaghatai in the 1340s into an eastern and a western sphere. Tarmashirin (r. 1326–34) converted to Islam shortly after his accession, but possibly on account of this he neglected the eastern part of his dominions, and the Mongols there were in turn instrumental in supporting a revolt against him in 1334, ostensibly on account of his infringement of the yasa (Mongol traditional law). Although Tughluq Temür (r. ca. 1351–63) was not a major figure in Central Asian history, for a few years before his death he managed to extend his rule to all of the ulus Chaghatai, from Transoxiana to Turkistan. After his death, however, the western segment of the ulus came under Temür Lang’s rule.

The ancient town of Almaliq, where Tughluq Temür’s mausoleum is located, was a summer encampment (yailaq) at the time of Chaghatai Khan and progressed to become the capital of the eastern section of the Chaghatai ulus. The quriltay (meeting of clan notables) at which Tarmashirin was deposed was sited there. Earlier it had been renowned as a major commercial center on the silk route. In the early fourteenth century the town was mentioned by several European sources as flourishing, containing a Catholic bishopric and probably also a Nestorian monastery. But its status decayed rapidly owing to the continuous civil wars later in the century. The Mughal emperor Babur, writing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, noted that it had formerly been a city, but “because the Moghuls and Uzbeks passed there, there is no longer any civilization.”

However, the tomb escaped the general devastation, and one of the few extensive notices in medieval Persian texts of any mausoleum was devoted to it by Mirza Haidar Dughlat, the author of the Tārīkh-i Rashidi:

Another of the great and famous cities is Almalyk. It is known at the present time, and the tomb of Tughluq Temür Khan is there. The traces of a great civilization remain. The Khan’s tomb is extremely lofty and elaborate. It is covered with tile bearing writing, and I remember a hemistich of the inscription: “This court (in bārgāh) is
the work of Master (\textit{ustād}) Sha'rbaf.\textsuperscript{\textendash} From this it can be surmised that the master was an Iraqi, for in Iraq weavers are called \textit{sha'rbaf}. As well as I can remember, the date of the dome was written as seven hundred sixty-odd.\textsuperscript{12}

This account is notable for several reasons. It confirms Babur’s report that the town was reduced to a shadow of its former glory. It gives the impression that the whole of the monument was covered with tilework, although whether this was indeed the case is a matter that we shall discuss further. The more specific mention of the Persian inscription is also valuable, as the surviving inscriptions are all in Arabic. More generally, it shows that the quality of the monument must have been exceptional for Dughlat to have produced such an extended description of it.

The tomb indeed makes a strong impression, particularly its entrance facade, the only one decorated with tilework (fig. 1). The other three sides and the dome are at present covered with plaster (fig. 2). Was it different in its original state? As the \textit{pishtâq} was originally higher than present, the exterior of the low dome would barely have been visible to anyone approaching the entrance. The only earlier photographs available to me do not give any indication that tilework was present on the other sides. Although one might expect the model of the completely tile-revetted Buyan Quli Khan mausoleum to have been followed, the logistics of either importing the tiles or moving the tile workshop to the site may well have been difficult enough to permit only the limited use of tilework that is presently seen on the building. Several other nearly contemporary mausoleums in the Shah-i Zinda provide parallels for the restriction of tiled decoration to the entrance facade.\textsuperscript{13} Dughlat did write that it was “covered with tile,”\textsuperscript{14} but it is arguable that the strong impression made by the entrance facade could have caused him to remember the building as completely revetted.

The tilework is of carved and glazed terracotta, identical in technique to that of its finest exemplar, the mausoleum of Buyan Quli Khan. It has the same palette of colors: white, turquoise and what at first sight seems to be black but is in reality dark manganese. The
turquoise of the tiles at the Buyan Quli Khan mausoleum sometimes runs over adjacent white areas, but at Almaliq it is more carefully controlled, with no leakage apparent.

The rectangular portal screen is framed by engaged columns; eight bands between it and the iwan in turn frame the foundation inscription. The bands range from simple alternations of manganese and white or manganese and turquoise to deeply cut panels of eight-pointed stars and cross-shapes. The top of the portal screen has been lost, and with it the middle of the foundation inscription. This was in Arabic, in white letters on a dark turquoise background. The remaining portion reads as follows:

Right side (fig. 3):

LESLAN AL-MUSTUM MIHABAN AL-FASIL WANNAM FI AL-ISLAM RAAI ARRAZA

AL-KRAM AL-MANSUR MIN ALSSMA AL-ANNAM AL-UIDAM LNW HAYRA AL-ALLUMA

MUGAF SSS (FATIN) ...

the great sultan, the domain of grace and favor, the protector of the territory of Islam, guardian of the multitude of the nobles, the protected by heaven, victorious over his enemies, who makes manifest the most high word of God, the pride of the sultans...

Left side (fig. 4):

LEBAS ALFARAN BIBTIHA ZUJHTA AL-MIL QAEM AL-USR FFKAR

AL-FAWATIR AZBADE ALSSMA FI AL-DUWN TIN QABIQA XANOUN DAMIT UFTIHAT

WÂL UMMERNA W NFQDI AL-MANARA W AL-MQBAX...AL-HUM SNTA AHDY...

(May?) the raiment of the Pardoner (cover?) her house, the wife, the wise queen, Bilqis15 of the age, the pride of the ladies, the paragon of women in the worlds, Tini16 Qara Buqa Khatun, (may God) prolong her virtue and lengthen her life and carry out in the east and west... Muharram, in the year one and...

The reading of the date here leads to some problems, which are explored below.

The inscription following the profile of the portal arch is as follows:

Basmala. Say: “O God! You give power to whom You please, and You strip power from whom You please. You endure with honor whom You please, and You bring low whom You please: in Your hand is all good. Truly, over all things You have power. You cause the night to gain on the day, and You cause the day to gain on the night. You bring the living out of the dead, and You bring the dead out of the living, and You give substance to whom You please, without measure.” God has spoken the truth, may He be exalted.17
Containing allusions both to the power that God has given the ruler and to God’s power to raise the living from the dead, the verses are especially appropriate to the tomb of a sultan.\textsuperscript{18} The spandrels of the arch have a simple pattern of repeated lozenges—a disappointment after the masterpiece of arabesque design that was used on the spandrels of the Buyan Quli Khan mausoleum.

The script is an extremely elegant one. Although typical of fourteenth-century Chaghatai monumental calligraphy, it has an unusual characteristic—namely, the curvature to the left of the bottom of the \textit{alif}, so that it sometimes joins on to the succeeding \textit{lám} or other following letter. Other examples of this are to be seen, for instance, at the \textit{ziyāratkhāna} of the shrine of Qutham b. ʿAbbas at the Shah-i Zinda (1334–35) and at the Buyan Quli Khan mausoleum. Another, somewhat ungraceful, characteristic is the cramped final form of the \textit{dāl}, although less extreme parallels are also found in earlier buildings such as the mausoleum of Qutlugh Agha (1361) at the Shah-i Zinda.

The area surrounding the upper window within the entrance iwan has an inscription in square Kufic of \textit{chahār Allāh}, repeated in such a way the final \textit{hā’s} form a larger square of their own smaller squares (fig. 1). This sounds simple and repetitive, but the design is in fact quite subtle, organized in such a way that the space of any \textit{chahār Allāh} as a whole does not form a square but dovetails with an adjacent design, leading the eye from one cluster to the next. Below this area, to either side of the door, the main pattern is of large hexagons, their sides bisected by parallel lines so that the resulting
lozenges become an equally vivid aspect of the design. The geometric elements here are flat; the same design is repeated on the sides of the recesses perpendicular to the door, but the compartments there are deeply carved with vegetal ornament whose richness compensates for the smaller field (fig. 5).

It is not clear where the Persian inscription giving the name of the craftsman, ʿustād Shaʿrāf, might have been, although a panel near the end of the decayed foundation inscription is a possibility. Shaʿrāf, as Dughlat notes, is indeed an Arabo-Persian term for “weaver,” but this tells us little about the craftsman’s work on the monument: his name could as well have been derived from family ancestry as from his occupation of, say, designing tile patterns. More unusual is the term that Dughlat says was used for the building: bārgāh, used of
a court or a court tent. Ibn Battuta, for instance, gives a detailed description of the *barka* (*bārgāh*) of the Golden Horde erected at Bishdagh, which consisted of a huge tent supported by four columns in the center. Could this secular term have been an attempt to assuage the non-Muslim residents of Almaliq, a politic gesture in view of their determined opposition to Islam? We are unfortunately missing the evidence that could have confirmed this—that is, the term that was used for the building in its foundation inscription.

The interior is devoid of decoration. In the center on a large rectangular platform two graves are situated on stepped plinths topped by bulbous cylinders, all whitewashed like the rest of the interior (figs. 6–8). It is unlikely that they are of any great antiquity.

The four squinches are mostly plain, with five overhanging corbels at their rear rising to a plain molding that coincides with the springing of the arch. Denticulated corbeling is a common feature of the zones of transition in tombs of the area—the mausoleum of Saif al-Din Bakharzi (late fourteenth century), situated beside that of Buyan Quli Khan at Fathabad, providing an example—and the horizontal layers at Tughluq Temür’s tomb may be seen as a variation of this type. But one feature is entirely unexpected in this context: the projecting brackets that support the lowest horizontal corbels. Their upper curved form might at first be taken to resemble the imitations of wooden corbels found on the columns demarcating the eight divisions of the zone of transition of the mausoleum of Isma’il the Samanid at Bukhara and the Arab Ata at Tim (figs. 9–10). But the eye-like moldings towards the bottom and the snout-like curves of these brackets give them the feeling of slightly abstract *makara*, the guardian monsters with curled snouts that flank the gateways to Indian temples. Presenting a geographically closer parallel are the Chinese carved roof timbers that begin as quite plain combinations of brackets and corbels, as here at Almaliq, and later add vegetal decoration that, at least by the Ming period, is almost zoomorphic.

The plan of the building shows, in addition to the main central dome chamber, a number of small extra rooms. There are four in the corners of the lower floor, and, in a most unusual arrangement, an extra three on an upper floor, on the side opposite the entrance (fig. 11). Those on the upper floor, each covered by a shallow dome, are reached by two staircases from the small rooms nearest the entrance; from these staircases a corridor leads to the rooms and also connects the two staircases by a passage that runs behind the rear of the entrance iwan. What were these rooms for? No specific description or waqf documents survive that enable us to be sure, but it is likely that they provided either extra
Fig. 7. Almaliq, tomb of Tughluq Temür, 771 (1369–70), section. (After Liu Yingsheng, “Urban Development and Architecture”)

Fig. 8. Almaliq, tomb of Tughluq Temür, 771 (1369–70), interior.
Fig. 9. Bukhara, Samanid mausoleum, 320s (930s), detail of zone of transition.

Fig. 10. Tim, Arab Ata mausoleum, 367 (977), detail of zone of transition.

Fig. 11. Almaliq, tomb of Tughluq Temür, 771 (1369–70), sketch plan of upper floor. (Plan: drawn by Omar Kishk)
burial spaces for the extended family of the deceased (in the case of the rooms on the ground floor), space for family visits to the shrine, temporary accommodation for Sufis, or a combination of these. In fact the larger grave within the dome chamber has at present a slightly smaller one adjacent to it that allegedly commemorates Tughluq Temür’s father and son, and the recess on the axis opposite the entrance could more easily have accommodated an extension of the main burial space, if desired. The narrow, low doorways into the corner and upstairs rooms suggest chilaka-khanas, spaces for withdrawal more in keeping with Sufi practices. Encouraging the presence of Sufis could also have provided benefits to the deceased in the form of the increased baraka from their prayers.

Such a connection is also likely in view of the formal links of the mausoleum plan with earlier funerary complexes, with its near contemporaries, and with later examples, which frequently include such small rooms. The funerary complex of Shaikh Mukhtar Vali near Khiva (late thirteenth to early fourteenth century) combines five dome chambers of varying sizes with a number of smaller room and corridors. The mausoleum of Muhammad Bashara (1342–43) in Tajikistan is the product of several building campaigns, but in its final mid-fourteenth century state its central dome chamber was surrounded by two rectangular areas, partially domed, that could have provided space for burials or for Sufi religious activity. The mausoleum of Buyan Quli Khan provides a parallel of sorts, in that it has an annex consisting of a room at the rear of the main domed space, which Haase explains as a ziyarakhana and girkhana, i.e., a smaller tomb chamber with a larger space for pilgrims. It is also noteworthy that just three decades or so before the mausoleum at Almaliq was built, Ibn Battuta was accommodated in different towns within Chaghatayid territory in hospices, which he refers to as zawiyas, that had been built or at (‘alī) the tombs of various dignitaries, such as that of Najm al-Din Kubra at Urgench, the Shah-i Zinda necropolis at Samarqand, the tomb of Saif al-Din Bakharzi at the Fathabad suburb of Bukhara, and Khvaja ‘Akkasha’s tomb at Balkh. The combination of mausoleum and accommodation for pilgrims was perhaps sufficiently established to be copied in the tomb of a secular ruler, whose builder—his wife—may have hoped for greater baraka to accrue to her husband through the provision of such charitable benefits. All of these examples pale into insignificance, of course, when compared with the enormous khanaqāh erected less than three decades later by Temür Lang at the mausoleum of Khvaja Ahmad Yasavi.

What was the missing date at the end of the foundation inscription? The date of Tughluq Temür’s death is variously reported in the chronicles as 764 (1362–63) or 765 (1363–64). One would expect the date of the mausoleum to be shortly before or after this, but although the condition of the inscription is poor at the end, there is clearly an alif followed by a hā’, and possibly a fragment of a dāl, at the beginning of the date, indicating that ihdā’, one, was the unit number. Since Tini Khatun was the builder (there is no possibility that the building was erected for her, since the inscription asks that her life be prolonged), we must assume that the mausoleum was erected post mortem, and that it therefore was built in 771 (1369–70). The long gap is certainly surprising, but perhaps it was occasioned by the civil war that ensued on the death of Tughluq Temür. Although his son Ilyas Khvaja succeeded him, he and the rest of his family were soon murdered by a rival amir, Qamar al-Din, who himself was soon overcome by the waxing power of Temür Lang. We can only assume that Tini Khatun had somehow managed to keep most of her family’s wealth intact and at the earliest possible opportunity erected a monument for her husband, and quite possibly for her father-in-law and son (or sons) as well. The only alternative I can posit is that the date was 761 (1359–60), and that it reflects a waqf that was set up at the commencement of building work. But as Tughluq Temür lived for at least another three years, it is extremely unlikely that a building of this small size would not have been completed within this time.

One other factor is worth emphasizing: this is another example, unusual within the Islamic world, of the prestige of Turkish women that permitted them to be patrons of major buildings. Apart, of course, from numerous examples in Anatolia, one may note the almost contemporary patronage of mausoleums by Timurid women in the Shah-i Zinda, which presaged their even greater involvement under Temür Lang’s successors.

The tomb of Tughluq Temür is thus of multiple interest. It is a rare survival of Chaghatayid architecture and the only medieval remnant of a formerly prosperous city. Its tilework is of high quality, being one of the few extant examples of the technique of carved and glazed terracotta outside Samarqand and Bukhara. Its plan is unusual in the provision of three upper-story rooms for Sufis, other worshippers, or family members. It was, surprisingly, erected several years after the death of its
occupants by the formerly unknown wife of the patron, Tini Qara Buqqa Khatun, who deserves to be remembered as one of a notable sequence of female Turkish patrons of architecture. Now that travel restrictions in the area have been eased it may attain some of the renown that is its due.

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NOTES

1. It is a great pleasure to dedicate this article to Michael Rogers.
3. The most accessible publication is in Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, The Timurid Architecture of Turan and Iran (Princeton, 1988), cat. nos. 11–13.
6. The present location of the tomb is sometimes given as Huocheng, but this is merely the nearest large town; the tomb itself is much closer to the town of Kargas on the border between Kazakhstan and Xinjiang, being some 5 km northeast of it.
13. E.g., the mausoleums of Khwaja Ahmad (1350s), Qutluq Agha (1361), Shâd-i Malik (1572), and Tughlu Tekin (1376): the most complete documentation on these is in Roya Marefat, “Beyond the Architecture of Death: The Shrine of the Shah-i Zinda” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1991).
14. See n. 12, above.
15. I.e., the Queen of Sheba.
16. I am grateful to Robert Dankoff for suggesting the reading of this name. I would also like to thank Husam al-Din Isma'il for his help with the reading of parts of this inscription.
18. The same verses are also found on the north dome of the Isfahan Friday mosque (1088–89); see Sheila Blair, The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran and Transoxiana, Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture 5 (Leiden, 1992), p. 164. Qurʾan 3:26, sometimes with 3:27, is found regularly in Cairene monuments; at the mosque of al-Salih Talaʾī (1160), the mausoleums of Kuz al-ʿAsal (1441) and Bash Bay al-Dawadar (1476–77), the madrasa of Inal (1496), and the complex of Qurqumas (1506–7). (Information on Cairo is from the project, “Documentation of the Inscriptions in the Historic Zone of Cairo,” prepared for The Egyptian Antiquities Project of the American Research Center in Egypt, Inc. [ARCE] under USAID Grant N. 263-0000-G-00-3089-00.)
20. There is thus no equivalent to either the extensive tiled decoration of the interior of the Buyan Quli Khan mausoleum or the extensive use of Persian in its inscriptions. The latter is examined in detail in Bakhtiyar Babajanov, “Monuments épigraphiques de l’ensemble de Fat¥âbâd à Boukhara,” Cahiers d’Asie Centrale 7 (1999): 195–210.
21. See Golombek and Wilber, Timurid Architecture, vol. 2, fig. 3: this is admittedly untypical in that it forms a pendente rather than a squinch. For a more conventional example within a squinch in the tomb of Shaikh Sadan near Multan (late twelfth century), see Finbarr B. Flood, “Gh¢rid Architecture in the Indus Valley: The Tomb of Shaykh Sadan Shahid,” Ars Orientalis 30 (2001): 130, fig. 4.
25. I am grateful to Omar Kishk for drawing the sketch plan. It does not take into account some of the irregularities that are to be found in the walls of the surrounding corridors but otherwise is reasonably accurate.
27. Some earlier funerary complexes augmented the burial chamber with extra domed spaces that frequently included a mihrab and other adjacent dome chambers, as at the eleventh-century examples of Hakim-i Tirmizi and Khvaja ʿ Isa (near Tirmiz):
see I. F. Borodina, “Osobennosti formirovania memorial’nikh
sooruzhenii Srednei Azii X–XV vv.,” Arkhitekturное Nasledstvo 22
28. L. Yu. Man’kovskaya, Tipologicheskie osnovi zodchestva Srednei Azii
(IX–nachalo XX v.) (Tashkent, 1980), fig. 16a.
29. The most convenient publication is Sergei Chmelnizkij, “The
31. For the plan of this complex, see A. Garriev, ed., Pamyatniki
arkhitekturi Turkmenistana (Leningrad, 1974), p. 211. It con-
sists of a small domed vestibule flanked by two slightly larger
dome chambers, with a still larger domed chamber on the
main axis.
32. The tomb of Saif al-Din Bakharzi consists of a larger dome
chamber preceding a smaller one (Borodina, “Osobennosti
formirovania memorial’nikh,” fig. 5.1), but this can hardly cor-
respond to the “large institution with vast endowments from
which food is supplied to all comers,” as mentioned by Ibn
Battuta. It has been suggested that it may have been restored
later in the fourteenth century; see Golombek and Wilber,
37. See Ülkü Ü. Bates, “Women as Patrons of Architecture in Tur-
key,” in Women in the Muslim World, ed. L. Beck and N. Ked-
38. For the Shah-i Zinda examples, see Marefat, “Beyond the Archi-
tecture of Death,” pp. 235–44. For later Timurid examples, see
Bernard O’Kane, Timurid Architecture in Khurasan (Costa Mesa,
CA, 1987), pp. 82–84, and Priscilla Soucek, “Timurid Women:
A Cultural Perspective,” in Women in the Medieval Islamic World:
Power, Patronage, and Piety, ed. G. R. Hambly (New York, 1998),
pp. 199–226. For other Iranian examples from the thirteenth
to fifteenth centuries, see Marefat, “Beyond the Architecture
of Death,” pp. 299–301.
39. For an example in Khurasan, near Herat, see Bernard O’Kane,
“The Tomb of Muhammad Gázi at Fúsháng, Annales Islamologiques
Enter the medieval walled city of Aleppo by its principal gate on the west, the Bab Antakiyya, and you are almost immediately confronted by the Qastal al-Shuʿaybiyya. The present structure, which is of modest size, consists of little more than a facade comprising a sabāṭīl-type fountain and the vaulted entrance to a destroyed madrasa (figs. 1, 2).¹ This facade is crowned by a disproportionately tall entablature that has made the Qastal a key monument in the debate over the “classical revival” in twelfth-century Syria. Michael Rogers featured the Qastal prominently in a major article published in 1971 in which he discussed numerous occurrences of the redeployment of classical buildings—and the less frequent copying of classical decoration—in Syria and Anatolia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. I offer the following thoughts on the Qastal in admiration of just one aspect of Michael’s unparalleled erudition.

Michael Rogers entitled his article “A Renaissance of Classical Antiquity in North Syria,” and argued that the “localisation of the classicising decoration…and its restriction to a period of little more than fifty years suggests very strongly that it was indeed a revival.”² The suggestion I would like to propose here is that we need to distinguish more exactly between adoption and adaptation; that there are only very few structures with ex professo evocations of the classical past, and that the intention behind these evocations differed widely—in short, that we are not dealing with a single phenomenon, but with a variety of responses that call for more nuanced readings.

The term “renaissance” used in the title of Rogers’s article is so semantically loaded that Terry Allen, in his book A Classical Revival in Islamic Architecture, published in 1986, opted for the less contentious term “revival.”³ Nevertheless, problems remain in the interpretation of both components of the phrase “classical revival.” First, what is meant in this context by “classical,” and second, are we in fact dealing with revival or with survival? The answer to the first may help resolve the dispute over the second, between those we might dub the Revivalists and the Survivalists.

Until a publication by Yasser Tabbā in 1993, “classical” in this context was often indiscriminately used to refer to two distinct architectural expressions in Syrian architecture: what we may briefly refer to as the Greco-
Roman pagan tradition of orders, in which elements were superimposed to create hierarchy and monumentality, and the Early Byzantine Christian tradition of North Syria, which made use of largely unencumbered, planar surfaces enlivened by continuous moldings. In one the moldings are massed; in the other they are, as it were, inscribed. The first is what we might rightly term “classical” or “antique,” the second Early Byzantine or, in Ernst Kitzinger’s parlance, “sub-antique.”

Although there are major gaps in the surviving evidence, Yasser Tabbaa has made a good case for assuming a continuity of tradition and craftsmanship from the sixth-century North Syrian churches to the late-eleventh-century Muslim monuments of Aleppo, most notably the minaret of the Great Mosque—a conservatism that was “an entirely localized phenomenon, centered mainly in the region between Aleppo and Edessa....” Ernst Herzfeld also regarded the sculptural handling of the Aleppo minaret as a survival, yet at the same time he referred to it as “antique.” A closer look at his wording makes Herzfeld’s intention clearer: “Despite all the transformations it has undergone, this architecture is essentially antique....” The extent of this transformation is obvious from the comparison Herzfeld makes a few lines later, in which he suggests that if one were to draw out the four facades of the lower stories of the Aleppo minaret the result would resemble the facade of a Venetian, presumably Gothic, palace. Given such heavy modifications, what did Herzfeld intend by referring to the decoration of the Aleppo minaret as “antique”? The answer lies in the contrast he wished to draw between late-eleventh- and twelfth-century Syrian architecture and the architecture of Iran, Iraq, and Mosul in the same period. He makes the point clearly: the Aleppo minaret belongs to an architecture that “is the product of Mediterranean civilisation.” Herzfeld’s “antique” is less a chronological descriptor than a regional characterization.

While Herzfeld and Tabbaa fall into the Survivalist camp, there are others who are Revivalists. The “classical revival” argument develops in two forms. One, as advanced by Michael Rogers, is a less coherent phenomenon and lacks a guiding concept. The instances of classical adoption and even adaptation, drawn from Anatolia and Syria, are presented as largely adventitious. Terry Allen’s “classical revival,” by contrast, is more complex, for he identifies two sequences of buildings.

The first comprises four buildings, all in Aleppo and all erected within a short time period on the orders of the Zangid ruler Nur al-Din (r. 1146–74) and his associates: The portal of the Madrasa al-Hallawiyya, dated 544 (1149–50); the Madrasa and Qastal al-Shu’aybiyya, dated 545 (1150–51) (figs. 1, 2); the Maristan of Nur al-Din, dated 543–49 (1148–55); and the Madrasa al-Muqadamiyya, portal dated 564 (1168–69), but redated by Allen to the 1150s.

Allen acknowledges that the only one of these monuments with an expressly classicizing feature is the Qastal
al-Shu‘aybiyya, which has a rich Corinthian-style entablature to which I shall return shortly. The Qastal consists of two principal architectural elements—the entablature and porch vault. The first is overtly classicizing; the second is not. Yet it is the portal, with its flat lintel, discharging arch, and cross vault, that links the Qastal to the other three buildings in Aleppo and to a final building in Allen’s sequence, the Madrasa al-‘Adiliyya in Damascus, which was begun by Nur al-Din but finished much later. They reveal the same taste for neatly cut, plain ashlar, restrained decoration, and complex stereotomy. After this madrasa the Ayyubid style proper begins, with its emphasis on muqarnas and color. 10

Allen’s second sequence is wider ranging in time and place, and the patronage is more diverse:11 the gates of Fatimid Cairo, 1087 (figs. 3, 4); the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo, 1089 (fig. 5, a and b); the west facade of the courtyard of the Great Mosque in Diyarbakir, 1117–18 and 1124–25 (fig. 11, a and b); Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, 545 (1150–51); the east facade of the courtyard of the Great Mosque in Diyarbakir, 559 (1163–64) (fig. 12, a and b); and the Great Mosque of Harran (1170s).

There is, he argues, a “progressively closer approach to the antique and other pre-Islamic sources in this sequence of buildings.” At the same time, though, he detects a progressively freer use of antique decoration, as illustrated by the work in Harran.

Interweaving these two sequences produces a misleading impression of widespread classicism. The two groups are seemingly linked by the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, but this is deceptive, because it is the Qastal’s porch that links the building to the first group and its entablature that relates it to the second. In terms of “classical revival” there are difficulties with both sequences.

If we remove the Qastal’s entablature from the first group, there is nothing expressly classical in its architecture. In architectonic and decorative terms this first
group represents an evolution from the late-fifth- and sixth-century traditions of North Syrian church architecture in its taste for plain masonry enlivened with moldings. Among a host of connections, such as jogged voussoirs, one can cite the use of continuous moldings, of cusped moldings, of moldings that terminate in spiral loops, and even of large looped moldings over arched windows. The last is a feature found at the North Church in Brad, dated 561, and appears to be the ultimate source for the elaborate marble facings over mihrab niches that are such a distinctive element in thirteenth-century Aleppo.

In other words, this first group is not “classical” but derived more directly from what Howard Crosby Butler defined as the “pseudo-classic tendency” of sixth-century North Syrian architecture. Nor is it revival, for there are pointers among the scant post-Umayyad architectural remains in North Syria to the continuance and evolution of this tradition in the intervening five hundred years. This was a living tradition that found new energy in the extensive building campaigns of the twelfth century.

Allen’s second list is also problematic, as it is questionable whether the buildings really cohere as a group, let alone a sequence. It begins with almost contemporary structures in Egypt and Syria—the gates of Fatimid Cairo and the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo—that grow out of the sub-antique tradition of North Syria. In both Cairo and Aleppo the architects were from “Syria,” and they used the telltale signatures of Early Byzantine Syrian architecture—neatly cut ashlar, continuous moldings and modillions, and, in Cairo, arcuated lintels, jogged voussoirs, and arches with stepped extrados, to name a few (figs. 3, 4). The
conched cornice used in the upper story of the minaret has precedents in the sixth-century churches of Qalb Lauzeh, Qalat Siman, and Arshin (fig. 5a). There are sixth-century parallels for the framing of the windows between the second and third stories of the minaret, and for the corner pilasters on the third. The fourth story has a series of round window openings framed by hexafoils in high relief (fig. 5b) that recall the six-lobed rosettes, also in high relief, on the facade of the basilical hall of the Umayyad palace of Mshatta, where the wall and arches are framed by a continuous molding. The fourth story has engaged columns with capitals and bases, but the “leaves” of the capital are closer to muqarnas prisms than to acanthus cauli-coli, and the arches they support have effloresced into scalloped fantasies of a quite unclassical character (fig. 5b). In short, the connection is with Syrian architecture of the sixth to eighth centuries, and there is no significant antique influence.

On the Cairene gates there are elements, such as triangular corbels (fig. 3), that can be found in Greco-Roman architecture, but the aesthetic as a whole owes more to the “sub-antique” than the antique. The cornice on the Bab al-Nasr, it has been suggested, shows “a clear acquaintance with a tradition of classicising decoration.” It is true that it includes a recognizable ovolo and modillions, but the ovolo is wrongly positioned, taking the place of the corona on a Corinthian cornice, and the modillions are stiff fronds. This suggests that the cornice lies towards the end of a progressive line of deformation, and is not a revival based on the direct copying of antique models.

Remove the Cairene gates and the Aleppo minaret
from Allen’s second sequence, and we are left with only two, arguably three, buildings that echo a classical sense of composition and proportioning: the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya—and there only in the entablature—and the courtyard wings of the Great Mosque in Diyarbakir. Harran is a more hybrid and problematic case, but in the other two instances a classical idiom was adopted with discerning and intention. The first part of this article deals in some detail with the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, the second, more cursorily, with Diyarbakir. The intention is to show that the adoption of the classical idiom in these two buildings was motivated by very specific local issues, that the intentions differed widely, and that we should be cautious about assuming that we are dealing with a uniform phenomenon.

**THE QASTAL AL-SHU‘AYBIYYA**

Far from linking the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya to the other three monuments in Allen’s first sequence, the entablature distinguishes it. In Herzfeld’s words, the Qastal displays “exuberant richness of decoration”; in the other buildings, by contrast, “sobriety reigns.” Where Allen placed the Qastal at the beginning of a sequence through the 1150s, Herzfeld placed it at the end of a tradition. He regarded the Qastal as a continuation—in both sculpture and calligraphy—of an aesthetic best represented by the Aleppo minaret, a tradition brought to an abrupt halt by Nur al-Din’s insistence in the 1150s on a sober manner that reflected an “extreme puritanism” (figs. 6, 7).

Herzfeld connected this new architectural sobriety with epigraphic changes introduced by Nur al-Din in the 1150s. These included changes to protocolary titles—Nur al-Din abandoning Persian forms and Turkish totemic names—and to script, with a move from floriated Kufic to the vocalized “Nurid thulth.” In short, for Herzfeld the architecture that tells us about Nur al-Din’s intentions is the architecture that comes after the construction of the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya in 1150. The architecture of the Qastal, on this reasoning, belongs to a local lineage that was adopted without attention to its implications.

This argument founders on several points. I would
argue, first, that the entablature of the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya is more classicizing than any of its supposed antecedents, and does not simply belong in a direct line of descent from the Aleppo minaret; second, that the Qastal’s inscriptions indicate a distinct agenda; and third, that the “classicizing” sculptural style of its entablature is consonant with its inscriptive messages.

At the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya we find the superimposition of elements to create an entablature in the Corinthian manner, complete with, in Michael Rogers’s words, “scotia, oblique fillet, cavetto, dentils and modillions, crowned by cyma recta with rich vine and palmette scrolls between narrow uncarved fillets” (fig. 8, a and b). In concept and in the treatment of some of the components it is so classicizing that it deceived Jean Sauvaget and others into thinking it was a reused, albeit reworked, classical sculpture. The tripartite cornice differs, however, from a classical prototype in several respects. First, the architrave projects at an inclination. Second, the frieze is treated as a cavetto. Third, Hellenistic figural decoration or Roman scrolls have been replaced by a monumental inscription in Kufic script, and, on a minor point, the ovolo between the dentils and the modillions has been omitted. The decoration of its components is Islamic: there are Fatimid echoes in the underside of the cornice, and scrollwork on the cyma recta and the fascia that prefaces early Ayyubid carving (fig. 9).

Substantial as they are, these alterations have been relatively well integrated. The structure of the entablature, in the sequence and proportions of the elements, suggests direct copying. With the exception of the inscriptions, what strikes one first about the entablature is its evocation of an antique model and its dominant size in relation to the facade (fig. 7). From a Greco-Roman standpoint, this gigantism might be read as a mark of ineptitude. From the standpoint of Muslim architecture in twelfth-century Syria, it can be read as an emphatic statement about the conscious adaptation of a classical language of architecture.

Two explanations have been advanced for this classicism. The first is that it was prompted by the location of the Qastal just inside the Antioch Gate, near which there was an arch with a Greek inscription that survived until at least 411 (1020). The sec-
ond is that the form of the Qastal portal and the classical style of its entablature were prompted by the victories Nur al-Din had just enjoyed over several Crusader forces, including those of Raymond of Antioch on June 29, 1149, and by the “vocabulary” of the Roman ruins at a site such as Apamea.31

The first explanation appears somewhat inert, but the “arch” may have been a tetrapylon that, as Jean Sauvaget suggested, was transformed into the earliest mosque in the city. Indeed, it is possible that the form of the Qastal’s porch was a reminiscence of this original structure. This mosque had been renovated in the early tenth century by a Shiite of Aleppo, Abu ‘l Hasan al-Ghadairi (d. 313 [925]).32 and in 545 (1150–51) Nur al-Din converted it into a Shafi’i madrasa for the Andalusi faqih and ascetic Shaykh Shu‘ayb, as part of his policy of promoting Sunni orthodoxy. At the same time, Nur al-Din added the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya. The expropriation of a Shiite mosque was a highly provocative act, converting it to a madrasa doubly so. What is more, the entrance to the madrasa took the form of a projecting portal. Rather than echoing directly a Roman triumphal arch, the projecting portal was an architectural device especially favored by the Fatimids, perhaps because it played on the importance of the concept of the bab in Isma‘ili ideology.33

The notion of the Qastal as a form of victory monument has some merit, but is not fully supported by the inscriptions, which occur on two bands, the upper one religious in character, the lower for the most part historical. These carried a complex of messages, of which jihad against the Crusaders was only one. The primary message was a sectarian polemic against the city’s predominantly Shi‘i population.

Earlier sectarian tension had flared in Aleppo when the Mirdasid Rashid al-Dawla Mahmud had had the khutba read in the name of the Abbasid caliph, which aroused the hostility of the local population, most of whom since the time of the Hamdanids were Imami Shiites.34 As we shall see, the construction of the Qastal’s porch was a reminiscence of this original structure. This mosque had been renovated in the early tenth century by a Shiite of Aleppo, Abu ‘l Hasan al-Ghadairi (d. 313 [925]).32 and in 545 (1150–51) Nur al-Din converted it into a Shafi‘i madrasa for the Andalusi faqih and ascetic Shaykh Shu‘ayb, as part of his policy of promoting Sunni orthodoxy. At the same time, Nur al-Din added the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya. The expropriation of a Shiite mosque was a highly provocative act, converting it to a madrasa doubly so. What is more, the entrance to the madrasa took the form of a projecting portal. Rather than echoing directly a Roman triumphal arch, the projecting portal was an architectural device especially favored by the Fatimids, perhaps because it played on the importance of the concept of the bab in Isma‘ili ideology.33

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The religious inscription on the Qastal (fig. 6) reads:

In the name of God... Never stand (to pray) there! There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy that thou should stand to pray there. In it are men who love to purify themselves. Allah loves those who make themselves pure (mutāḥirin) [Qur’an 9:108, Repentance]. And the places of worship are only for Allah, so pray not unto anyone along with Allah [Qur’an 72:18, The Jinn]. He only shall tend Allah’s sanctuaries who believes in Allah and the Last Day and observes proper worship and pays the poor-due and fears none save Allah [Qur’an 9:18].35

The quote from Qur’an 9:18 is very common on religious buildings in the eleventh and twelfth century AD and appears twice on the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo, for example, among forty-five recorded instances from these two centuries. Qur’an 72:18 is also relatively common.36 By contrast, the longest passage, from Sura 9:108, is recorded in just four other examples, only one of which is on a near-modern building, as we shall see.37 Sura 9:108 juxtaposes two themes: the mosque founded on piety, and purity. Both relate to the site known as Quba’, about three kilometers southeast of the Prophet Muhammad’s Medina. We shall return to the theme of the mosque founded on piety later.

The second element—purity—also connects with Quba’, as it was there that Muslims learned to purify themselves with water as well as stones. From ‘Uwaym b. Sa‘ida, a Companion, it was related that the Prophet asked the congregation in the Quba’ mosque about the cleanliness for which God praised them in the verse, and they replied that they had learned abstersion—with water—from their Jewish neighbors.38

For those who failed to recognize the historical background of the twin elements of this Qur’anic verse, the connection with water was made explicit by the location of the inscription: the passage was immediately above a sabil-type fountain or qastal. Nur al-Din undertook the repair of the ancient aqueduct that came in from the north of the city from Hailan via the Bab Arba‘in, and he built a new branch, which took water past the Great Mosque to the west of the city, and another to the south. As part of this canalization, Nur al-Din introduced water-fed latrines with small cubicles at the Great Mosque.39

The Qur’anic passage does more than just proclaim Nur al-Din’s public works. The passage on purity can be read as an anti-Shiite polemic. The only other known occurrence of 9:108 on a medieval building is on the mosque of al-Juyushi near Cairo. The foundation inscription of this mashhad is located above the main entrance, and it opens with 72:18 followed by 9:108—exactly the combination, though in a different sequence, that occurs at the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya.40
As the mosque of al-Juyushi stands on the Muqattam hills, the reference there was hardly to water in any literal sense. The passage seems instead to expand on the frequent use of the word tahir in Shiite inscriptions to refer to the family of 'Ali, including the Shiite imams, and, among the Isma'ili Fatimids, to the Fatimid caliphs, as in the phrase extolling the ancestors of the Fatimid imam: “Pure ancestors and most magnanimous descendants.”

The choice of 9:108 for Nur al-Din’s Qastal seems highly pointed, for it would have had a special resonance for the Shiites of Aleppo. It had a precedent in Fatimid usage but was not used in any other known Zangid or Ayyubid structure. Appropriated and recontextualized, it was placed in prominent fashion on a structure whose location ensured maximum visibility, whose purpose was provocative to the Shiite population, whose portal echoed a favored architectural formula of the Fatimids, and whose construction occurred at a time of marked sectarian tension.

The Madrasa al-Shu‘aybiyya was the second madrasa Nur al-Din founded in the city, the first being the Hanafi Madrasa al-Hallawiyya, which he converted from what was almost certainly another Shiite structure, the mosque of the Sarrajin, in either 543 or 544. These two madrasas, founded a year or two apart, were the first madrasas established in Aleppo since the fateful attempt to build the Madrasa al-Zajjajiyya in 1116, when a Shiite crowd broke in on the construction site and tore down the walls. Unlike Damascus, where numerous madrasas were built in the first half of the twelfth century, the introduction of a madrasa in Aleppo was so contentious that work finally finished on the Zajjajiyya in 1123, and then only with the intervention of the authorities.

Sectarian tension in Aleppo became enflamed again in 543, at about the time Nur al-Din appropriated what is now known as the Hallawiyya. The core of this building was the remains of the sixth-century Syriac cathedral of the city, and it was recognized in medieval Aleppo to have ancient origins. In 1124 it was converted into a mosque in retaliation for the Crusader desecration of the Mashhad al-Muhassin, the principal Shi‘i shrine of Aleppo in this period, which lay on the Jabal Jawshan outside the Bab Antakiyya. Nur al-Din, in turn, converted the mosque into a Hanafi madrasa. Although Nur al-Din’s action took place soon after major victories over the Franks of Edessa and Antioch and the armies of the Second Crusade, it had, I would suggest, less to do with the Christian origins of the building than with its more recent history: its conversion to a mosque in 1124 was ordered by a Shiite notable, the Uqaylid qadi Abu 'l Hasan Muhammad b. al-Khashshab. The mosque was almost certainly a major center of Shiite activity and lay immediately to the west of the Great Mosque. It is surely no coincidence that the first professor appointed by Nur al-Din to head his new Hanafi madrasa was the person who encouraged him to suppress the Shiite call to prayer.

Nur al-Din introduced a succession of restrictive measures against the Shiite population of the city. He forbade public displays of Shiism, all insults against Companions of the Prophet were to be severely punished, and from Rajab 543 (November–December 1148) he forbade the Shiite call to prayer that had been recited from the minarets of Aleppo for almost two centuries. In the same month, perhaps by way of concession, he allowed pious gatherings in the Great Mosque, which the Shiites had controlled since 1114. Disputes ensued, however, among the different allegiances, and within a month or two, in Sha‘ban 543 (January 1149), gatherings in the mosque were banned and recalcitrant Shiite leaders arrested. Some were deported, others fled. The inscription on the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya is dated 545 (1150–51), somewhere between eighteen and thirty months after the crackdown on the leaders of the Shiite population. Nur al-Din’s restrictions against the Shiites of Aleppo were lifted by his brother Amir-i Amiran in 554 (1159), when Nur al-Din was taken almost fatally ill, and by his son al-Salih Isma‘il in 1174.

The location of the Qastal, the function of its madrasa, and the circumstances immediately preceding its construction suggest a deliberate anti-Shi‘a tenor. The stroke of genius was to juxtapose the inscription with a cascade of water, and thus to recontextualize a Qur‘anic extract that in a Fatimid setting had a quite different resonance.

It seems highly probable that the original inscription of the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya was considerably longer. The Qastal and entrance porch were appended to a madrasa that disappeared long ago. The complex lay at the western end of an architectural “island,” at the fork of two roads, so that it originally had three street facades, on the west, the north, and the south.

The religious inscription on the western, fountain facade continues around all three sides of the projecting portal. It ends where the north wall of the portal met the main wall of the madrasa, though, most curiously, the last phrases of the religious inscription are demoted from the “frieze” to the lower and smaller...
“fascia” that carries the historical inscription; in fact, they come after the date of 545. In other words, the inscription did not continue along the northern facade of the madrasa.

The opposite seems to be the case on the southern facade. The first inscripional block on the western facade begins with the basmala and a vertical border to mark the beginning of the inscription, but it is cut off in the middle of the word Allāh (fig. 9). The next block begins ‘alā taqwā... from 9:108, which means that the first six words of the verse are missing. The inscription must, then, have begun on the southern facade, and the block inscribed with the basmala have been moved at a later date.

Changes in the masonry indicate that the southern facade of the now demolished madrasa originally extended some 17 meters along the qasaba that develops into the Suq al-Hawa. This southern street constitutes the principal thoroughfare from the Bab Antakiyya to the Great Mosque and the Citadel; it was in Nur al-Din’s day the main artery of the city, and in the twelfth century many of the more important monuments were constructed or refurbished in this sector. An inscription on the southern facade would have announced the building to those coming from the direction of the Great Mosque.

There is no evidence as to what might have been inscribed on the southern street frontage, but an excellent candidate would be the verse that precedes 9:108, inscribed on the southern street frontage, but an excellent candidate would be the verse that precedes 9:108, which means that the first six words of the verse are missing. The inscription must, then, have begun on the southern facade, and the block inscribed with the basmala have been moved at a later date.

The theme here is the Masjid al-Dirar, which was a tribal mosque erected in or near Quba in AH 9 by members of the Banu ‘Amr b. ‘Awf for the hanif Abu ‘Amir. The Prophet Muhammad was asked to lead prayer there but received a revelation in consequence of which the mosque was destroyed, probably by fire. Henceforth, it was known as the Mosque of Opposition.

There is no proof that this was the passage chosen for the southern frieze, but the quotation would have been apt for several reasons. The opening phrase of the inscription on the entrance facade—“Never stand (to pray) there!” (9:108)—presumes the reference to the Masjid al-Dirar. For the literate Muslim the “presence” of 9:107 was real enough; the question is whether it was a mnemonic presence or a physical reality on the southern facade. In the latter case verses 107 and 108 would have formed a continuous sequence along two sides of the building.

The significance of this reference will become clearer after we have looked at what little remains of the historical inscription. All that Herzfeld could see of this was “amīr al-mu’mīnīn ‘Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb [...] in the year 545.” The reference to ‘Umar was appropriate on one level because it was during his caliphate that Aleppo was seized from the Byzantines in AD 636 and the very first mosque erected inside the Bab Antakiyya, on the spot where the Qastal and Madrasa al-Shu‘aybiyya were to stand. The mosque founded on piety on the first day” may refer then to the first mosque of Aleppo, but to assume this was all is to ignore the standard exegetical treatment of this passage.

As we have seen, the “mosque founded on piety on the first day” was asserted by some to be the mosque at Quba and that was how it was identified to visitors in this period, such as Ibn Jubayr in 1183. According to the arguments of Max van Berchem and others, Nur al-Din expressed his desire to recapitule Jerusalem by commissioning in Aleppo a minbar that he intended to place in the Aqsa Mosque. The minbar was ordered in 564 (1168–69). A few years later, and shortly before his death, Nur al-Din made major changes to the Great Mosque in Mosul, and fragments of an inscription from the Nuri mosque suggest
that it included a Qur’anic reference to Jerusalem.⁶⁵ In neither of these instances, though, was a historicizing style used, and both were commissioned twenty years or more after the Qastal. The late date does not, however, rule out a jihad message at the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, as the earliest extant inscription in which Nur al-Din uses the title al-mujāhid was in the Hallawiyya, dated to February–March 1149—a year before his construction of the Qastal.⁶⁶

The Qastal is intriguing for several features. It incorporates a Qur’anic quotation that was not common on buildings, and that can be read in both a historical and a contemporary framework. It includes a long-deceased historical personality—‘Umar—in the documentary section of the inscription where Nur al-Din’s name must also have been included. And stylistically the Qastal juxtaposes a classicizing entablature with a vault in the new Zangid style. On several levels, then, an interplay was created between past and present.

Its principal religious quotation referred to the earliest days of Islam: explicitly, to the Mosque of Opposition, to the Mosque Founded on Piety, and to purification, and also to ‘Umar b. al-Khattab; implicitly, then, to the Masjid al-Qiblatayn and to Jerusalem, which had capitulated to ‘Umar, and also to the first mosque built after Aleppo submitted to ‘Umar. ‘Umar’s name occupies a key sector of the frieze, and the monument can be viewed in part as a testimony to his character and achievements.⁶⁷

These historical themes all had contemporary resonances: purification in Nur al-Din’s new water supply and the play on the Shiite and Isma‘ili usage of the word tā‘hir; the Mosque of Opposition in Nur al-Din’s fierce opposition to the Shiites; and the Masjid al-Qiblatayn in the cherished recapture of Jerusalem. The Qastal and its madrasa offered material and religious sustenance to the orthodox, while its inscriptions combated the twin enemies of Nur al-Din’s jihad, the Shiites and the Crusaders.⁶⁸ The juxtaposition of Nur al-Din’s name with that of ‘Umar invited a comparison, however humbly phrased, between the Zangid ruler and a Muslim paradigm. The comparison was one that continued to form part of Nur al-Din’s image. Historians of the period noted his piety and often compared Nur al-Din to both ‘Umar b. al-Khattab and ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.⁶⁹ Ibn al-Athir’s obituary of Nur al-Din likens him to the Rāshidūn,⁷⁰ while a short biography written sometime between 1171 and Nur al-Din’s death in 1174 by Ibn ‘Asakir noted that he wished to imitate the salaf.⁷¹

Explicitly and implicitly, the references were to the earliest days of Islam, to the hijra when Muhammad and his followers faced opposition, to the first conquests when they established their right to occupy Syria, and to an era before the emergence of the Shi‘a. What better setting in which to enunciate such sentiments than an architectural frieze that echoed the past? Is this, then, the explanation for the classical idiom adopted for this building? The retardataire styling of the entablature provided a visual evocation of a past summoned literally in the inscription.

The Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya was a liminal building astride a threshold, as it were, of the city, on the route to the very heart of Aleppo itself. In size, elaboration, and, of course, inscription, its entablature was declaratory. In form, it was archaizing, an exhortatory evocation of the era of the Rāshidūn. But exhortation

Fig. 10. Damascus, Maristan of Nur al-Din, 1154. Main entrance showing reused classical pediment and muqarnas semi-dome (Photo: the Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, neg. 5497)
was accompanied by admonition. The content of the inscription, as well as the confiscation of the mosque for a Shafi’i madrasa, were a rebuke to the Shi’a of Aleppo. The message, then, was Sunni, and distinctively Nur al-Din’s. But the voice was one familiar to the local population, for the floriated Kufic of the inscription, and much of the decorative carving, continued the tradition of the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo (figs. 5a, 9).

This argument assumes that Nur al-Din and his advisers appreciated the manner in which Qur’anic inscriptions could be used to reflect and elaborate on a building’s overt function. Proof that they did comes from the choice of Qur’anic passages in the iwans of Nur al-Din’s Maristan in Damascus (1154), which refer, appropriately for a hospital, to God’s role in sickness and in healing. The argument also implies that Nur al-Din and his advisers were conscious of the semiotics of style. On one level this emerges from the changes he made to his titulature, from his avoidance of the title of sultan to his ultimate adoption of epithets such as faqir and in particular zahid, perhaps also from the even more reduced titles he used in the three holiest cities of Islam: Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. The contemporaneous adoption of a new “ethical” titulature and an overtly sober architectural style was surely intended to convey a moral imperative. On another level, Nur al-Din’s appreciation of the force of appearance is reflected in his choice of simple, coarse garments.

The argument further implies that Nur al-Din had a sense of historicism. That this was so, even in the face of practicality, is shown by his decision to oblige his troops to use the baldric. Nur al-Din’s elder brother, Sayf al-Din Ghazi b. Zangi, ordered every one of his cavalry to wear his sword girded about his waist. Nur al-Din took a quite different policy: he ordered his troops to hang their swords from their shoulders—in other words from a baldric—because, according to Abu Shama, he had heard that the Prophet Muhammad, following Arab custom, used to hang his sword from a shoulder belt.

Nur al-Din evidently had a keen sense of the significance of style and appearance. What, then, are we to make of the Maristan in Damascus (AD 1154), a building whose facade is dominated by the visually awkward juxtaposition of a classical pediment with a stucco muqarnas dome and semi-dome (fig. 10)? The Qastal was one of the first buildings he erected in Aleppo and was used to make a statement. The Maristan was the first major structure Nur al-Din put up in Damascus. Did it carry a comparable statement? The pedimented doorway was a classical remnant of the type of which Syria was full; the muqarnas dome was an innovation in Syrian architecture, an importation from Iraq and the Jazira.

I would like to suggest that whereas in the Qastal al-Shu’aybiyya the use of a classicizing entablature had a temporal significance, the use of a classical pediment at the Maristan carried a geographical denotation. It was surely not there because it belonged to the pagan past, but because it symbolized Syria. The pediment of the Maristan echoed in minute form the pedimental gable of the Damascus mosque, so it stood as a shorthand for the most recognizable building of Damascus, as well as a more generalized reference to the architectural past of Bilad al-Sham.
Was this highly visible marriage of Syrian and Iraqi architectural components a visual metaphor of Nur al-Din’s new conciliatory policy or a symbol of the combined resources of the Zangids, the resources of both Syria and the Jazira? Nur al-Din had united Syria for the first time in centuries, and in 544 (1149) his brother Qutb al-Din, ruler of Mosul, conceded Syria to him, granting him, what is more, the entire treasure amassed by Zangi in Sinjar for the jihad Nur al-Din was conducting.79

Neither at the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya nor at the Maristan in Damascus was a classical idiom adopted expressly for its Greco-Roman associations. The same was true in Diyarbakir.

THE GREAT MOSQUE IN DIYARBAKIR

The courtyard of the Great Mosque of Diyarbakir is flanked by two wings with majestic facades.80 Both facades have two stories, each punctuated by nine arches framed by pairs of free-standing columns with capitals and tall consoles supporting a full entablature incorporating bands of floriated Kufic inscriptions. Both facades make use of antique columns, those on the ground story being hyperextended and fashioned from sections of two or more columns. The sculpted decoration on the western wing is, with the exception of the inscriptions and the arches, ancient, taken from a building of the sixth or seventh century AD. This facade carries two dates—equivalent to 1117–18 on the lower section and to 1124–5 on the upper (fig. 11, a and b).

The east wing is dated some forty years later, to 1163–64, and most of the carving, apart from the columns and capitals, is imitative of the work on the west wing (fig. 12, a and b). Above all, the eastern facade reflects the compositional scheme of the western facade, though there are differences in the treatment of the arcades and in the rendering of details.81 Thus, in one courtyard we have spoliated sculpture of the sixth or seventh century and an imitation of the mid-twelfth century. The inscriptions provide a clue to the motives behind the imitation, though what prompted the construction of the eastern facade has to be deduced from circumstantial evidence.

The mosque was apparently damaged by fire in either 1115, according to Michael the Syrian, or 1119, according to Ibn al-Azraq. The earlier date could explain the need to reconstruct the courtyard riwāqī, though neither author expressly states that they were damaged. But the fire cannot explain why the western riwāq was built in such an archaizing manner, and in a style that bore no aesthetic relationship to the mosque. The prov-
enance of the sculpture is a clue. According to Josef Strzygowski, the spolia dated from the fourth to the seventh century; recent research has refined the parameters to the sixth or seventh century, but no one has doubted that the entablature and many of the columns, in particular those with the elaborate shafts on the second story, came from a Christian structure—if not a church, then perhaps an ecclesiastical palace. A candidate is the ecclesiastical complex believed to have stood in the area of the mosque. The mosque is in the center of the city, at the crossing of the former Cardo and Decumanus, a site that was probably first occupied by the principal pagan temple of the city, and subsequently by the cathedral. If the remains used for the west facade were from the former cathedral complex, their large-scale reassembly as an adjunct of the mosque would have been construed as a deliberate affront. In the early twelfth century the metropolitan of Amid/Diyarbakir guided his see from Antioch,

Fig. 12a. Diyarbakir, Great Mosque, detail of the east facade of the courtyard, first story, third column from the north; the capital reused, the entablature newly carved in 1163–64. (Photo: G. Koch, courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks, Byzantine Photographs and Fieldwork Archives, Washington, DC)

Fig. 12b. Detail of the entablature of the first story of the east facade (Photo: G. Brands, courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks, Byzantine Photographs and Fieldwork Archives, Washington, DC)
which had fallen into Crusader hands in 1098, and which Count Roger was using as a base for expansion. In 1115 Roger inflicted a major defeat on the forces of Seljuk Sultan Muhammad at the battle of Danith. Any suspicion of collusion between the metropolitan and the Frankish crusaders would have provided justification for appropriating the remains of the cathedral. The circumstances require more investigation, but a polemical intent seems feasible.

The west facade was constructed on the orders of the Inalid ruler of Diyarbakir, vassal of the Great Seljuqs, reference to whom was made in the inscriptions of 1117–18 and 1124–25. The eastern façade too was put up under Inalid rule, but power had shifted dramatically in the intervening forty years. While the nominal ruler was an Inalid, real power lay in the hands of the viziers, the Banu Nisan. The shift in power was signaled in an inscription on the eastern sector of the entrance façade of the mosque dated 550 (1155–56). This was an inversion of standard protocol, but some deference was observed. Titles were reserved exclusively for the Inalid lord. This was an inversion of standard protocol, but some deference was observed. Titles were reserved exclusively for the Inalid. The Nisanid al-Hasan died in the following year and was succeeded as vizier by his son Jamal al-Dawla Kamal al-Din Abu ‘l Qasim. He made no such gesture of deference in the inscriptions on the western wing of the courtyard.

Here the Nisanid Abu ‘l Qasim places his name first, arrogates the title of isfahsālār previously assumed by the Inalids, and grandiloquently announces that he has undertaken the construction of the eastern portico (suffa) “from its foundations to its elevation,” and of the entire maqṣūra, from his own finances (min mālihi). This was a blunt declaration of Nisanid financial and political superiority, especially in view of the princely associations of the maqṣūra. What is more, Nisanid dominance over the Inalids was echoed in the emblematic animal sculpture on this facade. In short, then, the eastern was a purposeful imitation of the western facade—rivalry through mimesis. Its classicism was highly specific, a proclamation of the shift in local power in Diyarbakir. Spolia were used on the western facade in what may have been an anti-Christian polemic. Imitation was adopted on the eastern façade, not to refer to a Roman or Christian past, but as a comment on current, intra-Muslim politics in the city.

HARRAN

There are still questions over the date and patronage of the extensions to the Great Mosque at Harran. The prayer hall of the Umayyad mosque was enlarged with the addition of two arcades on the north and a new courtyard facade. The result was appropriately described by Ibn Jubayr in 1184 as “old [and] new.” In the northeastern corner of the third arcade one of the capitals is dated 570 (1174–75). There is an inscription dated 588 (1192) on the eastern gate of the complex; whether Saladin was involved in completing the mosque, as Herzfeld and Creswell believed, is unclear. The date of 570 (1174) means that construction may be due to Nur al-Din, but as he died on May 15, 1174, the nominal patron may have been his son (al-Malik al-Salih) Nur al-Din Isma'il (r. 1174–81).

In other instances, though, Isma'il merely completed work initiated by his father. Thus, in 570 (1174–75) he “finished” the minbar (tamāmah) in the Great Mosque in Aleppo commissioned by Nur al-Din in 564 (1168–69), the minbar, incidentally, that Saladin later appropriated for the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Isma'il was only eleven years old on his accession, and he relied on the support of a group of courtiers, mostly based in Damascus, though the governor of the Aleppo citadel, Shadbakht, an Indian slave who owed his freedom to Nur al-Din, played a key role. The young al-Salih, surrounded by a self-interested court, was in no position to exercise authority. Shadbakht’s role in expediting, in the name of Isma’il, the completion of work begun under Nur al-Din is illustrated by the Lower Maqam on the citadel of Aleppo. An inscription to the right of the entrance is dated 563 (1167–68); another, in the name of Malik al-Salih Isma’il and dated 575 (1179–80), expressly states that Nur al-Din ordered the work, and that it was completed under the supervision of Shadbakht (tawallû). Elaborately carved antique columns were incorporated into the new main entrance of the mosque in Harran. A Syriac chronicle refers to the demolition of the sixth-century Cathedral of St. Sophia in Edessa in a passage that comes between mentions of Nur al-Din’s death and Saladin’s accession, which suggests a date of about 1174, and it seems likely that the columns came from there. Adjacent work was in a clas-
sicizing style, complete with elements such as ovolo, dentils, and modillions.

In the circumstances, it seems unlikely that the eleven-year-old Isma‘il would have ordered such a major extension to the Harran mosque in the first year of his rule. Nur al-Din, however, may have envisaged the work as a tribute to his son’s coming of age, for in May 1174, ten days before Nur al-Din’s death, festivities were held for Isma‘il’s circumcision. The city of Harran was notorious for its pagan past, but it was also, as Ibn Jubayr emphasized, intimately associated with the prophet Abraham.93 Nur al-Din had already demonstrated in Aleppo his interest in sites associated with Abraham,94 but there could have been no better place than Harran in which to proclaim the ascendance of Islam, to memorialize Abraham the founder of monotheism, and by extension to commemorate Isma‘il, who is identified in the Qur’an (2:127) as helping Abraham to found the Ka‘ba.

This reading is highly speculative, but it would help explain the use of classicizing decoration, which, as at the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, was used to refer to an ancient past, though this time to a Patriarch rather than one of the Rāshidūn. Here, as at the Qastal, we can sense the hand of Nur al-Din.

Allen’s first group of monuments, those commissioned under Nur al-Din in Aleppo, represents neither classicism nor revival, if we exclude, as I have argued, the entablature of the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya. These buildings were the product of a living tradition that had its roots in the fifth-and-sixth-century structures of the limestone massif of North Syria. That tradition had morphed over time to become a distinct expression. The etymology of some of its vocabulary may have originated in Greco-Roman architecture, but the language had evolved. In genealogical terms, paternity lay in the sub-antique, even if the ultimate ancestry of components can be traced back earlier.

Allen’s second group better merits the terms “revival” and “classical,” but the list as a whole is misleading. It
should include neither the gates of Fatimid Cairo nor
the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo, as these
belong to the architectural lineage of the first group,
even if the expression is more embellished and flamboy-
ant than the sober style subsequently adopted under Nur
al-Din. The remaining structures in the list—the Qastal,
Diyarbakir, and Harran—span a relatively short period
of 20 years but do not form a developmental sequence.
There are connections in patronage and historicizing
intention between the Qastal and the mosque in Harran,
but the building of the Nisanid wing of the mosque of
Diyarbakir was motivated by mimetic rivalry, not histor-
icism. And there are differences in their employment
of classical motifs. By and large, the structure and pro-
portions of the entablatures of the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya
and the east wing at Diyarbakir are correct, even down
to the use of a fillet on the Qastal cornice, a feature
so minor that it argues for direct copying. At Diyarba-
kir the composition recalls that of a scenae frons. Little
of the ornament at the Qastal is classical, however; in
Diyarbakir some is, echoing that on the west side of the
courtyard. At Harran, by contrast, there are citations
from classical ornament, yet with errors in sequence and
sizing that suggest they were not taken directly from an
ancient model but were liberal interpretations.

Masons in Diyarbakir and Aleppo created sculptural
ensembles that were classical in proportion and scheme.
That they did so rarely is telling: they could when they
wanted. This is proven by Hibetullah al-Gurgani, the
architect of the east wing of the courtyard of the Great
Mosque in Diyarbakir (1163). Eight years earlier, in 550
(1155–56), he had rebuilt the east wall of the main
sanctuary facade, but in a style that echoed the west
wall of the same facade, which bears an inscription in
the name of the Great Seljuq Malikshah and the date
of 484 (1091–92).95 Within eight years, then, he built
two adjacent structures in completely different styles.
One was classicizing, one was not, but in both cases he
achieved symmetry with an earlier construction on the
western half of the site. We might deduce from this
that the aesthetic of symmetry was the guiding princi-
ple, but the inscriptive evidence makes it clear that
the patron had more in mind. The point is the abil-
ity of architects and their chantier to adopt different
styles when called for.

The Nurids used classical or classicizing elements in
three buildings—the Qastal, the Maristan in Damascus,
and the Great Mosque in Harran, whereas they erected a
host of other structures with no hint of classical theme.
This suggests that the choice in these three instances
was select and purposeful. The intended point differed
according to the political context, but the more sur-
prising conclusion is that the frame of reference dif-
fered.

The Maristan of Nur al-Din in Damascus may be a
rare instance in which an antique element was used to
evoke a sense of place rather than of time. The refer-
ence to Syria enfolded its Greco-Roman past, but in a
generalized rather than a specific way. The Qastal al-
Shu‘aybiyya, by contrast, was intended to evoke a sense
of time, in this case the earliest decades of Islam, not a
pagan past. In neither instance, though, was a Greco-
Roman referent used per se. The same held true for
Diyarbakir and Harran.

These Syrian and Mesopotamian examples thus
reflect a situation different from that in Konya, where
Alaeddin Keykubad rebuilt the city walls between 1219
and 1221 (fig. 13). Alaeddin included a Roman statue
of Hercules, funerary reliefs, and a Roman sarcopha-
gus alongside newly commissioned statuary of angels,
a seated monarch, animals, and mythical beasts, and an
equally heterogeneous mixture of inscriptions compris-
ing extracts from the Qur’an, Prophetic Hadith, and
the Shāhānšāmah as well as maxims and proverbs and,
presumably, royal protocols. This was an art of “quotation,”
both literally and figuratively, a sententiousness akin to
that of the “Mirror for Princes” literature. The mixture
conveyed the multiplicitous roots of Rum Seljuq court
culture—Turkic, Persian, and Arab, religious and sec-
cular. It commingled the mythic and recent history of
the city and its region: there were images of Crusader
foot soldiers, perhaps those who sacked Konya in 1190,
while the statue of Hercules, according to Ibn Sa‘id,
who visited the city in 1261, was believed to represent
Plato, the alleged founder of the city.96

Whereas Nur al-Din Zangi adopted classical elements
or a classical idiom to convey the antique, Alaeddin
Keykubad was exceptional in making a specific refer-
ence to the city’s Greco-Roman past, as befitted a dynast
who prided himself on being Sultān al-Rūm, “The Sul-
tan of Rome.”97

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Institution, Washington, DC
The Oriental Institute, University of Oxford

NOTES
1. On the meaning of qastal as a sabt, see Heinz Gaube and
Eugen Wirth, Aleppo: Historische und geographische Beiträge zur


15. See Creswell, *Musulîm Architecture of Egypt*, vol. 1, p. 215, for a brief discussion of the architectural comparanda for such arches. See figs. 4, 5a, and 5b for the use of an inner frame of cusped moldings on the Bab al-Nasr and on the minaret of the Great Mosque in Aleppo.


19. Modillons continued to be used in the Early Byzantine period, as evident from the modillon cornices on the sixth-century church at Qalb Lauzeh in North Syria: see Butler, *Early Churches*, p. 223. For the use of modillon cornices in Aleppo in the Ayyubid period, see Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 247, 250.


25. Yasser Tabbaa, “Monuments with a Message: Propagation of
Jihād under Nūr al-Dīn (1146–1174),” in The Meeting of Two Worlds: Cultural Exchange between East and West during the Period of the Crusades, ed. V. P. Goss (Kalamazoo, 1986), p. 228, likewise sees the entablature of the Qastal as “a rare example of purposeful imitation”; see also Tabbaa, “Survivals and Archaisms,” p. 39.


30. On the inscription, see Ibn al-Šīhna, “Les Perles Choisies’ d’Ibn ad-Chihna, Matériaux pour servir à l’histoire de la ville d’Alep,” tome 1, transl. Jean Sauvaget (Beirut, 1938), pp. 11–12. Sauvaget believed the entablature was actually from the triumphal arch that had been converted into the first mosque (Sauvaget, Alep, pp. 74–75; cf. Jean Sauvaget, “Inventaire des monuments musulmans de la ville d’Alep,” Revue des Études Islamiques 5 (1931): 76; Sauvaget, “Notes,” p. 223; see also Allen, Classical Revival, p. 17, n. 12; Tabbaa “Monuments with a Message,” pp. 227–28. Sauvaget (Alep, p. 47) even claimed that the arch had figurative reliefs, which he deduced from one of the names of the mosque—Masjid al-Atrās, “The Mosque of the Bucklers.” Sauvaget knew the accounts relating that this was where the Muslim conquerors of the city laid down their shields, but he dismissed them as “historiettes sans valeur historique”: Ibn Shaddād, La Description d’Alep, p. 44, after al-Šīmā (AH 483–ca. 538); cf. Herzfeld, Matériaux, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 222; Ibn al-Adim, Zubdat al-Halab min tārikh Halabi, ed. Sām al-Dahlīn (Damascus, 1951), p. 28.


33. Projecting portals occur, for example, at the Fatimid mosque of al-Mahdiyya, possibly the mosque of al-Azhār, and the mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo: see Jonathan Bloom, Minaret: Symbol of Islam (Oxford, 1989), pp. 102, 129–130, 132, fig. 75. It should be pointed out, however, that there was considerable tension between the Imami Shiites and the Ismailis in Aleppo, which resulted in a massacre of Ismailis by the qadi Ibn al-Khashhab in 508 (1114): see Herzfeld, Matériaux, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 293; Nikita Éliséeff, Nūr ad-Dīn, un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des Croisades (511–569 n./1118–1174), 3 vols. ( Damascus, 1967), p. 428.

34. Sauvaget, Alep, p. 95, n. 280; p. 98, nn. 290–92, on Ismai’lis and Shiites in Aleppo.


38. Michael Gecko, Muslims, Jews, and Pagans, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, vol. 13, series ed. U. Haarmann (Leiden, 1995), p. 63; ‘Uwain was reported by one source to be the first Muslim to use water to wash his posterior.


41. The key Qur’ānic passage is 33:33: “O People of the House, God only desires to put away from you abomination and with cleansing to cleanse you.” See Williams, “Cult of Alid Saints,” p. 44. For its use in twelfth-century Egypt and Syria, see Dodd and Khairallah, Image of the Word, vol. 2, pp. 96–97. It also occurs in Iran in the early twelfth century, on the Imamzade Yahya b. Zayd at Sar-i Pul: see Sheila Blair, The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran and Transoxiana (Leiden, 1992), cat. 75, pp. 198–201.

42. In general, see Max van Berchem, “Épigraphie des Assassins


45. M. Écochard, “Note sur un édifice chrétien d’Alep,” *Syria* 27 (1950): 270–83. On the ancient identification see, for example, Ibn al-Shihna, *Perles Choisis*, p. 120, where it is identified as a construction by Helen, the mother of [Emperor] Constantine.


47. Tabbaa, “Monuments with a Message,” pp. 224–26, claims the purpose was “to symbolically assert Nur al-Din’s subjugation of and victory over the Christians.” It is certainly true that this building sees the first extant occurrence of the title al-muḥājir in Nur al-Din’s inscriptions, but Tabbaa’s important article somewhat underplays, I would suggest, the anti-Shiite opposition to the Mosque at Quba}; cf. J. Pedersen, *Al-Andalus* (Leiden, 1927, repr. 1972), s.v. “Masjd,” p. 464b, s.v. “Masdj

48. On Burhan al-Din {Ali b. al-Hasan al-Balkhi and his influence, Sibt al-{Ajami begins his list of the city’s streets with this thoroughfare: see Sourdel, “Esquisse,” p. 115, and pp. 128–29 on the importance of this street, and, by contrast, Gaube and Wirth, *Alep*, p. 277 on the north route being a neglected suq, at least in modern times. On the importance of this southeast sector, see Sauvaget, *Alep*, pls. IV and LVIII.

49. Verse 108 occupies most of the fountain facade and the south side of the portal—a stretch of approximately 7.75 meters. The full verse 108 has 86 letters, but an initial section of some fifteen letters must have been placed on the southern facade, as there is no room for them on the western. Thus there are seventy-one letters over some 7.75 meters. The southern facade was over twice the length, and could have accommodated the 116 letters of verse 107, the eighteen of the full basmala, and the fifteen letters from the beginning of verse 108—a total of 149 over some 17 meters. Expressed in ratios, this amounts to 1:9.2 on the western facade compared to 1:8.7 on the southern, though it must be emphasized that the measurements are very approximate.


53. The Qastal occupies the western end of an architectural “island” that lies in the center of the old Hellenistic street that led from the Antioch Gate towards the tell that is now the site of the Citadel. The “island” divides the broad Hellenistic street into two. On the urban location, see Gaube and Wirth, *Alep*, p. 80. On the gate itself, see Gaube and Wirth, *Alep*, pp. 141–42, 344–45, and p. 163 for a list of its inscriptions.

54. The last block of the main religious inscription has a vertical hand on the left side, marking the end of the inscription frieze; it is equivalent to the vertical hand on the right of the basmala block, which marked the beginning of that frieze.

55. Sibt al-Ajamī begins his list of the city’s streets with this thoroughfare: see Sourdrel, “Esquisse,” p. 115, and pp. 128–29 on the importance of this street, and, by contrast, Gaube and Wirth, *Alep*, p. 277 on the north route being a neglected suq, at least in modern times. On the importance of this southeast sector, see Sauvaget, *Alep*, pls. IV and LVIII.

56. Verse 108 occupies most of the fountain facade and the south side of the portal—a stretch of approximately 7.75 meters. The full verse 108 has 86 letters, but an initial section of some fifteen letters must have been placed on the southern facade, as there is no room for them on the western. Thus there are seventy-one letters over some 7.75 meters. The southern facade was over twice the length, and could have accommodated the 116 letters of verse 107, the eighteen of the full basmala, and the fifteen letters from the beginning of verse 108—a total of 149 over some 17 meters. Expressed in ratios, this amounts to 1:9.2 on the western facade compared to 1:8.7 on the southern, though it must be emphasized that the measurements are very approximate.


58. Starting the main inscription at the southern end was perhaps unusual.

59. See above, n. 30.

60. Lecker, *Muslims, Jews, and Pagans*, pp. 78–80. There were two rival claims, depending largely on tribal affiliations: the Aws claiming it was the Mosque at Quba; the Khazrajis that it was the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina, which was on Khazrajī soil. The implied reference in the inscription to Quba is a point noted, but not pursued, by both Herzfeld, *Matériaux*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 223, and Allen, *Classical Revival*, p. 4.


62. An account derived from al-Baladuri is explicit that the first muḥājirīn built a mosque in Quba and prayed in it in the direction of Jerusalem for one year; the Prophet led prayer there when he first arrived: see Lecker, *Muslims, Jews, and Pagans*, p. 79; A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition: Alphabetically Arranged* (Leiden, 1927, repr. 1972), s.v.
"Kuba"; see above, n. 57. According to another tradition (Baydawi, on Sura 2:13), Muhammad was in the mosque of Banu Salima when he changed the direction of his prayer: cf. W. Barthold, "Die Orientierung der ersten muhammedanischen Moscheen," Der Islam 18 (1929): 245–50, who disputes the supposition that Jerusalem was the first direction of Muslim prayer at the beginning of the hijra, in part on the fact that Ibn Jubayr describes the mosque in Quba' as having a sole entrance on the west side.


64. Max van Berchem, Matériaux pour un Corpus inscriptionum Arabicae, tome 2, Jérusalem, "Haram" (1920), pp. 293–402; Tabbaa, "Monuments with a Message," pp. 232–35; Hillenbrand, The Crusades, pp. 150–61. The ex voto argument is generally accepted, but there are some reasons to question it; I hope to return to the subject elsewhere.


67. Three inscriptions on the west face of the portal, which was the principal entrance arch from the street leading from the Bab Antakiyya, were arranged, it would seem, to emphasize a Jerusalem, anti-Crusader message that would complement the anti-Shiite message of the passage over the fountain. The main inscription (Qur’an 72:18) was a condemnation of shirk; the center of the historical inscription below contained the name of Umar b. al-Khattab; and the roundel in the keystone prominently displayed the name of the architect, who was of Jerusalem origin, Sa’id al-Muqaddasi. It was perhaps the importance of coordinating these three themes over the entrance arch that forced the unhappy solution of relegating the end of the religious inscription to follow the date in the historical band. For the architect’s roundel, see Herzfeld, "Damascus: Studies in Architecture–II," p. 31; Herzfeld, Matériaux, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 224.

68. A well-known example of a message directed against twin enemies is the later inscription and figural sculpture of the Talisman Gate in Baghdad: M. van Berchem in E. Herzfeld and F. Sarre, Archäologische Reise im Euphrat- und Tigris-Gebiet, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1911–20), vol. 2, pp. 151–56.


72. It would be wrong to assume that the Kufic of the Qastal al-Shu’aybiyya was deliberately archaizing. It may look so to us, because of the rapid changes that occurred with the introduction of "Nurid thulth." But that is with the benefit of hindsight. (For the changes, see Van Berchem "Inscriptions arabes de Syrie," VI; Herzfeld, Matériaux, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 210.)


75. See, for example, Herzfeld, Matériaux, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 212–13.


79. Ellisseff, Nur ad-Din, p. 442 on Qubl al-Din of Mosul conceding this to his brother Nur al-Din.


82. Van Berchem, Amida, p. 61, insc. no. 21.

83. Ibid., p. 62.

84. Ibid., pp. 65–66, insc. no. 22. The titulature of the Inalid Mahmud replaces ifṣafātāt with aλ-mālik al-ʿālid, which Van Berchem also interprets as a downgrading. See also his discussion of the temporal signifiers, fī ruṣūn in place of fī duṣūr (cf. Max van Berchem, Inschriften aus Syrien, Mesopotamien und Kleinasien gesammelt in Jahren 1898 von Max Freiherr von Oppenheim: I. Arabische Inschriften, bearbeitet von Max van Berchem, Beiträge zur Assyriologie und semitischen Sprachwissenschaft, VII. 1 [Leipzig and Baltimore, 1909], p. 98).
The Inalid bull protome was used on the western facade, with, in at least one case, a ring in the bull’s mouth. On the eastern facade the bull head reappears, but so does an image of a lion. On both the eastern, entrance side and the western, courtyard side of the central arch a lion is shown dominating a bull. The emblematic aspect of these animals is confirmed by the sculpture on the Aleppo Gate, erected after control of the city passed to Saladin and his vassal allies the Artuqids. Here the Artuqid bird of prey is shown above a bull protome with a ring in its mouth: Van Berchem, *Amida*, p. 78. On the unconscionable wealth of the Nisanids, see Van Berchem, *Inscriptions aus Syrien*, pp. 91–99.


Jackson and Lyons, *Saladin*, pp. 78–79; Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety*, p. 37. Shadbakht’s loyalty to Nur al-Din’s memory is evident in the inscription on the madrasa he built in Aleppo in 589 (1193), where, almost twenty years after Nur al-Din’s death, he describes himself as his *'atīq*.


The columns are of fourth-century date, which accords with the fact that the cathedral was originally built in 313–20 and rebuilt as a Melkite cathedral: Mango, “Continuity of the Classical Tradition,” p. 119.


Van Berchem, *Amida*, p. 61, insc. no. 21; cf. insc. no. 18.


The Tuḥfat al-Akhyār in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore is the only known illustrated Turkish translation of the Sindbādnāma, yet so far its iconography and style have not been a subject of study. The Sindbādnāma, or Book of Sindbad—also known as the “Tale of the King’s Son and the Seven Viziers”—has aroused the interest of scholars since the nineteenth century because of its origins in India and in the Greek Syntipas and its versions in Pahlavi, Persian, and Arabic that were later to be incorporated in the Thousand and One Nights, translated by Antoine Galland in the eighteenth century. The Sindbādnāma was translated into many other languages, including Turkish, Syriac, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, German, Spanish, and Hebrew. The original is thought to have been written in Sanskrit and to have reached the West through the Crusaders. Some of its stories have also been incorporated in the Islamic world in collections (sing. majmūʿ; Turkish: mecma) such as the Bakhtiyārnāma or Tūtūnāma.

Ahmed Ateş, a Turkish scholar who has done the most extensive study on the text of the Sindbādnāma with its various versions and copies, has published the Persian text written in 1160–61 by Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. Muhammad b. al-Hāsun al-Zāhirī al-Samarqandi and dedicated to the Karahanid ruler Alp Kuthugh Tuna Bilge Masud b. Hasan. Ateş claims that although there are earlier Persian versions translated from Pahlavi, this version includes the largest number of tales, some of which do not exist in the other copies. He also discusses the Turkish translations of the Sindbādnāma, some of the earlier versions of which go back to the thirteenth century. These include a translation by Malik Saʿid Muhammad b. Abi Nasr al-Qazvini, and another in the British Library, the author of which is unknown; both are translated from Persian.

The most important Turkish version, however, seems to be Muhammad ʿAbd al-Karim b. Muhammad’s translation entitled Tuḥfat al-akhyār, the only known copy of which is in the Walters Art Gallery. Folio 2b of this manuscript includes praises of Sultan b. Sultan Sūleyman Han b. Selim Han, and on folios 3b and 4a the author explains that the Sindbādnāma originally was in Old Persian Dari or Pahlavi, with versions in Persian and also Arabic, and that after translating it he named it Tuḥfat al-akhyār (The Gift of Good Men). The text is in Turkish, but in certain sections it has Arabic, Persian, and Dari phrases; notes in red between the lines of text or in the margins explain the meanings of certain Arabic words.

This Turkish translation was discussed as early as 1899 by the French scholar Decourdemanche, who drew particular attention to the fact that it had been translated at the time of Sūleyman the Magnificent and was dedicated to his son Şehzade Bayezid. Although Decourdemanche did not indicate the location of the manuscript, the copy he saw was probably the one now in the Walters Art Gallery. Ateş mentions the translation, referring to Decourdemanche, and claims that Muhammad ʿAbd al-Karim must have made his translation directly from a copy of Samarqandi’s Sindbādnāma in the Sûleymaniye Library. This latter, undated manuscript has notes in the margins that, according to Ateş, were probably written by Muhammad ʿAbd al-Karim himself while translating it. Ateş, like Decourdemanche, does not mention the illustrated copy of the Tuḥfat al-akhyār in the Walters Art Gallery.

The Walters manuscript is of a small size popular for literary manuscripts of its period and contains only six miniatures, unfortunately with some overpainting on certain details (figs. 2, 5); it is nevertheless worthy of discussion iconographically and stylistically (figs. 1–8). So far only two other illustrated Sindbādnāma copies are known, and they date from different periods. The earlier is a Persian majmūʿa in the Sûleymaniye Library, comprising the Marzubānnāma, Kalilâ va Dimna, and Sindbādnāma. The colophon in this manuscript indicates that it was produced for Ibrahim Sultan, son of Shah Rukh, probably when he was governor of Shiraz from 1414 to 1435; the miniatures are in the Shiraz style of this period (fig. 9). The manuscript has the
seal of Bayezid II, indicating that it was in the Ottoman imperial library by the end of the fifteenth century. Although Ateş claims that ‘Abd al-Karim’s direct source was the earlier Sindbādnāma in the Süleymaniye Library, this could have been a second source.

The third Sindbādnāma was once in the library of the East India Company and is now in the British Library. With seventy-two illustrations, it dates from a much later period. Although its text is not highly esteemed as a literary work, it has been studied extensively since the nineteenth century, particularly for the stories narrated there. Certain of these are different from the Samarqandi version, and the original Persian source is not known. Later publications all have agreed that the illustrations, with their Safavid influences, belong to the Golconda school of India, dating from ca. 1575 (fig. 10). Because of its later date, there are no grounds for comparing this Sindbādnāma iconographically or stylistically with the Walters Art Gallery Tuḥfat al-akhyār, but presuming that it must have relied on earlier Sindbādnāmas, it is used in this study especially for its text, as a framework to the stories. A complete list of the illustrations, with those that appear in the other two illustrated copies indicated, appears as a guide in Appendix 3 of this article.

The plot of the Sindbādnāma, studied by Falconer as early as 1841, can be summarized as “a prince unjustly sentenced to death by his father” or “rescue through storytelling.” The text starts with a framework story: a son was born to a king who had long prayed for his birth, but astrologers declared that although this child would be more fortunate than all the monarchs in the world, a danger awaited him. From this danger, how-
Fig. 3. Concubine making advances to the young prince to break his silence. *Tuhfat al-akhyār*, fol. 24b. (Photo: courtesy of Walters Art Gallery)

Fig. 4. The viziers and ministers meet to discuss how to convince the king to free the falsely accused prince. *Tuhfat al-akhyār*, fol. 28b. (Photo: courtesy of Walters Art Gallery)

Fig. 5. The viziers and ministers meet (detail, showing over-painting). *Tuhfat al-akhyār*, fol. 28b. (Photo: courtesy of Walters Art Gallery)
ever, he would retain no injury. When the son was ten years old, he was entrusted to the sagest teacher but was unable to learn. The father then gathered all the philosophers for help. Sindbad, one of these philosophers, told the king the similar story of the King of Kashmir, who had suffered an unfortunate event in his horoscope. Sindbad informed the king that he had examined his son’s horoscope and discovered that the evil was already in the past and that he could educate him in six months. In the palace Sindbad made five compartments for the prince, with walls illustrating the arts and sciences; a map of the world; stars and planets; and inscriptions of the principles of commerce, religion, morality, justice, and equity. One compartment had music. In these rooms the prince became deeply learned in a few days. But on the seventh evening, finding out that destiny still threatened him, Sindbad advised the prince not to speak for seven days, whatever questions he was asked. One of the king’s wives or concubines, wishing to take advantage, asked the king’s permission to bring the prince to the harem to learn the secret of his silence. Still he kept silent. Then she declared her love for him and promised to make him king if he confessed. Forgetting his promise, he asked her how this could be done, and she replied “by poisoning your father.” The prince was horrified and fled the room. The woman, alarmed that he would tell his father what had happened, quickly went to the king and complained that the son had made advances to her and was intending to seize the kingdom. Hearing this the king commanded that the prince be killed. But his viziers, greatly concerned with the accusation, met to find a way of warning the king against trusting the testimony of women, and decided that each day a different vizier should tell him a story about female deceitfulness. Each day, however, the storytelling vizier’s work was undone by the woman, who told a contrary story.
Fig. 8. Old woman convincing the young woman by means of a crying dog. *Tuḥfat al-akhyār*, fol. 76a. (Photo: courtesy of Walters Art Gallery)

Fig. 9. Old woman convincing the young woman by means of a crying dog. *Majmūʿa* (containing *Marzuḵānāma, Kalila va Dimna, and Sindbādīnāma*), 1414–35. Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih 3682/3, fol. 525a. (Photo: courtesy of Süleymaniye Library)

Fig. 10. The concubine in the presence of the king, falsely accusing the prince of treason. *Sindbādīnāma*, ca. 1575. British Library, London, IO Isl 3214, fol. 29b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
warning the king what trouble his son might cause him. For seven days this went on, until on the seventh day the prince sent a messenger to the chief vizier thanking him for delaying his father’s decision and asking for an audience with the king and his nobles and courtiers, before whom he would appear and prove his innocence. When the audience was assembled, the prince kissed his father’s carpet and said, “If God does not wish to destroy one, no one can do it,” and told a wise story that impressed the king, who forgave him. Sindbad of course was rewarded. Full of admiration for his son’s wisdom, the king removed his crown, placed it on the prince’s head, and retired.

The Walters Art Gallery *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* has three illustrations from the framework narrative, showing Sindbad teaching the prince (figs. 1–2), the concubine making advances to him (fig. 3), and the viziers gathered to rescue him (figs. 4–5). Of the stories told by the viziers and the concubine, only three are illustrated. The first vizier’s story is that of a merchant who was a confectioner in Egypt, his beautiful but unfaithful wife, and a parrot. According to this story, the man gave directions to the parrot to watch over his wife and tell him whatever he saw. But the wife and her lover kept the parrot silent by placing a hand-mill over his head, and the next day the parrot told his master that all night long there had been a tempest. Hearing this, the man thought the parrot was lying and killed him, only later to learn the real story and bitterly repent his injustice. Among the Walters illustrations, only the first phase of the story—the confectioner giving directions to the parrot—is illustrated (fig. 6).

The next story is told by the concubine, warning the king against his viziers: a prince wanted to go hunting but his father warned him not to go because hunting animals was evil. The prince took no notice of his father’s advice and together with his father’s ministers went to hunt wild asses. He chased one but couldn’t reach it; finding himself instead in a desert, he met a beautiful peri whom he took on his horse. The peri directed him to a group of ghouls, who started attacking the two. Discovering this was the peri’s doing, the prince rode off at full speed. He prayed, the peri fell off, and he finally reached home. A vizier who in the meantime had told the king that his son had been eaten by a lion was killed for this lie. In the illustration depicting this story, the prince is shown hunting with his father’s ministers. There is no depiction of the peri and the ghouls (fig. 7).

The last illustrated story is that told by the fourth vizier. It concerns a man who fell in love with a young woman. She did not respond to his advances, so the young man found an old woman whom he sent to the young one in order to change her mind. The old woman fed a dog peppered bread and took the crying dog with her. When the young lady asked why the dog was crying, the old woman explained that the dog had once been a princess, but because she did not respond to her lover she had turned into a dog. Hearing this, the young woman was convinced to reciprocate her suitor’s love. In the illustration in the Walters *Tuḥfat al-akhyār*, the old and young women are seen talking while the dog, obviously crying, stares at them (fig. 8).

In all these illustrations depicting different episodes from the *Sindbādnāma* stories, the compositions are rather simple, not crowded with many figures or decorative details, and the narrative approach is similar to the illustrations of Ottoman historical scenes. It is apparent that the artist did not rely on the illustrations of the above-mentioned Shirazi *Sindbādnāma* in the imperial library. He may have seen that particular manuscript, but he chose to create his own iconography. Out of the five subjects illustrated in the Süleymaniye *Sindbādnāma*, two are found in both manuscripts: the prince hunting and the old woman convincing the young one with the dog. The hunting scene in the Süleymaniye version differs from that of the Walters *Tuḥfat al-akhyār*; the prince on horseback is shown hunting a deer, but the viziers do not accompany him. In the scene of the two women, there are certain similarities in the way the old woman sits with her hands stretched toward the young one, trying to tell her the story of the dog in gestures, but the setting is entirely different (fig. 9). In the Süleymaniye *Sindbādnāma* there are three other illustrations—one of Sindbad convincing the other philosophers of his wisdom by holding his astrolabe, a second of a young man declaring his love to a young woman on a balcony, and a third, from one of the last episodes of the framework story, of the king praising his son before the viziers after his seven days of silence are over (see Appendix 2). These three episodes are not illustrated in the Walters manuscript. The comparison of the two manuscripts indicates that the iconography in the illustrated *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* is completely Ottoman in approach.

Of the three *Sindbādnāmas*, the British Library copy with its seventy-two illustrations is the most extensively illustrated, and each of its illustrations covers a much larger area of the folio, in some cases using the margin.13 All six stories depicted in the Walters Art
Gallery manuscript are also illustrated in this copy, but with no common features and no indication that both artists used similar sources. Almost all the illustrations in the Golconda manuscript are much more detailed; they include imaginative architectural elements and crudely drawn figures that blend Safavid and Indian features (fig. 10).

It is difficult to determine whether when painting the different stories in the text the Ottoman artist of the Walters Tuinh al-akhyar looked to another illustrated Sindbdnna for iconographic details. He probably saw the above-mentioned Shiraz copy because it already existed at the time in the imperial library, but he does not seem to have used it as a model. Other illustrated Sindbdnna copies must have been produced in the Islamic world, but unfortunately, since only the three copies discussed here are known, it becomes impossible to search for prototypes. The Ottoman artist seems to have created his own iconography, adopting the simple narrative approach of not crowding the scenes with details but illustrating the most important points in the story, taking the reception and hunting scenes found in other Ottoman literary manuscripts of the time as models.

A comparison with certain contemporary illustrated manuscripts indicates stylistic similarities. As rightly put by Dr. Filiz Çağman, a certain style that developed in Herat under Husayn Mirza around 1485 and continued both in Safavid Tabriz and in Istanbul until the 1530s—found in illustrated copies of such literary works as the Divn-i Husayni and 'Ali Shir Nava'i’s Gharb al-aghfar—influenced early Ottoman painting. Çağman explains this style as originating in Herat outside Bihzadi circles and reaching the Ottoman capital with Selim I, who defeated Shah Isma'il at the Battle of Çaldiran and conquered Tabriz. Selim brought Badi’ al-Zaman b. Sultan Husayn to Istanbul in 1514 and several artists who were in his retinue continued their work in the Ottoman capital. This particular decorative and elegant style is marked by circular compositions, rich architectural detail, green or pink backgrounds, scrolling branches, and pink and orange garments. Enthronement and reception scenes and hunts are very frequently illustrated.

One example of this early Ottoman style appears in a copy of Attar’s Mantiq al-tayr dating from 1515. The pastel backgrounds and hexagonal golden thrones that appear in the scenes depicting Solomon and Balqis or the young prince hunting (fig. 11) in this manuscript are also found in the Walters illustrations. Although its figures are larger, the illustrations of the Selimnme of Şikr, executed in the earlier years of Süleyman the Magnificent’s reign, are reminiscent of the same style in their decorative approach, compositional layout, and rendering of garments and segmented turbans (fig. 12). Other Ottoman works executed during the earlier years of Süleyman’s reign reveal a similar style. The Ottoman versions are simpler renditions, never as decorative as the original Herat style.

Enthronement and reception scenes and hunts are popular in this group of manuscripts, and illustrations display similar details, such as windows behind seated figures in the reception scenes or architectural decoration composed of scrolling branches and clouds.
One of these manuscripts is Nava’i’s *Nawādir al-shahāb* (TKSM R. 805); with a text dating from 1505 but illustrations added at a later date in the Ottoman court. A *Divān-i Jami* is another manuscript with illustrations in a similar style. The same circular compositions and decorative details such as scrolling clouds are seen in the Walters *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* (see fig. 4).

In this group, however, the illustrations in Şükri’s *Selimnâme* are the closest to the Walters manuscript, especially in architectural details such as decorative cupolas and tiled walls and floors, open windows behind figures, or pulled-up curtains in the windows or doorways. The rather large figures wear voluminous segmented turbans and have drooping moustaches. Attendants are commonly shown waiting at doorways. In the scene depicting Bayezid II enthroned, the circular composition, decorative motifs around the arches, and figures with large segmented turbans are similar to the illustrations in the Walters manuscript (cf. figs. 12 and 1–6). One can conclude that the Walters *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* represents this style, which dominated Ottoman paintings from 1520 to 1560, starting with *Mantiq al-tayr* and continuing in several other literary works of the period.

Therefore, stylistically, the *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* suggests a date in the earlier years of Süleyman’s reign, although the work does not have a colophon. The fact that this translation was dedicated to Bayezid, Süleyman’s son, helps in the dating. Bayezid, one of the two youngest sons of Süleyman by Hürrem, was born in 1525. Circumcised in 1539 with Cihangir, Bayezid was sent to Konya, Kütahya, and Amasya. He accompanied his father on many campaigns. As a young boy in 1541 he joined Süleyman in the conquest of Budapest and was regent in Edirne and Istanbul. He was favored by his parents and by Rüstem Paşa, the grand vizier, much more than was Selim, the older son of Hürrem. In the following years certain political upheavals, especially in the Anatolian provinces in the late 1540s, centered on Şehzade (Prince) Mustafa, a son of Süleyman by Gûlbahar Hatun, who was eventually accused of siding with the janissaries and assassinated in 1553. Cihangir, Süleyman’s ailing youngest son, died of sorrow. Bayezid and Selim were thus the only sons competing for the throne, but in the coming years, Bayezid was falsely accused of starting a civil war, upon which he took refuge at the Safavid court and was executed there with his sons in 1561. Therefore, it is most probable that Abd al-Karim dedicated his translation of the *Sindbâdname* to Bayezid during the years in which the prince was politically strong and active. It is evident that the framework story of the *Sindbâdname* concerning a young, strong, and wise prince able to face all dangers was appropriate for a favored Ottoman şeyhâde. Whether the author had a particular purpose in dedicating this work to him is difficult to say. Given the popularity of literary works during the earlier year of Süleyman’s reign, it may be the sultan himself or the grand vizier Rüstem Paşa who commissioned this work for Bayezid. In any case, the illustrated manuscript must have been produced in the early 1540s, when Bayezid was greatly favored, especially by his mother and Rüstem Paşa, and was considered the heir to the throne.

Stylistically the manuscript closest to the *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* is the *Selimnâme*, which has generally been dated...
by scholars to 1525, although it may easily date from the early 1530s, since Şükri presented his work to Süleyman through the grand vizier Ibrahim Paşa (d. 1536).

As this particular style in Ottoman painting seems to have continued in the early 1540s, to propose such a dating for the Walters Tuhfat al-akhyâr would not be misleading. This manuscript, long neglected by scholars, is, as stated above, unique in being the only illustrated Turkish translation of the Sindbâdnâma. Second, it is one of the rare examples among Ottoman manuscripts dedicated to an Ottoman prince, and it demonstrates the extent of patronage at the time of Süleyman the Magnificent. One other illustrated manuscript similarly dedicated is Sururi’s translation of the Arabic Ajâ'ib al-makhluqât by Qazwini, dedicated to Şehzade Mustafa, another of Süleyman’s sons. Sururi, who was Mustafa’s tutor, left the translation incomplete after the assassination of the prince in 1553.23 Third, although the six illustrations of the Walters Tuhfat al-akhyâr are partly overpainted, certain unretouched details, especially in the facial features and decorative motifs, reveal the hand of an artist undoubtedly belonging to the atelier that followed the early Ottoman style prevailing in literary works of the early sixteenth century. Thus the manuscript certainly illustrates the nature of the Ottoman school of painting in its formative years.

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APPENDIX 1

fol. 12a. Sindbad teaching the king’s son. 8.4 x 8.2 cm (figs. 1–2).
fol. 24b. Concubine making advances to the young prince to break his silence. 9.4 x 8.2 cm (fig. 3).
fol. 28b. The viziers and ministers discuss how to rescue the prince, imprisoned by his father because of the concubine’s false accusation. 8.8 x 6.9 cm (figs. 4–5).
fol. 33a. The confectioner directing the parrot to keep watch over his unfaithful wife. 8.8 x 6.9 cm (fig. 6).
fol. 52b. The prince hunting with viziers. 8.2 x 6.8 cm (fig. 7).
fol. 76a. Old woman trying to convince the young woman by bringing her a crying dog. 7.8 x 5.3 cm (fig. 8).

APPENDIX 2

fol. 473b. Sindbad demonstrating his wisdom by holding an astrolabe. 8.7 x 8 cm.
fol. 503a. Young prince hunting. 11.1 x 10.7 cm.
fol. 520b. Young man confessing his love to the young woman at her window. 17.9 x 11 cm.
fol. 525a. Old woman convincing the young woman to respond to the young man in love. 9.2 x 8 cm (fig. 9).
fol. 556b. The prince received by his father, who praises him. 9.9 x 8 cm.

APPENDIX 3

fol. 1b–2a. Solomon and Sheba enthroned.
fol. 11b. The king praying for the birth of a son. 11.7 x 8 cm.
fol. 13b. The prince fails to learn from his teacher. 11.7 x 8 cm.
fol. 14b. The philosophers including Sindbad gathered to help the king. 19.5 x 8.5 cm. (S)
fol. 18b. Sindbad promises the king to teach his son. 9.3 x 8 cm.
fol. 20b. Sindbad’s tale of the camel, the wolf, and the fox. 8 x 11.7 cm.
fol. 21b. A garden scene. 8 x 5 cm.
fol. 22a. Sindbad teaching the prince. 11.7 x 8 cm. (W)
fol. 23b. The elephant keeper before the king. 20.6 x 12 cm.
fol. 28a. The king’s concubine declaring her love to the prince. 11.7 x 8 cm. (W)
fol. 29b. The concubine accusing the prince of treason. 11.7 x 8 cm (fig. 10).
fol. 31a. The prince punished and imprisoned. 11.8 x 8 cm.
fol. 32b. The eldest vizier’s story of the old woman, the elephant, the goat, and the apes. 11.7 x 8 cm.
fol. 34b. The viziers and ministers conferring in order to free the prince. 16.5 x 4 cm. (W)
fol. 35a. The vizier’s tale of the untrustworthiness of women. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 36b. The vizier’s tale of the confectioner, his unfaithful wife, and the parrot. 11 x 8 cm (W).
fol. 40b. The confectioner tearing off the head of the parrot. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 43a. The vizier’s tale of a husband coming home to find a soldier rushing from his house. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 45a. The concubine in the king’s presence accusing the viziers of corruption. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 47b. The concubine’s tale of the washer man and his son. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 48a. The executioner leading the prince. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 48b. The second vizier pleading with the king for the prince’s life. 13 x 5 cm.
fol. 50b. The second vizier’s tale of two partridges. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 54b. One partridge tearing the other’s head off and immediately repenting. 8 x 6.8 cm.
fol. 57b. The concubine complaining to the king. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 60b. The prince hunting a wild ass. 8 x 6. cm. (W), (S).
fol. 64b. The third vizier’s tale of the child, the snake, and the cat. 8 x 6.8 cm.
fol. 68a. The tale of the old woman and the merchant’s wife. 11 x 8 cm.
fol. 69a. The concubine before the king, threatening to drink a cup of poison. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 73a. The tale of the wounded boar and the monkey on the fig tree. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 74b. The executioner leading the prince. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 75a. The fourth vizier tells his tale in the presence of the king. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 76a. The bath-keeper whispering to the prince about his wife. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 78a. The prince making love to the bath-keeper’s wife (effaced). 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 80a. The young prince on horseback pleading to his beloved at her window. 12 x 8 cm. (S)
fol. 82a. The old woman convincing the beloved. 12 x 8 cm. (W), (S)
fol. 85b. The prince prostrate in gratitude before the old woman. 10 x 8 cm.
fol. 87b. The prince praying. 8 x 8.5 cm.
fol. 91b. The prince making love to his beloved. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 94b. The king and his son. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 97a. The king thanking Sindbad and the viziers that the prince is now restored to speech. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 99a. The story of the snake falling into a pot of milk, poisoning a group of friends. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 102a. The king approves his son’s tale and sets him free. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 103a. The prince’s story of a love-struck woman who tied a rope around her child’s neck and lowered the child instead of a pitcher into a well. 10 x 8 cm.
fol. 106a. The adulterous king and an infant in a cradle. 13 x 8 cm.
fol. 108a. The merchant and the farmer who deposit their money with an honest old woman who is deceived by one of them. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 109b. The old woman on her way to court is told by a boy what to say there. 10.5 x 8 cm.
fol. 114b. The merchant listening to the advice of a blind man. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 116b. The king asks his ministers and courtiers who taught his son. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 199b. The princess of Kashmir and her attendants in a garden. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 120a. A div carries off the princess in the garden. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 121b. The four brothers rescue the princess from the div’s cave in Yemen. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 123b. The king of Kashmir promises his daughter’s saviors the hand of his daughter and half of his kingdom. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 125a. The king on his throne with his daughter and son-in-law. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 126a. Feast of a prince on a terrace. 11.5 x 8 cm.
fol. 128b. Garden scene. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 129b. The prince making love. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 132a. The concubine in a distressed state reappears before the king. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 134b. The robber riding on a lion’s back. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 135b. The robber in a tree with a monkey below. 8 x 5cm.
fol. 137a. The monkey is caught and killed by the robber. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 138a. The executioner attempts once again to hang the prince. 16.5 x 5 cm.
fol. 138b. The sixth vizier pleads with the king for the life of the prince. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 142a. The peri instructor and the old ascetic. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 143b. The ascetic’s wife uses the magic confided by the peri. 16 x 5 cm.
fol. 149b. A conference between a woman and an effeminate man. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 158a. Sindbad seated before the king. 10 x 8 cm.
fol. 15b. The youth making love to the other woman. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 154b. The concubine tearing her garments before the king. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 158a. Sindbad seated before the king. 10 x 8 cm.
fol. 163b. The king praises his son before his viziers and dignitaries. 12 x 8 cm.
fol. 165b. The prince seated on his father’s throne before the viziers and courtiers. 12 x 8 cm. (S)

NOTES
1. Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, MD. Accession number W. 662.
2. Sometimes called the Sindbad Nama, this work and its versions in different languages were studied by Forbes Falconer, whose study, published in 1841, was based on a Sindbadname then in the Library of the East India Company and now in the British Library (Ethé 1236, IO Isl 3214). Falconer refers briefly to the different versions of the Book of Sindbad in various languages and then narrates all the stories in this Sindbadname; see Forbes Falconer, “Analytic Account of the Sindbad Nama, or Book of Sindbad, a Persian MS. Poem in the Library of the East India Company,” Asiatic Journal, n.s. 35 (1841): 169–80, and 36 (1841): 4–18, 99–108. This research was completed by W. A. Clouston later in the century in his work, The Book of Sindbad, or, the Story of the King, His Son, the Damzul and the Seven Vazirs (Glasgow, 1884). Neither Falconer nor Clouston gives any information on a Turkish translation. A full bibliography on the Sindbadname and its versions is given by V. Chauvin in the second volume of his Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes (Liege and Leipzig, 1897). The Turkish version is noted by J. A. Decourdemanche in “Note sur une version turque du ‘livre de Sendebad,’” Journal Asiatique, 9e sér., 13 (1899): 173–77. He compares the stories in the Turkish, Greek, and Arabic versions. A more recent and comprehensive publication on the various texts of the Sindbadname in Persian, Arabic, and Turkish is Ahmet Ateş, Sindbad-name (Istanbul, 1948). A critical review of this book was published by İbrahim Kutluk, “Sindbadname,” Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi, vol. 3 (Istanbul, 1949), pp. 351–67.
4. Ateş mentions a now-lost Persian translation, made by Amid Abu ’l Fawaris in 950–51, that was used by Samarqandi. One other Persian version before Samarqandi’s was that of Azraqi (d. 1072). Ateş compares three different texts by Samarqandi: Amasya Bayezid Library no. 756, Istanbul Suleymaniye Library no. 861, and Fatih 3682, in publishing the most complete Persian text by Samarqandi. He also uses for comparison the text of an Arabic version in the Suleymaniye Library, Şehid ’Ali Paşa 2743, dated to 1533: Ateş, Sindbadname, passim.
5. Ateş, Sindbad-name, pp. 18–22. For the Turkish manuscript in the British Museum, see Charles Rieu, Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the British Museum (London, 1888), p. 233.
9. See n. 7, above.
13. I am indebted to Mr. Jeremiah P. Losty for allowing me to work on the manuscript and use the British Library’s list of illustrations, which is revised and presented here.
18. Topkapı Palace Museum H. 1507/98, dated to ca. 1525.
20. Topkapı Palace Museum H. 987 does not have a colophon, but, according to Çağman, the illustrations were added in Istanbul: see “Divân-i Husaynî,” p. 240, pl. 23.
21. The best source on the life of Bayezid, son of Süleyman, is Şer-

THE CHARITABLE WORKS OF UMUR BEY

The charitable works of Umur Bey, an Ottoman gentleman of distinguished lineage who died in 1461, have attracted occasional attention since 1912, when Ahmed Tevhid first published the long Turkish inscription found in the portico of Umur Bey's mosque in Bursa. Architectural historians have reconstructed the original appearance of the modest mosque building and of the neighboring tomb and bathhouse, and an outline of their subsequent history has been traced. An unusual feature of the mosque was the presence of a second, smaller domed chamber to the east of the prayer hall, and it has been suggested that this was used as a public library. References to the books kept in this mosque are found in Umur Bey’s deeds of waqf, and several manuscripts that were once kept there can be identified from inscriptions found in them; at the same time, records of both types—waqf deeds and inscriptions in manuscripts—show that Umur Bey also donated books to other foundations. Some of the surviving manuscripts retain their original leather covers, which constitute the largest group of early Ottoman bookbindings made for a single patron other than the sultan. The texts contained in these manuscripts are mainly Turkish translations of works in Arabic and Persian, and some of these were commissioned by Umur Bey himself. The contents of most of the books made waqf by Umur Bey can also be identified, even in the case of those that do not survive, from two inventories that were prepared in connection with his donations. A tentative translation of one of these inventories is published below (see Appendix).

Umur Bey was one of the five sons of Kara Demirtaş (Timurtaş) Paşa (d. 1404), and his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had all played significant roles in the establishment of the Ottoman state over the course of the fourteenth century. Umur Bey, too, took part in public life, to judge by the very occasional references found in Ottoman histories of the fifteenth century. For the chronicler Ahmed Aşıkî (Aşıkpaşaçade), Umur Bey had acted as an informant on events at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, which may be taken as the beginning of his recorded activities. Umur Bey is not mentioned in connection with the battle of Ankara in 1402, where his father was taken prisoner, but it is evident that he successfully negotiated his way through the ensuing civil wars. His career seems to have culminated in the short period early in the reign of Sultan Murad II (1421–51, with interruptions) when he and his surviving brothers Oruç and Ali were all members of the imperial council at the same time. The evidence for this comes from another notice in Ahmed Aşıkî’s chronicle, written in the author’s characteristically laconic style:

Sultan Murad spoke, saying, “I have driven off my enemies. I have had five viziers. I shall remove some of them.” One he sent on a commission to the lord of Germiyan-eli; that was Umur Bey, the son of Kara Demirtaş Paşa. Another was given the post of beylerbeyi; he was his brother Oruç Bey. Another brother was given [the sanjak of] Saruhan-eli; this was Ali Bey.

It seems from this that the brothers were brought on to the council to assist in establishing the young sultan’s authority in the face of challenges first from his uncle Mustafa (d. 1422) and then from his younger brother, also called Mustafa. After the death of the second pretender in January 1423, the three men’s services were no longer required—or, more likely, they were felt to be a potential threat by their two more powerful colleagues, Çandarh Ibrahım Paşa and Hacı İvaz Paşa.

A CONNECTION WITH GERMIYAN-ELI?

The term used for Umur Bey’s “commission” is elçilik. This is usually understood to mean “embassy,” but the lord of Germiyan-eli, Yakub II (r. 1387–90; 1402–29), had been an Ottoman vassal since at least 1414, and Umur must have been acting as a representative of Yakub Bey’s suzerain rather than as the ambassador of a foreign power. It is not possible to tell how long
Umur Bey performed this role, but he may have stayed in Germiyan-eli until Yakub’s death in 1429, when the emirate became a sanjak of the province of Anatolia. Kara Demirtaş Paşa had also spent time in Germiyan-eli during the period when he held the post of beylerbeyi, and there may have been a perception that his family had a special relationship with the emirate. This would explain why Murad II sent Umur Bey there as elçi in 1423 and then appointed Umur Bey’s son Osman Çelebi as governor of the new sanjak of Germiyan-eli for some or all of the time between 1429 and the battle of Varna in 1444, where Osman was killed. The connection is further substantiated by Umur Bey’s ownership of property in the southern part of Germiyan-eli. The assets we know of were those he endowed on a mosque and madrasa in Karahisar, namely, a bathhouse and a caravanserai he had built in the city, the nearby village of Saracapınar, and a rice mill (al-rakah ‘l-aruzziyā) in the town of Homa.

If there was a special relationship between Umur Bey’s family and Germiyan-eli, it may also explain how Umur Bey came to play a role in the development of Turkish literature through the sponsorship of translations from Arabic and Persian. During his lifetime, events led poets and other literary figures from various parts of Anatolia to seek new patrons at the Ottoman court. In the case of Germiyan-eli, which had flourished as a center of courtly literature under Yakub II and his father, Süleymanşah (r. before 1363 to 1387), this movement almost certainly took place after Sultan Bayezid I deposed and imprisoned Yakub and annexed his emirate in 1390. What is more, the poets from Germiyan-eli, such as Ahmedî, Şeyhoğlu, Ahmed Dâi, and Şeyhi, remained in the service of the Ottomans even after their defeat at the battle of Ankara in 1402 and the subsequent restoration of Yakub II by Timur. As a result of this loyalty, they played a major role in the formation of a distinctive Ottoman Turkish literature.

The principal Ottoman patron of these poets was Bayezid I’s son Emir Süleyman, both in his father’s lifetime and during the period when he ruled part of the empire from Edirne (1402–11), and it may be significant that the names of Emir Süleyman and Umur Bey are mentioned together in a work by one of the poets already cited, Ahmed Dâi (d. after 1421). The book in question was Dâi’s translation of the Tafsir of Abu ’l-Layth al-Samarqandi: in the introduction the poet dedicates his efforts to Emir Süleyman and records the encouragement he had received from Umur Bey. Umur Bey was the dedicatee of another work by Dâi, his Turkish version of the Kitâb al-Shifâ’, al-Tifashi’s abridgment of Abu Nu’aym al-Isfahani’s work on Prophetic medicine, the Tībh al-Nabī. In view of this, it is possible to speculate that Umur or his father was responsible for introducing this man and perhaps other poets from Germiyan-eli to the Ottoman court. At the very least, Umur Bey’s connections with Germiyan-eli may explain how he acquired his own interest in literary patronage, and how he became acquainted with Dâi.

**WEALTH AND PIETY**

The assets in Germiyan-eli that Umur Bey made waqf formed only part of his wealth. He assigned other possessions to pious foundations in Bergama, Biga, Bursa, and Edirne. He built a madrasa, three mosques, four bathhouses, and two caravanserais; he had land, mills, and other property in at least four cities and in ten villages scattered across western Anatolia, as well as in Edirne; and on one occasion he donated twenty male slaves and their wives and children to his mosque in Bursa. He may have acquired some of these assets through his own efforts, but he certainly inherited a proportion of his landed property, and perhaps the majority of it, from his father, who is known to have profitfully handsomely from his military successes in the service of Murad I and Bayezid I. Yet Umur Bey’s overall expectations of what he was to inherit from his father were probably considerably diminished by Timur’s invasion of Anatolia in 1402, when Demirtaş Paşa was taken prisoner. According to the Zafar-nâma of Sharaf al-Din Yazdi, Timur was able to seize the great treasure Demirtaş had left in Kütahya, the capital of Germiyan-eli.

By this time, too, Demirtaş must already have made over a good proportion of his property as waqf to support the religious foundations he had created, the most prominent of these being his grand imâret in what is now the Demirtaş quarter of Bursa. Although this would have reduced the amount of private property he had to bequeath to his relatives, it would, of course, have benefited the member of his family who succeeded him as the trustee, or mutawalli, of his endowments, and who was able to draw a substantial income from the waqf revenues as his fee.

On Demirtaş’s death in 1404, his remaining property was divided among his heirs according to the prescriptions of the shari’a. The settlement of Tekirpınarı in the district of Geyve, to the northwest of Bursa, provides one example. Umur Bey inherited a share of this
village from his father, who had been given it by Sultan Bayezid I, and he acquired a further portion from his mother by gift or purchase, so that he was able to donate three-eighths of the village to his mosque in Bursa. Umur Bey’s two surviving brothers, Oruç Bey and Ali Bey, also inherited shares, which they both made waqf: Oruç gave his to the zâviye he had built in the village, while Ali Bey turned his share over to the imâret of his father in Bursa.

The only private property that Umur Bey is recorded to have retained were two houses. One was in the village of Tekirpænaræ. The other—presumably his main residence—lay within the walled city of Bursa (fi dakhil qal‘at Burûsû), that is, on the fortified spur of Uludağ then called Yukarı Hisar. The gradual conversion of private property into waqf practiced by Umur Bey and his relatives (and every other elite family in the Islamic world) reduced their income in the short term but provided a reasonable degree of protection against expropriation. This was particularly important at a time when the power of the old aristocracy—the class to which Umur Bey belonged—was on the wane.

Although the conversion of private property into waqf may have been wise in a worldly sense, this was clearly not Umur Bey’s only motivation. On occasion he is referred to as “al-Hajj Umur Bak,” indicating that he had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the introduction to his waqf deeds in Arabic drawn up in the winter of 1454–55 presents him (in fairly conventional terms, it is true) as a man of considerable wealth and active piety who was attempting to secure a place in paradise by devoting his riches to charitable ends. It begins:

Praise be to God, Who, out of compassion, delivered us from the Fire when we were on its brink; and Who, out of pity, cured our hearts of the affliction of error and restored them to health; and Who, out of kindness, allowed us to acquire the means to enact pious deeds; and Who, out of pure generosity, granted us success in giving rise to good works, for which the reward promised on the Day of Judgment is “houris secluded in pavilions” and the serving of wine sealed with musk! [Praise Him] with praise that protects the young maidens [that are His] blessings from frights [that would make them flee] and ensures the permanence of the gardens where the flowers never fade!

His altruism is clearer, though, in his patronage of literature and of book production.

The dedication of a work of literature to a particular patron is not in itself firm evidence that the person named had any real interest in its composition. Yet no doubts need to be entertained in the case of works dedicated to Umur Bey by the poet Ahmed Dâî and by less well-known figures such as the prose writer Musa al-Izniqi. These texts are all translations into Turkish of compositions in Arabic, and Umur Bey’s personal interest in such work is corroborated by the existence of the long inscription in Turkish that he placed in the portico of his mosque in Bursa, and by the quantity and nature of the books he made waqf, which included many works translated into Turkish. This evidence shows clearly that Umur Bey’s commissions of translations and donations of books were designed to make Islamic culture in its broadest sense accessible to a wider audience in Anatolia and the Balkans.

**INVENTORY A**

Unlike his brother Ali Bey, Umur Bey does not seem to have donated real estate to his father’s imâret, but he did give it books. A document of 1453 copied into a manuscript that belonged to Umur Bey records his donation of sixty books to this foundation. He stipulated that they should be kept in the prayer hall of his father’s imâret for the use of “the students, memorizers of the Qur’an, and other persons who reside in this prayer hall and imâret.” Others could have access to them only if trustworthy persons stood surety for them, except, of course, the donor himself, who was to “have use of these books, whether on his travels or at home, so long as he lives.” The figure of sixty books mentioned in the document is substantiated by an inventory of the volumes in question (Inventory A):
The main text of the waqfiyya and the title of the inventory are noncommittal about the location of the books, and it seems that the list encompasses all of

INVENTORY B

It seems, however, that the majority of Umur Bey’s books were donated to the libraries in his mosque in Bursa and in other foundations he had created. The earliest version of his surviving waqf deeds, which is dated to 1440, mentions books in Arabic provided for the use of the master and students of his madrasa in Bergama, and thirty-three volumes in Turkish given to his mosque in Bursa. This document survives as an entry in a register rather than as an independent copy in scroll or codex form, and it does not include an inventory. The first list of Umur Bey’s books other than the sixty in Inventory A is therefore that found on the reverse of his waqf deeds of 1454–55, which are in scroll form. The inventory is referred to in the main body of the text in the following terms:

The donor already mentioned—May God accept his good deeds!—has made waqf all the books the details of which are written on the back of this lawful waqfiyya for all who may benefit [from them].

The “details” referred to consist of 126 headings that subsume a total of 306 volumes (Inventory B; see Appendix, below).

[A.1] Four volumes of the Tafsir of Abu ‘l-Layth, translated into Turkish.
[A.5] Six volumes of the Strat al-Nabí, in Turkish.
[A.7] One volume on accounting (muhabbebe), in Turkish.27
[A.9] One volume on jurisprudence (jíkh), in Turkish.
[A.12] One volume of the Mirsād al-‘ibād, in Turkish.
[A.16] One volume on the interpretation of dreams (ta‘bîn), in Turkish.
[A.17] One volume of the Story of Abu Muslim, in Turkish.
[A.20] Three volumes of the Kāmil al-sinâ’a, in Arabic.

Three works, in thirty-five volumes, were in Arabic (A.18–20); sixteen works, in twenty-four volumes, were in Turkish (A.1–5, A.7–17); while the remaining volume (A.6) contains the Divván of Aşık Paşa, which was written in Turkish. The fact that the language of this text is not specified suggests that the compiler of Inventory A thought of all the texts explicitly identified as “in Turkish” as translations, although this is made clear only in the first entry. The work in question, the Tafsîr of Abu ‘l-Layth al-Samarqandi, was, as we have seen, translated by Ahmed Dâî, who dedicated his effort to Emir Süleyman. It was later translated again by Ibn ‘Arabshah (d. 1450), whose version was used by Musa al-Izniqi to create a third translation, called the Anfâs al-jawâhir, which was commissioned by Umur Bey. Entry A.1 must, though, refer to a copy of this third translation, the Anfâs al-jawâhir, since the waqf document that contains Inventory A is found in volume two of a copy of this work (Bursa ms. Ulucami 436; see below).

Dâî was nevertheless responsible for three other translations that can be identified with varying degrees of certainty with items in Inventory A. One is a Turkish rendering of the the Ta‘bîr-nâma of Abu Bakr al-Wasiti, which he dedicated to Yakub II of Germiyan-eli before 1390, and which may well be the work referred to in item A.16. The second is the translation of al-Tifashi’s abridgment of Abu Nu‘aym al-Isfahani’s Tíbb al-Nabí, which has already been referred to, and which, given that it was commissioned by Umur Bey, must be the work referred to in item A.4. The third is a Turkish version of the Tadhkira al-aqīlyya of Farid al-Din ‘Attar, which he dedicated to Murad II, and which is probably to be identified with item A.3. Other works in translation in the list originated outside Germiyan and Ottoman court circles. The Strat al-Nabí (A.5), for example, may well have been the work usually known as the Sîyâr al-Nabî (compare Appendix, B.15), which Musâta al-Dirâr of Erzurum translated from the Arabic of Abu ‘l-Hasan al-Bakri. Musâta presented the finished result to the Mamluk sultan Barquq in 1388. Equally, the Futûh-ı Şâhm (A.15) may be the same author’s translation of the Futûh al-Shâhm of Abu ‘Abdallah al-Madani, which he presented to Julban, the Mamluk governor of Aleppo, in 1395.30
the books Umur Bey made waqf without distinguishing between his various foundations. There is prima facie evidence, for instance, that Inventory A, which dates from 1453, was used in the compilation of Inventory B a year later. The twenty works listed in A are found in B in almost the same order; and, as the order of A is random, with the exception of the division into works in Turkish (A.1–17) and works in Arabic (A.18–20), there is no reason for this order to have recurred in B unless the compiler was cribbing from A. During its inclusion in B, however, Inventory A was divided into three blocks of entries, one containing the texts in Arabic (A.1–20) and two containing the texts in Turkish (A.1–6, A.7–17), and these were copied separately as items B.1–3, B.11–15 and B.19–30. In the process, the information on the number of volumes was retained, but the information on the language in which the books were written was discarded, with one exception.

This exception (B.11) is significant, since the language of the four volumes of the Tafsir of Abu 'I-Layth has changed from Turkish to Arabic! In item B.34 we find one more volume of this work in Arabic and no fewer than twenty volumes in Turkish. We may speculate that Umur Bey owned one five-volume copy of the Tafsir in Arabic and one copy of Ibn 'Arabshah's translation, which was probably in several volumes; that he loaned these two books to Musa al-Izniqi when he commissioned him to translate the Tafsir into Turkish; and that he received from Musa—or from Musa and other copyists—several multivolume copies of the new Turkish version of it, known as the Anfas al-jawahir; and that one of these copies, which was in four volumes, was donated to the imaret of his father, while another was given to his own mosque.

We know from the waqf notice in a surviving volume (Bursa ms. Ulucami 435: see below) that in 1449 Umur Bey also gave his mosque a copy of another tafsir translated by Musa, the Lubab al-ta'wil of al-Hazin al-Baghdadi. This translation has often been confused with the Anfas al-jawahir, and since no copy of it can be identified in Inventory B, even though we know one was in the Umur Bey mosque library before 1454, we may speculate that the compiler of Inventory B (or a predecessor) also confused the two tafsirs and included a multivolume copy of the translation of the Lubab under item B.34. This would go some way to explaining why Umur Bey had so many copies of this work.

In short, the compiler of Inventory B was probably trying to reconcile this tafsir material with entries in two earlier inventories, and in the process, he reallocated four volumes of the Arabic text to item B.11, which he had copied from Inventory A, while the remaining volume in Arabic and all the Turkish volumes were brought together under item B.34, which he had presumably copied from another inventory.

In other respects, Inventory B seems reliable, since books occur in numbers and under headings that make sense. For example, other works that Umur Bey had had translated are also present in multiple copies. One is Dâi’s rendering of the abridgment of al-Isfahani’s Tibb al-Nabi. Items A.4 and B.14 both probably refer to a single copy of the translation, which was donated to the imaret of Demirtaş Paşa, while item B.84 may be the copy donated to Umur Bey’s own mosque, and item B.46, described as the “Tibb al-Nabi in Arabic,” may contain the original text that Umur Bey gave to Dâi to translate. Similarly, the Fast al-khithāb of Khwajah Muhammad Parsa, which Musa al-Izniqi is known to have translated for Umur Bey,34 is referred to twice in Inventory B as the “Risâla of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa.” On the first occasion (B.35) the construction is of Persian origin (risâla-i Khwajah Muhammad-i Pārsā), and on the second (B.45) it is distinctively Turkish (Hoca Muhammed-i Pārsā risâlesi). We can infer from this that item B.35 is the copy of the text in Persian that Umur Bey gave to Musa to translate, and that item B.45 is the translation itself.35

Inventory B clearly encompasses a large proportion of the works translated into Anatolian Turkish by the 1450s; it includes original compositions in this language—one being the Munabbih al-rājīdūn of Musa al-Izniqi (B.48)—and, as we have seen, works in both Arabic and Persian. The last two categories probably included a number of entries where the language of the text was not specified because the language in question was self-evident to the compiler of the list: he knew that there was no Turkish translation available. Examples may be the Divāns of the fourteenth-century Shirazi poet ’Ubayd Zakani and of his more famous contemporary, Khwaja Muhammad Hafiz, the “Shirazi” par excellence (B.103, B.104).

The identification of the items in the list is far from complete and, indeed, may never be complete, given the presence of entries such as “book brought by Okçali” (B.105). Even where the title is given, identification is sometimes a problem. The poet Ahmedi’s most famous work is his İskandar-nâma, a version of the Alexander legend that he produced in several different versions between 1390 and 1410. Yet it is not possible to tell whether this poem is represented by all, some,
or none of the four copies of the *Iskandar-nāma* listed under items B.18, B.47, and B.74. The last of these may be the best candidate, however, as it is described as being “in verse,” which suggests that the other three were in prose. With the identification of other items, though, there can be no doubt: item B.67, described as “Ahmedî’s poem on medicine,” must be this poet’s *Tarwîth al-arwah*, a verse work on medicine that Ahmedî began to write for Emir Süleyman but which, because of his patron’s defeat and death in 1411, he presented instead to his brother, Sultan Mehmed I.36

One means for refining our understanding of the inventory is the *waqf* inscriptions that appear in books that once belonged to Umur Bey. These books have been dispersed over time, and a number of them were moved to the Great Mosque and other religious establishments in Bursa before their transfer to the state library in the former madrasa of İnebey. Murat Yüksel has published the inscriptions from six of these:37

1. The second volume of the *Anfas al-jawhir*, which, as we have seen, contains Inventory A, and which was given to the imâret of Demirtaş Paşa (ms. Ulucami 436). It was almost certainly inventoried under item B.34.

2. The second volume of Musa al-Izniqi’s translation of the *Lubûb al-tawûl* of al-Hazin al-Baghdadi, which was made *waqf* for the mosque of Umur Bey in Bursa in 1449 (ms. Ulucami 435). As we have seen, this may also have been inventoried under item B.34.

Unfortunately, the intended destination of the other four manuscripts was not recorded, although the books in question can be provisionally identified with items in Inventory B:

3. The first volume of a work called *al-Ma’nawi al-murûdi al-muntakhab min al-Mathnawi al-rashât*, presumably a partial translation of the *Ma’nawi* of Jalal al-Din al-Rumi. It had been translated by Mu’in b. Mustafâ in 1435 for Sultan Murad II, and this copy (ms. Ulucami 1664) had been made *waqf* in 1449. It may well have been the first volume of the two-volume *ma’nawi* listed as item B.58.

4. A translation of another great work of Persian mystic poetry, the *Lama’ât* of al-Iraqî, made by Badr al-Din in 1430, with a *waqf* inscription dated to 1456 (ms. Ulucami 1715/1). Although this date falls a little after the composition of Inventory B, the manuscript would surely have been in Umur Bey’s possession by this time, and it may therefore be identified with the one-volume copy of this work listed as item B.123.

5. The fifth volume of a Turkish translation of the *Fatûwâ* of al-Bazzazi copied by Ahmad b. Musa al-Siwasi, with an undated inscription (ms. Ulucami 1448). Three copies of this highly regarded collection of Hanafi fatwas are included in the list. B.6 is in two volumes, and B.73 is in one volume, so this manuscript appears to relate to item B.44, which is in nine volumes.

6. A translation of the *Kâmîl al-sinâ’a*, al-Majusi’s handbook on Galenic medicine, made by al-Mawla al-Rumi al-Mutatabbib, donated in 1453 (ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 819). This is not item B.3, which we know from item A.20 was in Arabic, but it could be either item B.79 or item B.85, both of which are single-volume copies of the Turkish translation.

Yüksel’s publication was not exhaustive, however, since similar inscriptions have been found on other manuscripts in the İnebey Library. In this way, four volumes from the two copies of the *Tafsîr al-kâbûr* of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi listed in item B.8 have been identified.38 It may also be possible to trace books dispersed from Umur Bey’s foundations in other collections, on the basis of either inscriptions or codicological features.39 Further circumstantial information may also come to light, such as a stipulation regarding Qur’an recitation in the *waqf* deed of 1454–55:

> Ten *dirhams* each day to the ten men who, knowing the Qur’an by heart and being able to recite it in the correct manner, gather every day in the mosque mentioned above and read aloud ten of the thirty fascicules into which the Noble Book and Mighty Qur’an is divided, [at a rate of] one *dirham* each per day.40

It is possible that the daily recitations were the reason why Qur’an manuscripts of different types were included in the inventory (B.37, B.38, B.64, B.65), but as yet we have no way of knowing which of these books, if any, were used for the reading of the ten *ajzâ‘*. This relative lack of contextual detail does not diminish the value of Inventory B, which provides rare information on the reading material available to literate residents of Bursa, and perhaps other locations in western Anatolia, in the middle of the fifteenth century. At the same time, it tells us a good deal about Umur Bey: it shows what he considered to be acceptable reading mat-
ter for the congregation of his mosque and other constituencies, it substantiates his literary patronage, and it shows which books he owned—and gave away. This paper is only a preliminary step in extracting the information this inventory can provide.

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APPENDIX: INVENTORY B

Here are the details of the books given in trust mentioned in this lawful deed of waqf:

[1] Sahih of al-Bukhari: thirty volumes
[5] Hadith of Quda'i: one volume
[6] Fatawah of Hafiz al-Din Bazzazi: two volumes
[7] Qunun-i Isib: one volume
[8] Jami' of Ibn Baytar: one volume
[9] Munabbih al-raqid: two volumes
[10] Iksir al-sada: one volume
[12] Sirj al-qulub: one volume
[14] Hisn al-hasan: four volumes
[16] Iskandar-nama: one volume
[17] Divan of Ashq: one volume
[18] Muhadsab: one volume
[19] Dhikr al-ma's: one volume
[22] Marzban-nama: one volume
[23] Book on jurisprudence (kitab-i fikh): one volume
[24] Iksir of al-sa'ada: one volume
[26] Siraj al-qulub: one volume
[27] Bidayat al-hidaya: one volume
[28] Ta'bir: one volume
[29] History of Abu Muslim: one volume
[31] Futûh al-Sham in Persian: one volume
[32] Tawarikh of Tabari: four volumes
[33] Tafsir of Najm Daya: five volumes
[34] Tafsir of Abu 'l-Layth; one volume in Arabic and twenty more in Turkish
[36] Va'z-nama: one volume
[37] Qur'an with glosses in Persian (farsi ma'nali mushaf): one volume
[38] Qur'an with glosses in Turkish (tûrkî ma'nali mushaf): one volume
[39] commentary (sharh) on the Bihâr: two volumes
[40] Mishbah: one volume
[41] Mashâriq: one volume
[42] Zayn al-arab: two volumes
[43] Qisas al-anbiyâ': one volume
[44] Fatwa of Bazzazi: nine volumes
[45] treatise of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa (Hoca Muhammed-i Parsî risâlesi): one volume
[46] Tibb al-Nabi in Arabic: one volume
[47] Iskandar-nama, repeated: twenty-eight volumes
[48] Munabbih al-râgidin: two volumes
[49] Jami' al-gharib: three volumes
[50] Ibn Baytar in Turkish: two volumes
[51] Istitahat al-mashayikh: one volume
[52] Wiqaya: one volume
[53] [book] in verse (manzûme): one volume
[54] Qaws-nama [Qâbus-nama?]: one volume
[55] medical miscellany in Arabic (tibdan arabi mecma): one volume
[56] Lubb-i Masâbî: one volume
[57] Arba'in mihakkan: three volumes
[58] Maqâviv: two volumes
[59] Quhuri: one volume
[60] Hidaya: one volume
[61] Qutb al-Din Maqdisi [Muqaddasi?]: three volumes
[62] another (def'a) Masabih: one volume
[63] Mashâriq: one volume
[64] set of [Qur'an] fascicules (hatme-i ecza): nine
[65] Qur'an (mushaf): one volume
[66] Yaqut-i darj: one
[67] Ahmedî's poem on medicine (Ahmedi nazmi tibbi): one volume
[68] Baytar-nama: one volume
[69] Farhang-nama: three volumes
[70] Hamâ'il: two volumes
[71] Qawwâri': two volumes
[72] another Dhikr al-ma's: four volumes
[73] Fatwâ of Bazzazi, another copy (def'a): one volume
another book brought by Okçalæ (Okçalæ getirdiği kitab): one volume

commentary on the Farâ‘îd: one volume

Kâmîl al-sînâ‘a: one volume in Turkish

Inânî şî pârî [?]: one volume

another book on jurisprudence (def’a fîkh kitabî): one volume

Tâfşîr of Tabâ‘ara [juz’ 29]: one volume

Asbâ‘î ‘alâmâ‘î of Samarqandi: three volumes

Tibbî Nâbi: two volumes

another Kâmîl al-sînâ‘a in Turkish: one volume

Rawwâq al-majâ‘îls: one volume

commentary on the Vâsîyâ‘-yi Imâm-i ‘A’zam: one volume

Yaqûtulu ‘l-‘abd: four volumes

Marâqîb-i Jalâ‘ al-Dîn: one volume

another Marzân-nâmê: one volume

Sûnîdîz-nâmê: two volumes

History of Seydi Battal: one volume

Mûhâsâbâ: two volumes

another Shî‘at al-Îslâm: one volume

Mulhama: one volume

Tarâssul: two volumes

another Iksîr al-sa‘â‘da: one volume

Masâ‘îbî mutasafarîqa: one volume

Fadâ‘îl-i Qûds: one volume

Tawârîkh: one volume

Tâşrîf: one volume

Manâsîk: one volume

‘Ubaydî-î Zakan: one volume

Dîvân of Shirâzî: one volume

book brought by Okçalæ (Okehî getirdiği kitab): one volume

Qasîdat al-Burda: two volumes

another Dîwân al-mawt: two volumes

Hîsîn al-haşîn, another copy: one volume

Medicine of Cerrâh Ece (Cerrâh Ece Tibbî): one volume

book composed for the refutation of heretics (ehlî bîd’â ta‘înî için düzülen kitab): one volume

Dîwân of Kemal: one volume

Farhang-nâmê: one volume

History of the World: one volume

Jâmâ‘î-p-nâmê: two volumes

Tâfşîr of Qul Huwa ‘llâh Ahad [sura 112]: two volumes

[74] Iskandar-nâmê in verse (nasîm-î Iskender-nâmê): one volume

[75] Faraj ba‘d al-shidda: two volumes

[76] Khurshîz: one volume

[77] book on Islamic philosophy (hikmet kitabî): one volume

[78] commentary on the Farâ‘îd: one volume

[79] Kâmîl al-sînâ‘a: one volume in Turkish

[80] Inânî şî pârî [?]: one volume

[81] another book on jurisprudence (def’a fîkh kitabî): one volume

[82] Tâfşîr of Tabâ‘ara [juz’ 29]: one volume

[83] Asbâ‘î ‘alâmâ‘î of Samarqandi: three volumes

[84] Tibbî Nâbi: two volumes

[85] another Kâmîl al-sînâ‘a in Turkish: one volume

[86] Rawwâq al-majâ‘îls: one volume

[87] commentary on the Vâsîyâ‘-yi Imâm-i ‘A’zam: one volume

[88] Yaqûtulu ‘l-‘abd: four volumes


[90] another Marzân-nâmê: one volume

[91] Sûnîdîz-nâmê: two volumes

[92] History of Seydi Battal: one volume

[93] Mûhâsâbâ: two volumes

[94] another Shî‘at al-Îslâm: one volume

[95] Mulhama: one volume

[96] Tarâssul: two volumes

[97] another Iksîr al-sa‘â‘da: one volume

[98] Masâ‘îbî mutasafarîqa: one volume

[99] Fadâ‘îl-i Qûds: one volume

[100] Tawârîkh: one volume

[101] Tâşrîf: one volume

[102] Manâsîk: one volume

[103] ‘Ubaydî-î Zakan: one volume

[104] Dîwân of Shirâzî: one volume

[105] book brought by Okçalæ (Okehî getirdiği kitab): one volume

[106] Qasîdat al-Burda: two volumes

[107] another Dîwân al-mawt: two volumes

[108] Hîsîn al-haşîn, another copy: one volume

[109] Medicine of Cerrâh Ece (Cerrâh Ece Tibbî): one volume

[110] book composed for the refutation of heretics (ehlî bîd’â ta‘înî için düzülen kitab): one volume

[111] Dîwân of Kemal: one volume

[112] Farhang-nâmê: one volume

[113] History of the World: one volume

[114] Jâmâ‘î-p-nâmê: two volumes

[115] Tâfşîr of Qul Huwa ‘llâh Ahad [sura 112]: two volumes

[116] Wîqûya in Turkish: one volume

[117] another Marzân-nâmê: one volume

[118] book on geomancy (remel kitabî): one volume

[119] Divân of Hûseyîn: one volume

[120] Divân of Şeyhî: one volume

[121] miscellanies (mecmuâlar): nine

[122] book on divination (fal kitabî): one volume

[123] Lâma‘ât of al-‘Iraqi: one volume

[124] Adwa‘î: one volume

[125] book on lexicography (lugat kitabî): one volume

[126] Âsrâr al-îrîfîn: one volume

NOTES

Author’s note: The transliteration in this article has followed the following principles: If a word is Turkish or was specific to Ottoman Turkish usage (e.g., imâret), it is given in its Turkish form. If not (e.g., waqf), the transliteration is in the Arabic form. In the case of book titles, I have followed the grammatical structure: if it is Turkish, I have translated the title; but if it is Arabic or Persian, I have transliterated it as Arabic or Persian.

As well as thanking Michael Rogers for his help over recent years, I would like to record my gratitude to Julian Raby and Zeren Tanândæ for introducing me to Umur Bey, and to the staff of the Atatürk Kitapçılıği in Istanbul for their welcome. They provided me with a photocopy of an anonymous transliteration of the waqfîyya in their care, and, although it proved to be defective, it served as a valuable crib in reading the manuscript itself.

1. Ahmed Tevhid, “Bursa’dâ Umur Bey Camii Kitâbesi,” Tarih-i Osmanî Encümeni Mecmuasî, year 3, nos. 13–18 (1328 [1912–13]): 866. For a more reliable transcription, see Ekrem Hakkî Ayverdi, Osmanî Mimarisînde Çelebi ve II. Sultan Murad Devri (Istanbul, 1972), pp. 339–40. The inscription is dated Jumâda ‘l-Ukhra 865 (March 14–April 11, 1461) and contains the Turkish text of what was probably the final version of the founder’s waqfîyya, composed on 50 Muhrarım 865 (November 15, 1460).


22. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 71–72, 88–89, and the Turkish
23. This process carried on for several generations. See, for example, Mehmed Tahir, "Ahmedî." 67
24. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, lines 1–5:
26. This foundation, a waqîfah al-¥ay¸h, thumma {ayyana tilka ‘l-{asharah li-abn¸}ih¸ wa-abn¸}ih¸. The interpolation of this sheet did not involve any change to the inventory of books on the reverse, which is higher up the scroll.
27. In this entry, the term used for “in Turkish” is тïrki rather than тïrke.
28. No copy of the divan of Aşîk Paşa is recorded, although 67 stray poems have been identified and published; see, for example, "Türkiye Vakfî İslâm Ansiklopedisi, s.v. “Aşîk Paşa.” 4
29. See, for example, Encyclopaedia Iranica, s.v. “Abu ‘l-Lays Samarqandî.”
32. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38. The scroll is 515 cm long and 27.5 cm wide and is made up of eighteen sheets of paper pasted end to end, with the phrase sahha ‘rouf written over each join. Of these, seventeen are made of a laid paper with chain lines in groups of three set 4.5 cm apart. Ten sheets are more or less full-length (up to 37 cm), and seven are more or less half-length (up to 18.5 cm). The tenth sheet is made of a different paper, notable for its fibrous inclusions; it is longer, at 42 cm; and on the reverse it bears a note in a later hand declaring it to be an interpolation (Bu varak mûcevverdir. Kâgidir rãngi ve hattî ve ikî sahîkî vakfiyesi şehat eder), and the word sakim (unsound) has been written across it. The text on this sheet contains an obvious interpolation (lines 104–6), which would explain why the replacement sheet had to be longer than the original sheets: Wa-’âyuna li-bintihi ‘l-sabîya Nafisâ damât ’ismatuhî fi kull yâmu’ ‘asharat darâhîn mâ damât fi qayl al-hayâh, thunmâ ‘âyuna tilka ‘l-’asharah li-abn¸}ih¸ wa-abn¸}ih¸. The interpolation of this sheet did not involve any change to the inventory of books on the reverse, which is higher up the scroll.
33. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, lines 149–152: Wa-waqqafî ‘l-waqqî al-mushhîr ilayh taqabbalà ‘îläh hayyâtulu jami’ al-kutub al-mukäbûna bi-tajâfûtîhî ‘alà zaharat kudhîhî ‘l-waqqîfî al-shatî’îyâ kî kull man yâwwâfî. For the slaves, see Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 84–89.
35. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 71–72, 88–89, and the Turkish waqqîfîya of 1460 (see n. 1, above). See also Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 116–117. This foundation, a mahalle mosque, appears only in the Turkish waqqîfîya of 1460 (see n. 1, above). Also see M. Tayyib Gök-bilgin, XV. ve XVI. Asrîarda Edebi ve Paşa Livâsî. Vakfîlar, Mül-kler, Mukaddasalar (Istanbul, 1952), p. 29.
37. See, for example, Turks Vakfî İslâm Ansiklopedisi, s.v. “Ahmedî-Dî.” 5
38. The first three are already detailed in an Arabic waqqîfîya dated Dhu ‘l-Qa’dâ 843 (April 4–May 3, 1440); see Erünsal, Türk Kitâbâneleri Tarihi, pp. 9–10. See also Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 36–39. See also Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, ll. 19–20.
40. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, lines 102–4:
41. This line is written over each join.
42. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, no. 40. Ms. MC Vakfiye 38, lines 1–5: Al-¥amdu li-ll¸h alladhº anqadhan¸
43. Mr. Ahmad Tahir names "Ibn Baytar in Turkish." It is therefore significant that Mehmed Tahir names "Ibn Baytar in Turkish." It is therefore significant that Mehmed Tahir names "gäuîa osmâniyeden Umr Bey" as the patron of a translation of this work; see Osmanh Müellifleri, vol. 3 (Istanbul, 1342 [1928]), p. 247. Cf. also item B.52, a copy of the handbook on Hanafi fahî called al-Wiyyâqa, and B.116, a copy of the "Wiyyâqa in Turkish."
From the mid-sixteenth century onwards, despite the commencement of wars with the Safavids to the east and internal political turmoil, the production of decorated books at the painting studio of the Ottoman palace increased, and books presented to the sultan as diplomatic gifts swelled the palace book collection. Examination of the inscriptions on the bindings, first and last lines, lines on pages preceding or following illustrations, and details in miniature paintings in some of these illustrated books; scrutiny of archival documents relating to palace administration; and careful reading of the history written by Selaniki Mustafa Efendi (d. 1600?) and the works of the historian and bureaucrat Mustafa Âli (d. 1600) reveal that some of the palace eunuchs were involved in commissioning works of art, and that sometimes they were influential in political affairs and in the relations between the sultan and grand viziers, other statesmen, bureaucrats, and poets.

The first of these eunuchs to come to our attention in this respect is Darüssaade Agha Habeši Mehmed Agha (d. 1590). The position of Darüssaade ağası was a key one in the palace administration: although the real duty of these officials appeared to be management of the harem, they were also in charge of those who administered the charitable endowments of high-ranking palace officials. At the same time their duties made them the persons closest to the sultan and his family, and hence they wielded a high degree of authority and influence over political issues. It was Mehmed Agha who officiated in the name of the sultan at the marriages of the sultan’s sisters and daughters, who accompanied the sultan on campaign as his equerry, and who was in charge of making payments for construction work and repairs at the palace, making purchases from many kinds of tradesmen and craftsmen, including jewelers, tailors, and merchants, and checking the accounts. Emboldened by the authority invested in him, Habeši Mehmed Agha separated the positions of head eunuch of the palace—Babüssaade ağası—and head eunuch of the harem—Darüssaade ağası—taking the latter title, which led to the black eunuchs acquiring administrative precedence in 1574. In the Şehinzâhnam-i Murad-i Sâlis, an account of the events between 1574 and 1581 that was presented to Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–95) in 1581, four of the miniatures in the first volume relate to Mehmed Agha (Istanbul University Library, F. 1404). These four pictures document an important event of Ottoman history—the death of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha, who was assassinated in 1579. They show Mehmed Agha going to see Sokollu Mehmed Pasha after the attack (fol. 133b), the two men talking at Sokollu Mehmed Pasha’s deathbed (fol. 135a), Mehmed Agha informing Sultan Murad III of the death of Mehmed Pasha (fol. 136b), and Mehmed Agha having the assassin captured (fol. 138a). This suggests that Mehmed Agha had the authority to influence the selection of illustrations in the course of producing this book.

Three illustrated copies of Zubdat al-tawrîkh, a general Islamic history written by Seyyid Lokman, were produced between 1583 and 1586, one of them for presentation to Sultan Murad III. Dated to 1583, the last miniature in this manuscript depicts Habeši Mehmed Agha in the presence of Sultan Murad (fig. 1). The second copy, in Topkapı Saray, was produced for Vizier Siyavuş Pasha, and the third copy, in Dublin, for Habeši Mehmed Agha himself. This last copy is the first example of an illustrated manuscript produced at the Ottoman palace studio for a palace eunuch—all earlier manuscripts having been made for the sultans, their sons and daughters, or their grand viziers—and it demonstrates that Mehmed Agha had influence over the palace studio.

Sultan Murad III commissioned a writer whose pen-name was Intizami to write a book describing the circumcision festivities held in 1582 for his son Mehmed; an illustrated copy of this Sûrnâme was produced around 1588 (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1344). On the last pages Intizami gives information that might be described as a history of the art of the period (fol.
After providing autobiographical details, he gives an account of Nakkaş Osman, the artist who designed the illustrations for the manuscript, consulting when necessary the chief palace eunuch Mehmed Agha and the dwarf Zeyrek Agha, and executing the illustrations only with their approval, some illustrations being changed or redrawn in accordance with their wishes. One of the last illustrations in this work shows an enthroned Murad III giving audience to leading palace officials (fol. 429a), and another shows Habeşi Mehmed Agha, with a bound book in his hand, conversing with the dwarf Zeyrek Agha (fol. 432a, fig. 2). The standing figure in the picture also holding a bound book must be the author Intizami. At the circumcision festivities Mehmed Agha hosted a banquet for high-ranking guests in the name of the sultan (fol. 1b).

An illustrated copy of Kitâbi gencine-i feth-i Gence, written by Rahimizade İbrahim Çavuş about the 1588 campaign against Gence led by Beğlerbeği Ferhad Pasha, was produced in Istanbul in 1590 (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, R. 1296). At the beginning of this work, Rahimizade explains that he wrote the book at the instigation of Darüşsaade Agha Mehmed, who was known for his close relationship with the sultan. One of the first miniatures (fol. 8b) depicts Mehmed Agha in the presence of Sultan Murad III presenting this illustrated book to him (fig. 3). Another picture showing Mehmed Agha in the sultan’s presence is found in the Nusretnâme, an account of the eastern campaign led by Lala Mustafa Pasha written by Mustafa Âli and produced in 1584. This miniature (fig. 4) depicts two different events (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1365, fol. 178b). The scene at the top shows Murad III sitting in a pavilion with three eunuchs to his right. According to the label on the miniature, the eunuch closest to the sultan, holding an aigrette, is Mehmed Agha; the one in the center, holding a sword, is Osman Agha; and the third is the chief treasurer. To the sultan’s left are his two sword bearers and the dwarf Zeyrek Agha. The scene probably depicts the ceremony held before sending a kaftan of honor to one of the people portrayed in the lower part of the picture, which depicts a scene showing Minuçehr, one of the Christian atabeks of the Çoruh clan who converted to Islam in 1578, entertaining the pashas who held posts in Kars and Çıldır.

Another famous palace eunuch whom we find asso-
ciated with works of art produced at the palace is Gaza-
fer Agha. A janissary recruit of Venetian birth, Gaza-
fer Agha (d. 1602) was in the service of the future
Selim II in Kütahya. When Selim went to Istanbul to
claim the throne in 1566, he took Gazanfer, in whose
friendship he trusted, and his younger brother Cafer.
So that the brothers could enter the harem with Selim,
they were castrated. Cafer died following the opera-
tion. Gazanfer Agha held the posts of Babüssaade a
hasodaba, and çakærba, and, according to the histo-
rian Selaniki, was also kapærba from 1590 to 1599.
Gazanfer Agha is portrayed in one of the miniatures
standing to Sultan Murad III’s right, next to his sword
bearers (fig. 5). Another of Âli’s patrons, Hoca Saded-
din Efendi (d. 1599), who was the sultan’s teacher and
served as seyhüslâm in 1598, is seated at the sultan’s
left hand (fol. 249b). Mustafa Âli is known to have
petitioned Gazanfer Agha and Zeyrek Agha for high-
ranking posts, such as that of nîsanç and beşlerbeği.
Gazanfer Agha asked him to write an account of con-

Fig. 2. Mehmed Agha conversing with Zeyrek Agha. Sûrnâme, ca. 1588. Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1344, fol. 432a. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Saray Museum, Istanbul)

Fig. 3. Mehmed Agha presents the manuscript to Sultan Murat
III. Kitâb-i Gencine-i Feth-i Gence, 1590. Topkapı Saray Museum
Library, R. 1296, fol. 8b. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Saray
Museum, Istanbul)
Mustafa Âli was appointed beştebâbi of Damascus at the instigation of the sultan’s mother Safiye Sultan and with the backing of Hoca Sadeddin and Gazanfer Agha.21 In the preface to his book Hülâl al-Qâhira, about Cairo under the Ottomans, he explains that he presented a clean copy of this work to Gazanfer Agha, whom he describes as the Ardashir of his time, as resembling Solomon in being one of the trustworthy pillars of the state, and as a hero equal to Alexander.22 One section of the same writer’s famous history, Künhû ɬ-abâr, is devoted to the merits of Gazanfer Agha as a patron.23 Gazanfer Agha continued to be a celebrated figure during the reign of Sultan Mehmed III (1595-1603), and together with Hoca Sadeddin participated in the sultan’s Eger campaign and the Battle of Mezőkeresztes (Haçova).24 The illustrated copy of the history of the conquest of Eger (Eğri fethi tarihi: Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1509) by palace chronicler Talikizade contains illustrations of Mehmed III receiving Hungarian envoys in his tent (fol. 26b–27a), and of him at the Battle of Haçova (fol. 50b–51a); in both of these images Gazanfer Agha is portrayed standing next to the sultan (fig. 6). In the scene of Mehmed’s return to Istanbul following the capture of Eger, the grand vizier is shown at his right hand and Gazanfer Agha behind him on his left (fol. 68b–69a).25

The poet and bureaucrat Mehmed b. Abdülباقي
(Ganizade, d. 1626)), who wrote under the pen-name Nadiri and served as a madrasa teacher, kadi, and military judge, had close relations with the court throughout his life. This is evident from the fact that he wrote poems for Murad III, Mehmed III, Ahmed I, and Osman II, for grand viziers, and for the eunuchs Gazanfer, Server, and Mirahur Ali. Only one of the copies of Nadiri’s *Divân* produced in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is illustrated with miniatures (Topkapı Saray Museum, H. 889); these are believed to have been painted around 1605 by Ahmed Nakşî. One of them depicts the Battle of Haçova (fol. 6b–7a). At the top left of folio 6b Sultan Mehmed III is impositingly portrayed on horseback; to his right appears the royal teacher, Hoca Sadeddin Efendi, and between and behind them Gazanfer Agha anxiously observes the course of the battle (fig. 7). Another miniature (fig. 8) shows Gazanfer Agha visiting the madrasa that he founded in his name in 1596 (fol. 22a); it was located at the foot of the Bozdoğan Aqueduct in Sarachaâne, Istanbul, and the poet Nadiri was appointed its müderris (professor). (Although Gazanfer Agha served at the palace for thirty years, he is always portrayed as a slender youth without beard or moustache, since he was a eunuch.) The facts that Mirahur Ali Agha and Gazanfer Agha are frequently mentioned in both the preface and the poems of Nadiri’s *Divân* and that a palace eunuch should found a madrasa in his own name demonstrate the high status and degree of authority of both men at court towards the end of the sixteenth century.

Further evidence of Gazanfer Agha’s interest in books is revealed by the numerous manuscripts whose prefaces state that they were produced at his request. These include *Destân-i Ferruh u Hümä*, a book of entertaining stories translated into Turkish at the end of the sixteenth century and illustrated (Istanbul University Library, T 1975), *Tercâme-i Miştâh-i Cifr el-câmi* (Istanbul University Library, T 6624 and Topkapı Saray Museum Library, B. 203), and Jami’s *Bahârîstân* (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1711). Sultan Mehmed III’s preference for simple, concisely worded stories must have influenced Gazanfer Agha’s choices. Notes written on the first pages of two manuscripts, an illustrated *Haft awrang* (H. 806) and an illuminated *Shâh u Gadâ* (R. 1034) in Topkapı Saray Library, explain that they were purchased from the estate of Gazanfer Agha.

Another of Mustafa Ali’s friends at court was the dwarf Zeyrek Agha, whose name is mentioned in association with Mehmed Agha and Gazanfer Agha. While Ali was working on his *Nusretname*, he wrote a letter to Zeyrek Agha in which he addresses him as “my son.” As already mentioned, Zeyrek is portrayed in the *Sûrnâme* and *Nusretname* (figs. 2 and 4), and together with Mehmed Agha was consulted about the illustrations for the *Sûrnâme*.

Mustafa Safi (d. 1617), author of *Zubdat al-tawârikh*, relates that the dwarf Zeyrek, a companion of Sultan Murad III, was intelligent, perceptive, and skilled at relating unusual stories and anecdotes. Another writer, Şem’î (d. 1591), explains that he translated *At- tar’s Pandnâma* into Turkish (The British Library, Sloane 3588) at this agha’s request. The most important evi-
ience of Zeyrek Agha’s personality and influence at the palace studio is the Divân of Sultan Murad III (Topkapı Saray Museum, 2/2107). Containing poems of a mystical nature by the sultan, this manuscript is magnificently illuminated and splendidly bound, its covers decorated with gold worked in various techniques and encrusted with precious stones. The doublures have stamped and gilded medallions and cornerpieces, with decoration on the field between these motifs. The inscription band on the covers contains information concerning the production of the manuscript, written by a poet called Derviş. It explains that Zeyrek Agha commissioned the compilation, copying, and binding, and that the binding itself was the work of court goldsmith Mehmed. The date 996 (1588) in this inscription is probably the date that the binding was completed.

After Derviş Mahmud of Konya became mesnevi-hân (reciter of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi’s Maşnâvî-i ma’nâvi) in 1575, he visited Istanbul and during his stay, as he explains in the preface to this work, heard about Sultan Murad III’s interest in mystical writings, upon which he translated parts of from Sevâk-i menâkib, a work about Mevlana’s wisdom and excellence. Wishing to show these to the sultan, he spoke about it to Zeyrek Agha, whom he describes as one of the close companions of Murad III and “a friend of the poor and protector of the weak”; and Zeyrek Agha presented his work to the sultan. The sultan asked Derviş Mahmud to return to Konya and complete his translations, presenting him with a reward of money; the poet went back to his dervish lodge in 1590 and set to work. His manuscript was later provided with miniatures (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, R. 1479).

Selaniki records that in 1595 Zeyrek Agha and Cafer Agha were commanded to go to Malatya and Bosnia respectively, that their magnificent houses were sold, and that the dwarf Zeyrek remained locked in the prison of the steward of the gatekeepers. For some reason Zeyrek Agha had fallen from favor but managed to avoid being sent into exile.

The influence of the chief palace eunuchs on the sultan and his family increased from 1622 onwards,
and the black eunuchs maintained their status until the beginning of the twentieth century. During the reign of Ahmed I (1603–17) and the early part of the reign of Osman II (1617–22), Mustafa Agha emerges as a distinguished figure who supervised construction of the mosque of Sultan Ahmed I. Süleyman Agha, who was *Darüssaade ağası* during the reign of Osman II and accompanied this sultan on the Hotin campaign, evidently played a role in the procession of the sultan into the city on his return, which was as festive and resplendent as if he were celebrating a victory. A miniature illustrating this scene by Ahmed Nakşi is in *Şehnâme-i Nâdirî* (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1124, fols. 53b–54a). On folio 53b the black eunuch wearing a fur-lined kaftan and a large white turban and riding a horse slightly behind and to the left of Sultan Osman II must be Süleyman Agha (fig. 9). Another picture showing the chief palace eunuch and the black eunuchs in his service together with the sultan can be seen in a copy of *Tercüme-i Şehnâme*, translated by the poet Medhi and illustrated during the reign of Osman II (Uppsala University, L. Celsius, fols. 1b–2a). In this miniature the chief palace eunuch to the left of the young Sultan Osman II, who is enthroned at a ceremony in the second courtyard of Topkapı Saray, is probably Hacı Mustafa Agha. Another black eunuch, apparently of high rank, carries a thick book under his arm; he appears in front of a crowd of black eunuchs to the right of the picture. Among the illustrations of ceremonies held in the palace courtyard, this is the first to portray such a large group of black eunuchs, providing visual evidence of their powerful position at court. On folios 3b–4a in another copy of the same work are two miniatures showing Sultan Osman II with Darûssaade Agha Mustafa (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, T. 326). In the miniature on folio 4a the dark-skinned Mustafa Agha is shown standing at the left of Osman II, who is seated on the throne. A black eunuch standing behind Mustafa Agha holds a book that is probably Medhi’s translation. The poet Medhi wrote a long preface to his work, in which he describes how he began it and how he consulted Mustafa Agha in the course of writing it (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, T. 326, fols. 1b–7a). It was therefore natural that the first miniature in copies of his *Şehnâme-i Türkî* should portray Mustafa Agha as well as Osman II.

Of all the black eunuchs, the one who owned the most books and founded libraries in his own name was Beşir Agha (d. 1746), who was head eunuch of the palace during the reign of Sultan Ahmed III (1703–30). In 1717 İbrahim Pasha was appointed grand vizier and Beşir Agha head eunuch. Just a year later, in 1718, preparations were being made for stocking a new library to be built at the palace. Its foundations were laid in the third court in September 1719, and it was completed in December of the same year. The idea of constructing a palace library in the name of Sultan Ahmed III may well have originated with Beşir Agha, a bibliophile who had served as palace treasurer in earlier years. Beşir Agha continued to serve as head eunuch of the palace during the reign of Mahmut I (1730–54), and he may also have influenced this sultan’s decision to found the tile-decorated library next to Haghia Sophia Mosque. Several of the illustrated books belonging to the Revan Kiosk, the collection of
which today is in Topkapı Saray Library, contain the seal of this eunuch and record his ownership (R. 803, 911, 1548, 870, 871, 858, 862). More pictures documenting the influential status of the Darüssaade agha and other black eunuchs at the palace can be seen in the Sûrnâme describing the circumcision ceremonies held for the sons of Ahmed III in 1720 and illustrated by the painter Levni in 1727–28. Here eunuchs are shown standing behind Sultan Ahmed III on his left and right (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, A. 3593). In the miniature at the end of this manuscript depicting the princes being taken to the Circumcision Chamber, the black eunuch at the front of the procession is thought to be head eunuch of the harem Uzun Süleyman (fols.173b–174a).

Two miniatures in the Sûrnâme indisputably portray Beşir Agha. One of these (fol. 16a) shows him with the palace officials who are his subordinates in the royal procession as it arrives at Okmeydanı for the festivities (fig. 10). The other portrays him entering the presence of the sultan to present his gift on the occasion of the

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Fig. 9. Sultan Osman II on the way to the campaign of Hotin. Şehnâme-i Nâdirî, ca. 1622. Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1124, fols. 53b–54a. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Saray Museum, Istanbul)

Fig. 10. Arrival of Beşir Agha at the Okmeydanı. Sûrnâme, ca. 1729. Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 3593, fol. 16a. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Saray Museum, Istanbul)
circumcision celebrations (fol. 27a). Beşir Agha holds a decorative china bowl, while the officials behind him carry other gifts that he will present (fig. 11). 56

Crumbles of information acquired from written sources such as records of court craftsmen, endowment deeds, seals and records of ownership in books, and inscriptions on book bindings, as well as evidence provided by prefaces and epilogues, reveal that the sultan had no direct involvement in artistic activities at the palace, but that the foremost power groups at court were instrumental in the production of art works.57 Early in the second half of the sixteenth century Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha (d. 1579) played an influential role in the arts of the book at court. During the years following his death, an increase in the number of illustrated books produced at the palace art studio, seals and records of ownership in these books, and endowment deeds show that the power groups that formed around the chief palace eunuchs were influential in the production of decorated books at the court studio and in the foundation of libraries both inside and outside the palace. Even well-educated statesmen like Mustafa Ali appealed for help from these power groups and enjoyed their patronage. Seyyid Lokman, who was an Ottoman Court şehnâmeçisi (chronicler) in the second half of the sixteenth century, also mentioned the interest of the aghas Gazanfer (kapânası), Mustafa (ser hazine-i hassa), Osman (kilercibaşı), Ahmed (saray-i amire ağası), and Mehmed (Darüssaâde ağası) in his Hünernâme (Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 1523, fol. 230b).

The high output of artworks at the palace during the second quarter of the sixteenth century was the result of the powerful association between Habeşi Mehmed Agha, Gazanfer Agha, the dwarf Zeyrek Agha, and Hoca Sadeddin. Subsequently, eunuchs—particularly those who were bibliophiles among the members of the palace power group—carried on the tradition of the sixteenth century.

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NOTES

3. Ibid., p. 1.
Seren Tanindı, 1582 Sünnâ-i hümâyûn: Döşûn kitâb (İstanbul, 1997).
8. Ibid., p. 15.
9. Ibid., p. 85.
10. Ibid., p. 1. The group of black eunuchs are depicted in one of the double page miniatures of Şehinsâhîname-i Muradî Selîs, vol. 2, related to the circumcision ceremonies. In this painting Şehzade Mehmed and the vizier are conversing in the presence of black eunuchs (sânâvî ağân) in the lavishly decorated room of the İbrahim Pasha Palace (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, B. 200, fols. 82b–83a. See: Nurhan Atasoy, Ibrahim Paşa Sarayları (İstanbul, 1972), p. 28).
19. Fleischer, Mustafa Âli, p. 129.
20. Ibid., p. 118.
21. Ibid., p. 188.
22. Andrea Tietze, Mustafa Âli’s Description of Cairo of 1599: Text, Translation, Translation, Notes (Vienna, 1975), p. 28.
23. Fleischer, Mustafa Âli, pp. 119, 177–78.
29. Atasoy and Çağman, Turkish Miniature Painting, pl. 44; Atlî, “Ahmed Nakşî,” fig. 6.
32. Stchoukine, La peinture turque, p. 94, pls. 102–3.
35. Fleischer, Mustafa Âli, p. 188.
37. Fleischer, Mustafa Âli, p. 117, n. 10.
43. Selanki, Tarîh, p. 487.
45. The historian Peçevi describes Süleyman Agha in his work: Tarîh, p. 353.
46. Atasoy and Çağman, Turkish Miniature Painting, pl. 46; Atlî, “Ahmed Nakşî,” fig. 10. Unlike the previous publications, the last miniature of the bibliographical work, which was illustrated by Ahmed Nakşî (Topkapı Saray Museum Library, H. 1263, fol. 250b), does not depict Sultan Osman II, but most probably depicts one of the court aghas.

51. Ibid., pp. 87–89.

52. Karatay, *Farsça yazmalar*, nos. 363, 403, 419, 443, 454, 717; idem, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Küütüphanesi Türkçe yazımlar каталогу* (İstanbul, 1961), no. 2291. On the last folio of one of the Topkapı Palace albums is written “the prosperous Beşir Agha, treasurer to his imperial majesty” (B. 407). Like Beşir Agha, İbrahim Pasha, who was grand vizier during the same period, is also known to have been a bibliophile. See: Erünsal, *Türk kültüphanelerı*, pp. 80–81. İbrahim Pasha had new illuminated copies made of earlier history books. The scribe Muhammed b. Abdullah, who copied *Tarikh-i Selânikî* in 1721, recorded that he copied the work at the order of the vizier İbrahim Pasha, son-in-law of Sultan Ahmed III. The manuscript has a lacquered binding and is illuminated. See M. A. Simser, *Oriental Manuscripts of the John Frederick Lewis Collection in the Free Library of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1937), no. 93. İbrahim Pasha’s interest in such projects is also illustrated by the fact that he set up a commission of forty-five people to translate Ayni’s history into Turkish. See Ömer F. Akün, “Salim,” *İslam Ansiklopedisi* 10 (1966): 131. The poet Salim was a member of this commission, and one section that he translated and copied in his own hand in 1725 was illustrated (İstanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Lala İsmail 318): see Nezihe Seyhan, “Süleymaniye Küütüphanesi minyatürli yazıma eserlerin каталоğu” (diss., Bogaziçi University, 1991), pp. 121–74. Another indication of this interest in palace environment during this period is that the poet Raşid Efendi was commissioned to write a chronicle starting from the beginning of the reign of Sultan Ahmed III and a history commencing from the point where the historian Naima had left off in 1660; see Kemal Özergin, “Raşıd,” *İslam Ansiklopedisi* 9 (1964): 632–34. One copy of this history, dating from the nineteenth century, is illustrated with portraits of the Ottoman sultans. See Ivan Stchoukine, “Manuscrits du Caire,” *Gazette de Beaux-Arts* (1935): 154, pl. 45.

53. The document on the preparation of the *Sûrnâme-i Vehbi* manuscripts has recently been discovered by M. Uğur Derman and will be published in his forthcoming article.


56. Information supplied by eighteenth-century historian d’Ohsson concerning his project of Ottoman sultans’ portraits indicates that the Darüssaade Agha of the Topkapı Saray was responsible for the palace manuscript treasury in the late eighteenth century; see Günsel Renda, “Illustrating the *Tableau général de l’Empire ottoman,*” in *The Torch of the Empire: Ignatius Mouradgea d’Ohsson and the Tableau général de l’Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (İstanbul, 2002), pp. 59–76.

zeren tanıdı
The astrolabe by ‘Abd al-Karim in the British Museum is one of the most famous astrolabes in the world (figs 1–2). Its celebrity lies in the figural designs that represent the constellations on its rete and back, in the attractive use of the fashionable technique of inlaying silver and copper to decorate its brass body, and in its inscription, which gives the names of the artist and his patrons, the date the astrolabe was made, and (apparently) its place of manufacture. As a result it has long been recognized as an important documentary object, providing crucial evidence for Cairo as a scientific and artistic center under the Ayyubids. But the inscription is problematic. It consists of six lines of deeply engraved Kufic; the lower four lines, however, have been filled in with brass of almost the same color as the body of the astrolabe, making them difficult to see and impossible to reproduce except as a line drawing (figs. 3, 4). Disagreement about the meaning of this inscription has undermined its documentary importance. In this paper I will propose another reading for the date and the provenance of the astrolabe, suggest identities for the three patrons, and provide new information about its craftsman, ‘Abd al-Karim. But in order to disentangle the different theories about the date, patrons, and provenance, I will first review the various interpretations of the inscription that have been proposed since the astrolabe was discovered by Augustus Wollaston Franks in Mr. Pratt’s Bond Street shop in 1855.

The astrolabe was first mentioned in print by Morley in 1856, a year after it had been acquired by the British Museum. As a historian of scientific instruments, he concentrated on a description of its scientific aspect. He did not give the inscription but stated that it was made for “al-Malik al-Ashraf, son of al-‘Adil, and nephew of the great Salâh ad-Dîn, by ‘Abd al-Karîm al-Misrî al-Usturlabî in 633 (1235).” He observed that al-Ashraf ruled at Damascus from 626 to 635 (1228–37), but did not mention his previous period of rule in the Jazira. He gave neither the date nor the place of manufacture of the astrolabe.

Lane-Poole was the first to quote the Arabic inscription, in Art of the Saracens of Egypt, published in 1886. He translated it: “‘Abd-El-Kerºm made it, the Cairene [Misry], the Astrolabist at Cairo, the [follower] of El-Melik El-Ashraf and El-Melik El-Muºizz, and of Shih¸b-ed-dºn, in the year 633.” He identified al-Ashraf as the Ayyubid ruler of Diyar Bakr and al-Muºizz as an unspecified “prince of Mesopotamia” in the first quarter of the thirteenth century AD. He went on to use the astrolabe as evidence that inlay work by Mesopotamian arti-
ists was already being produced in Cairo in the early thirteenth century.⁴

In 1904 Van Berchem followed Lane-Poole in his reading of the inscription, although he changed sanā‘ahu (made it) to sanā‘at (work of) and added the last line ‘affā [sic] Allāh ‘anhu (forgiveness of God on him). But he attacked (with some relish) Lane-Poole’s identification of al-Ashraf as the Ayyubid Sultan Yusuf of Diyar Bakr and then of Damascus, and of al-Mu‘izz as a Mesopotamian prince. He emphasized the necessity of taking into account the assertion in the inscription that the astrolabe was made in Cairo by a Cairene. He claimed that al-malak must be the description of reigning princes and identified them as the last Ayyubid sultan, al-Malik al-Ashraf Musa II, and the first Mamluk sultan, al-Malik al-Mu‘izz Aybak, who ruled together in Cairo from 648 to 650 (1250–52). He glossed over al-Shihābi, suggesting that it must designate an ancient owner or patron of the artist. He admitted that his interpretation did not agree with the given date of 633 (1235–36) but had no explanation for the discrepancy.⁵

Three years later, in 1907, Migeon in his Manuel d’Art islamique diplomatically mentioned both theories without taking sides.⁶
In 1932, in a telling demonstration of the divide that existed at that time between scholars of scientific instruments and scholars of Islamic culture, Gunther reprinted Morley’s postscript without comment or reference to later discussions, despite giving a bibliographical reference to Lane-Poole. But he also published a second astrolabe by ‘Abd al-Karim, in the Museum for the History of Science, Oxford, which is unequivocally dedicated to Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Musa and dated 625 (1227–28) (fig. 5).

When Barrett published the British Museum astrolabe in his Islamic Metalwork in the British Museum in 1949, he was aware of the Oxford astrolabe; so although he referred to another (unspecified) theory in a footnote to Van Berchem, he reverted to the original identification of al-Malik al-Ashraf as the Ayyubid ruler of Mesopotamia and Damascus. He could not identify the other two patrons. Like Lane-Poole he used the Cairo provenance as evidence for a school of inlaid metalwork in Egypt in the Ayyubid period. He pointed out that the astrolabe is the earliest example of inlaid metalwork to state specifically that it was made in Cairo, thereby putting its documentary importance for the history of inlay on a level similar to that of the Blacas ewer.

Mayer’s Islamic Astrolabists and Their Works, published in 1956, was the first to publish a photograph of the inscription. Although he knew of the Oxford astrolabe, Mayer agreed with Van Berchem’s theory that the inscription refers to the last Ayyubid sultan and the first Mamluk sultan, as he knew of no Ayyubid sultan called al-Mu‘izz. He bypassed the problem of the additional names and the contradictory date by claiming that the inscription had been tampered with and was therefore unreliable. The accompanying text implies that he had studied the astrolabe himself:

An examination of the original proves beyond doubt that the lower part of the signature, as a matter of fact anything except the first two lines, was erased and re-engraved and that, consequently, neither the date nor the titles of the two sultans can be relied upon.

But the inscription has not been reengraved on the object, only in his photograph! Obviously he was not working from the original but from a photograph provided by a British Museum curator who, as the inscription is impossible to read in reproduction, had helpfully clarified it for him.

Mayer’s publication helped establish Van Berchem’s thesis even more firmly. As recently as 1985, Savage-Smith referred to “the fine astrolabes made by ‘Abd al-

Karim who worked for the last Ayyubid and the first Mamluk ruler of Egypt.”

It was not until 1991 that Van Berchem’s thesis was seriously reexamined. In the exhibition catalogue Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration, Michael Rogers argued that it did not account for the additional patron, Shihab al-Din, and did not agree with the date of 633 (1235–36) that had been confirmed by the position of the stars on the astrolabe. He identified al-Ashraf firmly with al-Ashraf Musa I, for whom ‘Abd al-Karim had made the Oxford astrolabe. He observed that soubriquets like al-mu‘izz were not necessarily drawn only from Ayyubid and Mamluk throne names taken on accession and suggested that al-mu‘izz might be associated with another of al-Ashraf Musa’s titles, mu‘izz al-islam (he who brings glory to Islam). He still could not account for the presence of al-shihabi, which was not the honorific title (laqab) of al-Ashraf Musa, and he suggested that it might refer to someone quite different and as yet unidentified.

I first joined the fray in 1995 in an article on a series of candlesticks that appear to demonstrate that the inlay technique was not known to metalworkers in Cairo before 1269. The astrolabe, apparently made and inlaid in Cairo in 1235–36, more than thirty years ear-
lier, contradicted the evidence of the candlesticks, and so I took it off display to check the inscription more closely and discovered that Mayer’s photograph had been enhanced. In a short paragraph I mentioned this and questioned whether bi-Misr should be interpreted as “in Egypt,” as the titles and the style of the object made it more likely that Abd al-Karim was working in Syria or the Jazira.13

In 1997 David King published a magnificent astrolabe in the Maritime Museum in Istanbul, which is also decorated with figural images and inlaid in silver. It was made for al-Mu’azzam Isa in Damascus in 619 (1222–23) by a craftsman from the Syrian town of Baalbek and inlaid by another craftsman from Damascus. In his conclusion, King observed that the two astrolabes by Abd al-Karim are in the same tradition as this one and suggested that they should also be attributed to Damascus.14

It is ironic that a documentary inscription has caused such controversy over this object’s date, place of manufacture, and patron. According to the theories discussed above, the date is either 633 (1235–36) or totally wrong and to be ignored; the patrons might include two Mamluk Sultans or one or two Ayyubid rulers, but the third remains untraced; and the provenance should be Cairo, but could be Jazira or Damascus. At the risk of adding to the confusion, I take this opportunity to reexamine the problematic inscription.

The upper two lines are deeply engraved and have not been filled in with brass, so they remain clear to read (figs. 3 and 4):

Line 1. sanā’at ‘Abd al-Karim (work of Abd al-Karim)
Line 2. al-mdābī (?) al-asturlābī (the metal worker (?) and the astrolabist)15

The first word of the second line has previously been read as al-Misrī (the Egyptian/Cairene). Al-Misrī is the sort of familiar nisba that we all fall upon with relief when confronted by a tricky inscription, but an inlaid brass ewer in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art in Istanbul suggests that we should be open to a different reading of this word.16 Made in 627 (1229), two years later than the Oxford astrolabe by Abd al-Karim, it is signed min sanā’at Iyās ghulām ‘Abd al-Karim b. al-Turābī al-Mawsīlī (from the work of Iyas, apprentice to Abd al-Karim son of al-Turabi al-Mawsili) (fig. 6). Surely this must be a reference to the same Abd al-Karim who made the Oxford and British Museum astrolabes? Abd al-Karim was not a common name at this period, and so it would be an extraordinary coincidence to have two metalworkers with this name running different metal workshops at exactly the same time. Moreover Iyas’s inscription begins min sanā’at (from the manufacture of). Min sanā’at or sanā’at are usually used to introduce signatures on scientific instruments; inscriptions on vessels generally introduce their makers with ‘amal (work of) or naqsh (decoration by).17 The only other example known to me, the Aron incense burner signed sanā’at Mahmūd b. Khutluikh al-Mawsīlī, is by a craftsman whom we know to have also made scientific instruments, including the geomantic table dated 639 (1241–42) in the British Museum.18 This contemporary comparison strongly suggests that Iyas was being trained by someone used to signing scientific instruments—such as Abd al-Karim the astrolabist.

According to the inscription on the ewer, the father of Abd al-Karim was called al-Turabi. This was a nisba used by some inhabitants of the city of Merv in East Iran, according to al-Samanī.19 The Mongol invasions of Iran may have encouraged al-Turabi and his family to move to Mosul where he (or his son) adopted a sec-

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Fig. 6. Drawing of the maker’s inscription on an inlaid brass ewer. The Museum for Turkish and Islamic Arts, Istanbul. (After D. S. Rice, “An Unpublished ‘Mosul’ Ewer,” fig. 1, p. 229)
ond nisba, al-Mawsili. But if that is the case, ‘Abd al-Karim the astrolabist cannot have been Egyptian, and we have to find another meaning for the nisba in the inscription on the two astrolabes.

As there are already two geographical nisbas associated with ‘Abd al-Karim—al-Turabi and al-Mawsili—the word in question probably does not refer to a place. Moreover it is strangely positioned before the profession of the maker; usually the nisba, indicating the geographical origin of a craftsman, comes right at the end of his name and after his profession. Diacritical marks are not used in this part of the inscription, so it is possible that the sād is a dād, and that there is a letter before the final yā’ (compare the bā’-yā’ at the end of asturlābi). Perhaps it derives from daraba (to beat), the term used on the Bobrinski bucket to introduce its maker: al-mīdrabī signifies one who beats, strikes, or hits violently. According to al-Kindi, al-madriḥī was the technical name of the cutting edge of the sword blade, no doubt because it was forged (hammered at high heat). Could the word be al-mīdrabī or al-madriḥī, and is ‘Abd al-Karim listing his double talents as metalworker and astrolabist? There is a tendency to assume a high level of specialization by medieval craftsmen, but the two astrolabes themselves—the British Museum one of brass and the Oxford one of high-tin bronze, both with sheet-metal inlays—demonstrate that ‘Abd al-Karim and his workshop were working with a variety of materials (high-tin bronze, brass, gold, silver, and copper) and techniques (casting, hammering, and forging), and the Istanbul ewer demonstrates that they were capable of producing inlaid brass vessels as well as astrolabes.

The date obviously affects the identification of the patrons listed in lines 3 and 4, and so I move next to lines 5 and 6 (fig. 4):

Line 6. ‘aṣa‘ Allāh ‘anhu (forgiveness of God on him)

The date is in abjad. The khā’ with a dot above (600) and the lām (30) are clear. The last letter has previously always been read as jīm (3), perhaps because a mark on the brass was interpreted as a diacritical mark. This gave the date 633 (1235–36). But the method for distinguishing the abjad jīm (3) from hā’ (8) at this period was not by means of a dot beneath the letter jīm but by its lack of a final curving flourish. Both jīm and hā’ may be seen in the list of abjad letters in contemporary
copies of al-Jazari’s Al-Jami’ bayn al-‘ilm wa l-‘anal al-nafsi fi l-`uswah al-hiyal (fig. 7). Abjad numbers written on the plates from the astrolabe follow the same convention. Therefore this last letter is definitely ʼbāʾ, and the date for the astrolabe must be corrected from 633 (1236) to 638 (1240–41).

The first two lines of the filled-in part of the inscription read (fig. 4):


Line 4. al-Malik ʼal-Muʾizz al-Shihābi (al-Malik, al-Muʾizz, and Shihāb [al-Din])

The erased lower four lines of the inscription have always been read as a continuation of the first two lines. But the inscription, although all of one date, consists of two distinct parts: the first two lines, which have no diacritical points, and the last four lines, which do have them. Another indication that the inscription should not be read as a single unit is the shadda over the first word of both parts. Traditionally a shadda indicates that a letter is mihmal (without diacritical points), but this is obviously unnecessary in the second part of the inscription, which has all diacritical points clearly marked. A shadda was also used at this period to indicate the beginning of an inscription, and here it probably has the function of marking the start of the second section.24

The first word of this second section has always been read bi-Mısrr: “in Egypt/Cairo.” But there are several problems with this reading. The first is the awkward and grammatically incorrect position of the word between the names of the craftsman and the employers to whom he owed his allegiance. “In Cairo” makes no sense here; the location of manufacture should have followed the names of the patrons and precede the date, and there is no obvious reason why it could not have done that. Its position implies that the three patrons qualify this word rather than the craftsman, especially if the inscription is read with a pause as suggested above. The yāʾ endings of the titles indicate a stronger form than a genitive. When appended to a name, titles with this ending indicate that the individual is in the service of that person. Sometimes similar titles are appended to a building or department (for example a treasury or library) to indicate that it is in the possession of the person named. But it would be highly unusual for a city to be described as in the service or possession of an individual ruler—let alone three, one of whom was already dead (see below). In any case, there are no individu-
Mahmud, the Artuqid ruler of Amid and Hisn Kayfa; and Shihab al-Din, who was atabek in Aleppo. His power base in the Jazira was considerable, yet in 626 (1229) he exchanged his Jaziran territories for Damascus, having been seduced by the charms of that city. Thereafter he based himself at Damascus until his death in 635 (1237).30

Al-Ashraf was a peripatetic ruler moving from city to city, so it is difficult to know where 'Abd al-Karim’s workshop was located in 625 (1227–28) when he made the Oxford astrolabe for him. It could have been any one of the cities under his control: Harran, his capital and a center for the manufacture of astrolabes in the early Islamic period;31 Sinjar, one of his favorite cities, where he was residing in the first half of 625;32 or Mayyafariqin, with its ready sources of copper, which produced both coins and inlaid brass vessels. (We will later return to Mayyafariqin as the likely location of 'Abd al-Karim’s workshop.) Al-Ashraf could even have commissioned the astrolabe in Damascus, where other high-quality astrolabes with precious metal inlays and figural decoration were being produced at this time.33 Although it was made the year before he formally exchanged his territories in the Jazira for Damascus (and its inscription, which refers to him extravagantly as the ruler of Iran, Armenia, and Iraq but does not mention Syria or Damascus, confirms that), he spent much of the second half of 625 (1228) staying in Damascus with its ruler al-Nasir Dawud, who was his nephew.34

There are two possible contenders with the regnal title al-Malik al-Mu‘izz. The first is al-Malik al-Mu‘izz Artuqshah, the Artuqid ruler of Kharput from 620 (1223) until his defeat by the Seljuq Sultan Kayqubad in 631 (1234). Artuqshah owned at least one other metal object bearing his name: the Blacas mirror, which is now in the David collection.35 But Kharput was little more than a gigantic fortress on the frontier of Artuqid territory, and it is hard to believe that either the mirror or the astrolabe would have been made there. Also al-Mu‘izz was a political opponent of al-Ashraf, and so 'Abd al-Karim would not have included them both together in his inscription.36

A more likely candidate is a younger brother of al-Ashraf, al-Malik al-Mu‘izz Mujir al-Din Ya‘qub.37 Like other Ayyubid princes he carried a royal title, al-Malik al-Mu‘izz, that did not necessarily reflect political authority, and I have found no evidence of him as an independent ruler.38 However, he was a loyal supporter of al-Ashraf, because when Akhlat was attacked by the Khwarazmshah leader Jalal al-Din in 625 (1228), while al-Ashraf was in Syria, he and another brother, al-Malik al-Amjad, defended the city on al-Ashraf’s behalf. The siege lasted nearly two years before the defense failed and the brothers were taken captive along with al-Ashraf’s Georgian wife in 627 (April 1230). They were not released until the autumn of that year, when al-Ashraf and Jalal al-Din agreed upon their freedom as part of a peace treaty. At some point thereafter, al-Mu‘izz moved to Damascus, because he is mentioned helping al-Kamil, and then al-Salih, defend that city after the death of al-Ashraf (635/1237). He was later buried there.39 As an ally of al-Ashraf and without his own principality to rule, al-Malik al-Mu‘izz frequented the cities of his older brother in the Jazira and in Damascus and would have had ample opportunity to commission work from 'Abd al-Karim.

The last employer does not have a royal title, and Shihab al-Din is a common name. However, we can limit the field considerably, firstly because he must have been a person of considerable wealth and power. Although relatively minor individuals commissioned scientific instruments for their own use and these were often engraved with their names, the implication of this inscription is that Shihab al-Din had 'Abd al-Karim in his service, which means that he probably had his own court. Second, we have a ten-year span in which to seek him. Assuming a chronological order in the listing of his employers, 'Abd al-Karim was working for al-Ashraf in 625 (1227–28), then for al-Mu‘izz; therefore he cannot have been working for Shihab al-Din before 627 (1229–30) at the very earliest. Obviously he was in his employ in or before 638 (1240–41), the date of the British Museum astrolabe. So we are seeking a powerful individual with a courtly setup who was active between 627 and 638 (1229–41), in or around the territories previously ruled by al-Ashraf in the Jazira or Syria.

Two individuals stand out. The first is Shihab al-Din Tughril, who was regent to al-Malik al-‘Aziz of Aleppo from 613 (1216) until 629 (1232), when his ward attained his majority, and who died two years later in 631 (1233). Shihab al-Din was an ally of al-Ashraf and was responsible for an alliance between him and his master al-Malik al-‘Aziz that would have facilitated the transfer of 'Abd al-Karim’s services from one to the other.40 Individuals did carry his name as a nisba: for example, the Jam‘i Sharifzada was built by Anaz Abi ‘Abdallah al-Shihabi in 615 (1218–19).41 He was also a known patron of metalwork: a ewer in the Freer Gallery was made for him in 629 (1232) by Qasim b. ‘Ali, ghulām (apprentice) of Ibrahim b. Mawaliyya al-
Mawsili. But Shihab al-Din was noted for his piety, and it has been suggested that this is the reason the Freer ewer is without figural decoration, in which case he is unlikely to have employed an astrolabist who specialized in figural depictions. A larger obstacle is the date of his death, 631 (1233), seven years before the manufacture of the British Museum astrolabe in 638 (1240–41), because Shihab al-Din was almost certainly the current employer of ‘Abd al-Karim.

A more likely possibility is another younger brother of al-Malik al-Ashraf: al-Malik al-Muzaffar Shihab al-Din Ghazi. In 608 (1211–12) he was given Edessa (Urfa) and Saruj by his father, al-‘Adil. During this period he built a magnificent new gate for Edessa; known as the Harran Gate it bears stoneworking skills in the area, including cast doors, sheet-metal vessels, and inlaid decoration. It comprises a variety of clocks and other timekeeping devices. The first and grandest clock features personifications of the zodiac arranged around a circle (fig. 9) that can be directly compared, in position and detail, to those on the back of the British Museum astrolabe (fig. 2). The designs are in mirror image, suggesting the use of transfers. Al-Jazari’s treatise was copied in some quantity at the Artuqid court in the early thirteenth century; copies were probably made as diplomatic gifts. One may well have been given to al-Ashraf, who was allied with the patron of al-Jazari, al-Salih Mahmud, at this time.

If my identification of the three patrons is correct, a direct parallel can be drawn between the careers of al-Jazari and ‘Abd al-Karim. Al-Jazari seems to have had “tenure” as inventor and metalworker at the Artuqid in the third quarter of the thirteenth century) refers to him as Shihab al-Din Ghazi although he calls his sons by their royal titles, which suggests that this is how he was known locally. A parallel example of this is Badr al-Din Lu’lu’ of Mosul, who was rarely referred to as al-Malik al-Rahim except on his coins and architectural inscriptions, and whose employees used his laqab as a nisba—al-Badri or al-Maliki al-Badri—rather than his regnal title.

Like al-Mu’izz, Shihab al-Din Ghazi could have employed ‘Abd al-Karim wherever he was based within the territories of his older brother and overlord, al-Ashraf. But this identification does raise the possibility that the location of ‘Abd al-Karim’s workshop was within the city of Mayyafariqin, where Shihab al-Din Ghazi was based most of his adult life. Mayyafariqin was an important metalworking center. New sources of copper were found just north of the city in the mid-twelfth century and were actively mined from then on. Probably as a result of the proximity of the metal supply, Mayyafariqin had a reputation for heavy cast objects; a large chain was ordered by the caliph at the end of the twelfth century. The door of the fort of Mayyafariqin was of solid brass, according to Ibn Shaddad. Coins were minted in the city. Two inlaid vessels bear the name of Shihab al-Din Ghazi and were probably locally made, perhaps in the same workshop as the two astrolabes by ‘Abd al-Karim and the ewer by his apprentice Iyas (fig. 6).

Al-Jazari’s treatise on the manufacture of automata, written between 595 and 597 (1198–1200) in the neighboring city of Amid, presupposes considerable metalworking skills in the area, including cast doors, sheet-metal vessels, and inlaid decoration. It comprises a variety of clocks and other timekeeping devices. The first and grandest clock features personifications of the zodiac arranged around a circle (fig. 9) that can be directly compared, in position and detail, to those on the back of the British Museum astrolabe (fig. 2). The designs are in mirror image, suggesting the use of transfers. Al-Jazari’s treatise was copied in some quantity at the Artuqid court in the early thirteenth century; copies were probably made as diplomatic gifts. One may well have been given to al-Ashraf, who was allied with the patron of al-Jazari, al-Salih Mahmud, at this time.

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court in Amid, moving from the employ of Nur al-Din Muhammad to his son Qutb al-Din Sökmen and then to another son, Nasir al-Din Mahmud. He lists these different family patrons in the introduction to his treatise. Ḥabd al-Karim may also have been employed by three members of a family, in his case three Ayyubid brothers, over a period of at least thirteen years. Perhaps the highly unusual list of three different patrons on the astrolabe, including one who had died, is a direct parallel, albeit in a different medium and a more abbreviated form, to al-Jazari’s account in the introduction to his treatise of the family members who had employed him.56

In summary, the fundamental problem of this inscription is that there are no individuals with the titles al-Malik al-Ashraf or al-Malik al-Mu‘izz in Egypt in or before 638. Van Berchem evaded the issue by suggesting that the date is wrong and should be ignored. Mayer, believing that the inscription had been reengraved at a later date, confirmed that there could be errors in the inscription. But although faint and difficult to reproduce, the inscription is actually quite clear, and despite being filled with brass, the forms of the letters have not been tampered with. It is surely unlikely that a deeply engraved documentary inscription on a scientific instrument would contain errors of a factual nature. A more obvious solution is that our interpretation of the inscription is at fault. The reading of the titles is indisputable and their identification with three
Ayyubid brothers, all active in the Jazira, highly likely. The new reading of the date as 638 (1240–41), confirmed by abjad letters used elsewhere on the instrument, does not affect the issue. The crux of the problem has to be the word at the beginning of line 3: bnsr. It cannot mean “in Cairo.” That is confirmed by its strange position between the names of the craftsman and his employers and the unusual omission of al-mahrûsa. Until a parallel use of this word is discovered, its interpretation, and the interpretation of the craftsman’s nisba, which may be related to it, will remain speculative.

The final puzzle of this inscription is why two-thirds of it was so carefully obliterated. I emphasize that this is not an inscription inlaid for decorative effect (as described by past scholars). There is no doubt that the intention was to eradicate it: brass of the same color as the body of the vessel was inlaid into the deeply engraved channels of the inscription, the edges of which had been made jagged both to hold the inlay in place and to blur its outlines. When first done, this part of the inscription must have been quite invisible; the only reason we can see it at all now is that the brass inlay, made from a separate batch of metal, has discolored in a slightly different way than has the body of the astrolabe (fig. 3).

The motive for erasing these four lines must have been to obscure the names of the patrons of the craftsman. If the date had been the problem, only the last two lines would have been erased. Reasons for hiding the identity of the patrons depend on whether this concealment was done by ‘Abd al-Karim himself or by order of Shihab al-Din or a later owner.

‘Abd al-Karim could possibly have been using the astrolabe as an example of his work while seeking employment. That might explain why the patrons are listed so briefly, without a proper dedicatory inscription: the astrolabe was not made for any of them but was intended as a sort of medieval curriculum vitae. Perhaps when he engraved the inscription, ‘Abd al-Karim was hoping for employment with another member of the Ayyubid family and thought that including his past Ayyubid patrons would be an advantage. When that failed he obscured the names so that he could seek employment with the Seljuqs or Mongols, both enemies of his past masters.

Appealing as that theory is, the true explanation is probably more mundane. There are many examples of medieval metalwork with altered inscriptions; usually such alteration occurs because an object was to be given to somebody else by the owner or sold to someone new by the craftsman because the original patron had defaulted or died.57 In this case it seems most likely that the astrolabe was to be a recycled diplomatic gift and the donor wished to disguise its second-hand status. The middle of the thirteenth century was a period of great instability in the Jazira, with incessant rounds of diplomacy that must all have required high-level gifts. Shihab al-Din Ghazi and his son al-Kamil Muhammad, who succeeded him as ruler of Mayyafariqin in 642 or 645 (1244 or 1247), were constantly threatened with invasion by the Seljuqs and Mongols. One of the most serious threats was in 638, the year that the astrolabe was made, when a Mongol Embassy demanded the surrender of Mayyafariqin. Shihab al-Din Ghazi persuaded them to desist, but who knows what bribes he had to present to the Mongols in order to save his city?58

The Boston basin is one example of an object that was recycled at this time (fig. 8). It was originally made for Shihab al-Din Ghazi and bore his name and titles in the bold inscription running around the inside and outside. Later the pertinent parts of the inscription were adapted for al-Nasir Yusuf II (r. 634–58 [1237–60] in Aleppo and 648–58 [1250–60] in Damascus), but now that the inlays have fallen out one can see the original engraved lines of his regnal title—al-Muzaffar—beneath the added al-Nasir, and his name—Shihab al-Din Ghazi—in the final section of both inscriptions. The basin was probably one of the gifts that al-Kamil Muhammad took with him when he went to Damascus in 656 (1258) in order to forge an alliance with al-Nasir Yusuf against the Mongols.59

Al-Kamil Muhammad also sent embassies to the Mongols in valiant but ultimately useless attempts to halt their invasion of his territory. In 650 (summer 1252) he sent his brother to petition Batu, the Mongol ruler of southern Russia and the Caucasus, to intervene and stop Bayju, the Mongol governor of Azerbayjan and Armenia, from invading Mayyafariqin. Batu halted the invasion on condition that al-Kamil agree to go in person to the Mongol court at Karakorum to present his submission to the great Khan. Al-Kamil consented, and in late 650 (February 1253) he set off for the court of the Khan Mongke “bearing rich gifts.”60 We cannot know whether or not the astrolabe was one of those gifts, but it would have been an obvious choice for a dynasty fascinated by astronomy.61 Sadly al-Kamil’s attempts to reach a diplomatic solution failed, and he was killed when Mayyafariqin fell to the Mongols on 23 Rabi’ II 658 (April 7, 1260).62

London, U.K.
NOTES

Author’s note: An early version of this paper was presented at a conference entitled “Zangids and Ayyubids: Art and Patronage in Syria and the Jazira,” on November 18, 1998 at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

1. British Museum, Department of Oriental Antiquities 1855.7–91.

2. There is no history of the astrolabe before 1855, but “P.G.A.”, engraved just below the throne on the front, must refer to an earlier European owner, presumably the same individual who had the months and zodiac identified with engraved Latin abbreviations. “P.G.” could be Pascual de Gayangos (1800–97), the Spanish historian who wrote on Islamic Spain and translated al-Maqhari for the Royal Asiatic Society. His large and varied collection was given to the Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, by his heirs in 1898. It included at least two Arab astrolabes (Franco Garcia, “Astrolabio,” Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia [1955]: 298–311, figs. 1–6).

The unusual abbreviation of Latin October to “OCTU” (rather than “OCETO”) may be after the Spanish “Octubre.” Other contenders are Petrus Gallius, the French physician who was in Istanbul in the early sixteenth century (although the engraving is probably too modern for the sixteenth century), or the French draftsman Philibert Joseph Girault de Prangéy (1804–92), who traveled throughout the Middle East for his Monuments arabes d’Egypte, de Syrie, et d’Asie-Musulène dessinés et mesurés de 1842 à 1845 (Paris, 1846–55). My thanks to Stephen Verney for his help in tracking down the owner of these initials.


4. S. Lane Poole, The Art of the Saracens in Egypt (London, 1886), p. 177.


8. Gunther, Astrolabes, p. 233 and pls. LIII–LIV. This astrolabe should have been better known, as it was exhibited in Paris in 1900 and published by L. Evans, “Some European and Oriental Astrolabes,” The Archaeological Journal 68 (1911): 227.


15. Curiously, asturlâbî on the British Museum astrolabe is written with a šin, but on the earlier astrolabe in Oxford it is written with a sâd. The Arabic word is a phonetic derivation from Greek and Latin, and both šin and sâd were used in the medieval period, but it is strange that the same craftsmen should have used different spellings in his signature inscriptions. Future work may show that particular spellings are associated with different regions. From a cursory check of published astrolabes it appears that sâd was more common in the medieval period. Perhaps significantly, the only other astrolabe using šin that I have found so far is contemporary with the British Museum example, is inlaid with silver, has a figural rete, and was made for an Ayyubid prince by an astrolabist hailing from East Iran (Nürnberg, Nationalmuseum W 20: by al-Sahl al-Asturlabi al-Nisaburi for al-Malik al-Muzaffar Taqi al-Din, probably ‘Umar b. al-Malik al-Amjad Bahramshah of Baalbek, who seems to have inherited his father’s land around Damascus, and who supported al-Salih Ayyub’s fight for that city in 636 (1238–39): R. S. Humphreys, From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus 1193–1260 (New York, 1977), p. 253. Similarly, the Oxford astrolabe uses the definite article for the date: al-hijriyya rather than the simple hijriyya on the British Museum astrolabe (see note 25).


20. For example, the near contemporary Malcolm globe in the British Museum, dated 674 (1275–76), which is signed by Muhammad b. Hilal al-munajjim (the astronomer) al-Mawsili (of Mosul). See Mayer, Astrolabists, for numerous other examples. There are exceptions, however, including the Istanbul astrolabe dated 619 (1222–23), which is signed by ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Sinan al-Balabakki al-Najjar: see King, “Syrian Astrolabe.”


22. Analysis of the Oxford astrolabe was by Susan La Niece of the British Museum Research Laboratory, in association with Silke Ackermann of the British Museum; they plan to publish their results. There were close links between scientists and metalworkers. Shuja’ b. Man’a al-Mawsili, who made the Blacas ewer in Mosul, was from a family of mathematicians. Al-Jazari was both inventor and maker of automata and apparently was well used to all metalworking techniques. The inlayer of the Istanbul astrolabe is also known to have made three astrolabes (King, “Syrian Astrolabe,” n. 10). Mayer (Astrolabists, p. 21) points out that astrolabists had to have a thorough knowledge of metalworking techniques. He also lists nisbes that indi-
cate links between astrologists and metalworkers.

23. Curiously, the Oxford astrolabe by 'Abd al-Karim includes the definite article for al-hijriyya, but the British Museum astrolabe does not. The lack of the definite article is a feature of other scientific instruments made in Syria and the Jazira in the thirteenth century, and so this may be evidence of 'Abd al-Karim taking time to adapt to local custom.


25. An undated early note in the archives of the Department of Oriental Antiquities in the British Museum omits all but the top of the šīd and the ʾāʾ, as if the rest was not visible at that time.


27. Thomas Leisten has told me that he has come across “Misr” being used for a city in the Jazira, but I have been unable to track down any reference to a Jazira town of this name in the texts of the period.


29. Al-Ashraf had a strong interest in science, astronomy, and astrology: the inscription on the Oxford astrolabe makes it clear that he himself ordered it. He consulted astrologers before setting out on his military campaigns. Ibn Shaddad names the astrologer that he and al-Kamil used in 629 (1232) as Sham al-Din Yusuf: see C. Cahen, “La Djazira au milieu du treizième siècle d’après ‘Uzz-ad-din ibn Chaddad,” *Revue des études islamiques* 8 (1934), p. 116. In 1232 he sent Emperor Frederick II a kind of planetarium in which astral bodies worked in gold and jew-


31. Allan, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, pp. 73, 219, 226.


43. Hill, *Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices* (Kitāb ma’rifašt al-hiyal al-handasiyya) (Dor-


48. Ward, “Evidence for a School of Painting,” pp. 69–83 and fig. 2 for a photograph of the relevant section of al-Jazari’s intro-

49. For example, the globe by Ja‘far b. Umar b. Dawlatshah al-

50. Khirmani dated 764 (1362–63), Museum of the History of Sci-
ence, Oxford, no. 2900: see Mayer, Astrolabists, pl. XI. It has the craftsman’s inscription engraved over another, erased, inscription that included the name of the patron. The newer inscription includes the signature of the craftsman, which suggests that he was responsible for the erasure. There are many examples of Mamluk metalwork being recycled for a new owner, including several objects that were reengraved with the names of the Rasulid Sultans of the Yemen, presumably because these objects were diplomatic gifts.

61. The famous observatory was founded at Maragha in 657 (1259), only seven years after this embassy.
62. Humphreys, From Saladin to the Mongols, p. 356.
The existing literature on the relationship between music and the visual arts in the Islamic world, even if not extensive, is yet sufficient for an attempt at some sort of characterization. Broadly speaking, it can be divided into two generally unrelated streams. One is interpretative and essentially unidirectional: rather than treat the two on the same footing, seeking, say, to elucidate possible economic, functional, or aesthetic parallels, it concentrates on musical iconography—that is, it regards artifacts and paintings as source texts to be scoured for their musical content, whether from a primarily organological perspective or as representative of social structure and behavior.\(^1\) It has, therefore, potentially much to say about music, being indeed a vital visual supplement for the historical musicologist, otherwise largely starved of information about the morphological evolution of instruments.\(^2\) However, apart from its undoubted value as an index or even an inventory of a significant motivic repertoire, above all in representations of courtly entertainment, it has had rather less to say about developments in Islamic art. The other stream, even when specifically addressing connections between music and art, ventures by implication or design into the more speculative domain of the general world of culture. Assuming the operation at some level(s) of a unified vision, it seeks to tease out conceptual parallels ultimately reflective of an aesthetically and hence ideologically integrated universe, and consequently may also engage with other forms of creative expression, particularly literature.\(^3\) With regard to the visual arts, notions of abstract design and structure, rather than representation, have been emphasized; and particular attention has been paid to putative similarities between formal patterns of melodic organization and the recursive combinatorial potential of arabesque motifs.\(^4\) On the other hand, comfortingly if rather unexpectedly, little attention has been paid to hypothetical parallels with the geometry of floor designs, mosaics, and muqarnas decoration that might have been suggested by the mathematical predilections of certain theorists of music.\(^5\)

Also hitherto neglected has been the ancillary topic to be addressed here, the use of visual representation and visual metaphors as explanatory devices in relation to music. For this one can suggest a quite prosaic reason: the expectation of a yield too exiguous for useful generalization. If anything, it might have been anticipated that a more productive metaphysical vein would emerge from analogies between music and poetry, and that at least one stream of theoretical discourse would somehow flow from poetics. But if we set aside the domain of rhythmic analysis, at times intimately (if deceptively) connected to prosody, we find that borrowings from the metalanguages of grammar and rhetoric are strikingly absent, and that the technical vocabulary of music, whether indigenous or Greek-derived, is largely autonomous. For example, the well-known summary of the attributes of the outstanding (al-muṣib al-muḥsin) singer enunciated by the great Umayyad singer-composer Ibn Suraj (d. 726)\(^6\) may be taken as representative of the manner of early theorizing. But in contrast to its highly wrought linguistic surface, marked by syntactic and morphological parallelism and occasional rhyme,\(^7\) we find that the vocabulary used is remarkably sober and self-contained, and beyond the various technical terms deployed it develops only the general metaphorical area of fullness and completion (through the verbs ashaba’, mala’ , fakhkhama, and istawfā). There is nothing visual here, and as one of its major aesthetic concerns is the appropriate marriage of musical expression and textual meaning, one might expect to find prominence accorded elsewhere to parallels with literature. But these are generally avoided by later authorities, and correspondences for and metaphorical equivalents of particular musical phenomena are usually sought, rather, in items of material culture, the visual arts, and building.

Even if obvious, it is worth observing that whereas the conventional descriptive vocabulary for art objects\(^8\) difficult of access though it may sometimes be for the non-specialist, attempts a quasi-scientific precision through

**OWEN WRIGHT**

**THE SIGHT OF SOUND**
an allusion to the sensation of taste (al-hāssa al-dhaw-qiyya) to the verbal stimuli contained in philosophical dicta. At this point the manuscript breaks off, but analogous material is found elsewhere, for example in the Nawādir al-falāsifa section in the music chapter of the Rasā’il of the Ikhwan al-Safa’, where there are several such dicta juxtaposing seeing and hearing, couched in the competitive and contrastive form of muwashshānah: sight is given precedence over hearing in the first, but hearing over sight in those that follow, albeit for a variety of unconnected reasons that have no bearing on conceptions of music and art. One rather complex and interesting argument, however, does at least invoke music.16 Hearing, it is contended, is capable of more precise discriminations (aḍaqq tamyīzān), as shown by its capacity to appreciate meter (kalām mawzūn) and music, where it can recognize deviations in rhythm and melody; sight, on the other hand, is for the most part epistemologically unreliable (yakhītu fi ʿaṭṭar muḍrakhātih), being fallible in its estimation of size, motion, and regularity of surface/shape (rubbān yārā ... al-mustawwī mu’āwajjan wa ʿl-mu’āwāj mustawwīyan).

An initially banal-seeming but in fact more recondite and intriguing association of sound and sight occurs when al-Kindi has recourse to notation. The context is an abstract analysis of melodic movement in the course of which he initiates the use, later taken much further by al-Farabi (d. 950), of the powerful but blunt tool of binary oppositions.17 The first contrast drawn is that between consecutive (mutātālī) and non-consecutive (ghayr mutatālī), but strikingly visual metaphors are introduced in the subsequent division of the second into two varieties, “spiral” (lawlab) and “braid” (muwashshakh)18 or “braided” (daffār). The two subtypes of the former are defined as a movement such that, given, e.g., the pitch set \( p, p+1, \ldots, p+5 \), the “inward” form (dakhil) produces \( p, p+1, p+4, p+2, p+3 \) (and then back to \( p \)), while the “outward” (khārij) moves in reverse. The latter is again of two types, the definitions of which are less easy to interpret, although both seem to involve a form of shuttling motion.

As if sensing a need for further clarification, al-Kindi goes on to supply notated examples. Various systems of graphic symbolization have appeared at different times in the Middle East to represent sound, whether in terms of duration or of pitch, but the most frequently used in the Islamic world has been the letters of the Arabic alphabet, usually, as here, in the abjad sequence and therefore with implied numerical values. If we represent the lowest note of the gamut (⟩) by A, the octave

its reliance on the non-metaphorical resources of the vocabulary for color, shape (whether geometric or organic), and position, for those striving to characterize musical entities such correlatives are for the most part lacking, so that they necessarily have recourse to analogy, allusion, and metaphor. It is therefore hardly surprising to find that it is not only in literary sources such as the Kitāb al-aghānī but also in the more sober treatises of the theorists that references to visual phenomena occur, and what follows is an exploratory survey of visual imagery and metaphorical vocabulary that draws largely upon the latter. Modest in extent, it is also selective, discarding random and for present purposes unfruitful parallels9 as well as dramatized descriptions of musical performances, however strongly visual in content.10 It will also leave to one side those many ultimately metaphorical expressions that, to pursue the analogy, are colorless, bleached out, and only to be identified as metaphorical in origin through etymological dissection. Thus in the rhetorical question Kayf yubsiru al-ghinā` man nashaʾa bi-khurāsān là yasmaʾ min al-ghinā` al-ʿarabī illā mā là yafkhāmanū (“How can someone conceive of music who grew up in Khurasan, unable to understand whatever Arab songs he may have heard?”)11 one may note the metaphorical ground of the verb abṣar, but at the same time disregard it as faded, just as one may note but ignore in the present context the visual origin—whether in English or Arabic—of such basic creative terminology as “image,” “imagination,” “form”: šūra, tasawwur, khayāl, takhayyul, hayʾa.12

Among early theorists visual references resolve, broadly, into two classes: the associative and the explanatory. The former, grounded in cosmolinguistically sustained networks that suggest arbitrary collocation rather than causal relationship, appear prominently in the work of al-Kindi (d. ca. 866). In his Risāla fi ajzāʾ khabarīyya fi ’l-ḥusnīq, musical entry to these networks is provided by the four strings of the lute, through which we gain access not only to other predictable fourfold sets (the humors, elements, seasons, points of the compass) but also to, e.g., quarters of the day, the month, and the human lifespan. Whether singly or combined, the strings have ascribed to them an emotional impact,13 as also do colors14 and perfumes,15 but there is no development of synesthetic correspondences. That their effects remain independent of each other is underlined in the following section of this treatise, which begins with a reminder of the preceding treatment of auditory (samʿi), visual (basārī), and olfactory (shamātī) perception, but then, rather than link them or continue the series, shifts via
initially selected for purposes of illustration—\(\bar{a} j d w b \ddagger k \ddagger\)—corresponds straightforwardly to:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
A & B & c & d & e & f & g & a \\
\end{array}
\]

and after ascending and descending scales (for the \emph{mutat\text{\texttilde}} category) we move to the following examples:

- “inward spiral”: \(A e B d A\)
- “outward spiral”: \(d B e A d\)

These seem, indeed, to have less melodic than visual sense, for prior to the final return to the initial note the first does assume an inwardly spiraling shape when drawn out over a scalar disposition of the notes, while the second, similarly, moves outwards (fig. 1).

The “braid” examples are more complex, including further pitches, and as it is difficult to reconcile the noted examples with the definitions, their precise shapes cannot be established beyond dispute, so that—to take as an example the “separate braid”—the version put forward by Lachmann and el-Hefni,\textsuperscript{19} for all that it is visually persuasive, should be regarded as no more than typologically indicative (fig. 2).

However, the central point here concerns not the reliability of the text or the accuracy of the interpretation, but the fact that the nature of such recursive note patterns is difficult to grasp from a reading of the graphic symbols alone. Intriguingly, they convey schematic (and wholly abstract) outlines that are categorized as shapes by their accompanying verbal labels and need some process of spatial projection in order to be understood as such. In fact, al-Kindi is thinking here in fundamentally visual terms: however little we may know of the musical practice of the period, it is incontestable that considered melodically the notes given form implausible contours.\textsuperscript{20} Theoretical speculation, whether conducted by al-Kindi himself or taken over by him from a no longer extant, post-classical source, is here being driven by the visual metaphor embodied in both the Greek term \emph{plok\text{\textae}} (“plaiting”) and its literal translation into Arabic.

With al-Farabi (d. 950) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037) we encounter analogous abstract concepts in the categorization of possible types of melodic movement. But al-Kindi’s complex shapes have been jettisoned along with the related metaphorical vocabulary, and the structures listed can more readily be understood in straightforward linear terms as permutations of the type:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
p & q & r & q; p & s & t & s; p & u & \ldots\\
or: & t & u & v & w & s & r & q & p; & t & x & y & \ldots
\end{array}
\]

and the concept of linear extension figures clearly in al-Farabi’s vocabulary: pitches may be stretched (\emph{mandud}) or shortened (\emph{maqs\text{\textae}}). But we are also offered a straight (\emph{mustaq\text{\textae}}) vs. circular (\emph{mustad\text{\textae}}) opposition, attributes that are unfortunately not defined. Rather, it is admitted that they are not objective or intrinsic (\emph{bi ’l-haqq}) but belong to the realm of subjective impressions (\emph{takhayyul}).\textsuperscript{22} The notion of circularity is repeated by Ibn Sina, who defines it in terms of periodic repetition of pitches within a given melodic span. He also takes geometrical analogy further by adding the concept of polygonal (\emph{mu\text{\textoma}}) movement, and then allowing the combination “circular polygonal” (\emph{mu\text{\textoma} mustad\text{\textae}}).\textsuperscript{23}

Whether straight, curved, or angled, in single or overlapping lines, common to all these theorists is visualization of pitch relationships through spatial patterning. To be expected, therefore, would be a parallel use of such representation to give a visual mapping of duration when organized into the recursive patterns of a rhythmic cycle. But although the figure of the circle is latent in the key term \emph{dawr}, which we already find in al-Farabi, his analysis of rhythm is dominated by notions...
of disjunction, gap filling, and gap creation, and it is only much later that we encounter diagrammatic representation in the form of circles. In fact, not until the aptly named Kitāb al-adwār of Safi al-Din al-Urmawi (d. 1294) does this method come to the fore. Thereafter, although not favored by every theorist, it becomes a standard display format, being used not only to show the cyclical, repetitive nature of rhythmic structures (fig. 3) but also to display consonant relationships in modes (by drawing lines between the pitches in question: fig. 4) and the distribution of pitches between modes (fig. 5); to serve as a frame for a novel form of notational display (in the Kitāb al-in‘ām fī ma‘rifat al-anghām [ca. 1500] of al-Saydwā‘i); and even, on occasion, to provide a model for setting forth cosmological associations (fig. 6). In the Ottoman tradition the display of the inner structure of the rhythmic usūk in circular format, used by Cantemir at the beginning of the eighteenth century (fig. 7), was still in use in the mid-nineteenth, and even later we find in Egypt the symmetry of the twenty-four quartertone octave provoking a movable double circle format for plotting transpositions (fig. 8).

To return to the world of words, it is hardly surprising, given its sheer length, to find the widest range...
of analogies in the text of al-Farabi. Although by no means exclusively so, this is predominantly visual in orientation. Here we may usefully distinguish metaphors relating to composition and the materials and processes used from parallels drawn in relation to the finished product. In the former area we may note the standard concepts of craft (ṣinā‘a) and artisanal fashioning (ṣiyāgha), but register, as an index of metaphorical enfeeblement, their flexibility and range: the first can collocate with theory (mūsīqī), while the second may be associated with imagination (takhayyul).

Of more interest is the way al-Farabi articulates another standard concept, the binary opposition between primary and secondary notes, that is, between those that are considered fundamental to a composition and those that are not. Two analogies are offered in clarification: textiles and buildings. Primary notes are accorded the status of warp and weft or bricks and wood, secondary notes that of dyes, glossing, decoration, and fringes (al-ashāgh wa l-siqāl wa l-taṣāwīq wa l-ahdab), or, in buildings, that of adornments, appurtenances, and facilities (al-taṣāwīq wa l-maḥāfīq wa l-istiḥābat).

Ignoring the yoking together of functional and non-functional in the last set of terms, a clear distinction is thus drawn between basic materials and aesthetic processes of design and embellishment, but whereas this matches the standard discrimination between the transmitted outline of a song and embellishments ( İzād) added in performance, al-Farabi appears to regard as secondary certain notes that are integral to the song (that is, to analyze a song in terms of primary and secondary elements), and he adds an aesthetic judgment to the effect that some songs are enhanced by their secondary notes, while others are not, and may even be spoiled by them.

When discussing the ways notes combine, al-Farabi again resorts explicitly to visual analogy (tutawwar bi-al-munsabā), concentrating now on color. For notes in immediate (coadunative) association (iqtirān), perfection is compared to the combination of the boldly contrasting colors of the wine and the glass, of sapphire and gold, of lapis lazuli and red, while for notes in consecutive association (tarīb), vaguer reference is made to unspecified colors in decorations (tawwāq) and to a succession of different and equally unspecified tastes.

Elsewhere, moving from part to whole, al-Farabi makes reference to shape and outline. Given the general absence of architectural analogies it is hardly surprising to find that there is no elaboration of the building metaphor to include references to complete structures. Rather, we encounter a basic vocabulary of depiction and representation (rasm, irtisām, siyā) that is developed more explicitly in an extended characterization of a category of song (within a threefold classification relating to the effects of music) that inspires in the soul images and representations. These are likened to ornaments (taṣāwīq) and images (tamāhīl), which are then characterized further as the passage gathers its own momentum:

With some, one experiences only a pleasant sight (manzār anīq), but others imitate (yuḥākī) in addition plastic forms (ḥay‘at ashqā’), with their emotions, actions, characters, and habits, as with the ancient statues (tamāhīl) that people used to venerate in former times as if they were images (mithālāt) of the gods they worshipped alongside or in precedence to God Almighty. They were depicted
(musawwara) with shapes and forms (khilaq wa-hay’at) that indicated the actions, characteristics, and desires that they associated with each one, just as the physician Galen has reported about certain idols (asnam) he had seen, and just as they are now in furthest India.

The notion of imitation (muhaqah) also appears later in the context of the relationship between instrumental and vocal music. The former is generally subordinate, being used to accompany and support the voice, but reference is also made to an independent genre of instrumental music that is non-vocal in idiom, and this is compared to non-representational decoration designed solely for aesthetic effect. Implied thereby is an equation of words (as they appear in vocal music) and things (as they appear in representational art), but neither this idea nor the underlying distinction between representational and non-representational is elaborated. However, although al-Farabi’s formulation does not, evidently, deny the representational aesthetic dimension, it could be argued that it does provide some purchase for a conceptual separation of structure and ornament. To the extent that it allows for the autonomy of the latter its emphasis is rather unexpected, for what prevails elsewhere is a basic vs. secondary contrast from which may be derived a hierarchical distinction of aesthetic levels or responses: the secondary, decorative element (tazyin) is viewed as something that supplements the (ontologically prior) essential (wujud dararti), thereby producing an enhancement (wujud afdal). The analysis of how this is done refers to a number of processes storable in terms of mechanical operations, and although one of these is termed tazyin (the injection of notes standing in consonant relationships to those to which they are added), it suggests nothing qualitatively different from the other three, two of which (takhtir, tafkhim) also, if in ways that are not wholly clear, result in enriching the palette of pitches, while the third (ibdal) involves substitution.

Given the use of letters as a notational device to represent pitch, it was only to be expected that the metaphorical range of visual references would also include calligraphy. But if it is interesting to observe that calligraphy is referred to primarily by writers who use notation little or not at all, it has to be conceded that the references themselves are not particularly illuminating. They range from a general parallel in aesthetic discrimination—Ishaq al-Mawsili reporting that his father invoked as an evaluative criterion for singing the gulf between writing that is merely orthographically correct and unexceptional in shape and true calligraphic standards—to a rather quirky analogy drawn between...
the care needed to master (iḥkām) certain techniques (especially of voice production) and the particular attention paid by a scribe to specific letter shapes, the examples given being ‘ayn, sād, hā’, tā’, and mīm. 39

Stylistic comparisons are also expressed through an analogy already adduced, that of textiles. The metaphor of weaving (nasj) for artistic creativity is sufficiently ubiquitous 40 to make al-Farabi’s use of it for music interesting primarily for the division of labor involved, design being assigned to men, execution to women. 41 But it is less the process, however controlled, than the finished product that may serve as a tool for comparison. Parallel to the early Abbasid debate on the relative merits of the ancient and modern poets, we find among musicians adherents of the style of the older, mainly Umayyad, masters opposed to those with a taste for innovation, and when asked by Harun al-Rashid for his views on the ancient (qadim) versus the modern (muḥdath) style in music, Ibrahim al-Mawsili is reported by al-Hasan al-Katib to have given in reply a comparison with textiles:

An old song is like an ancient fabric (al-washy alʿāṭiq) the merits of which are familiar, and the beauty of which becomes more apparent as one continues to gaze upon it and consider it: the more one ponders, the more its beauties register, whereas the modern song is like a new fabric that appeals (rāq) [at first], but the more one considers it the more evident its faults become, and the more its splendor fades. 52
There is thus the clear perception of a marked difference in style between contemporary and earlier fabric design, and a fragmentary variant version of this anecdote suggests that at least one and possibly the main reason for the allegedly enduring quality of the older material as against the evanescent appeal of the new relates to a contrast between sobriety and flashiness in the color range employed.\(^43\)

Comparisons with painting also occur, but in a quite different and purely theoretical domain. As with al-Kind\‘i’s language-driven generation of visually conceived patterns, they stem from, or are fortuitously provoked by, the vocabulary employed to translate Greek terms. For the classification of tetrachords into three types—
enharmonic, chromatic, and diatonic—the Arabic equivalents variously include mulawwan (chromatic) and r\‘sim (enharmonic).\(^44\) However, the original notion of the “coloration” of the chromatic genus being in some way an alteration of the “in-tune” enharmonic is, in effect, reversed. The enharmonic genus, which for Arab musicians (and even theorists) was a purely theoretical entity never incorporated into practice, is regarded as marginal and shadowy in contrast with the now primary diatonic genus, indicatively termed qawi. The resulting painting metaphor reflects this new hierarchy, expressing a creative sequence that runs from the vaguely contoured enharmonic to the fully finished diatonic, as clearly, if elliptically, stated by al-Farabi:

> The extremely soft [sc. enharmonic] genus, given that it has only a weak effect on the soul, is like an artist (musawwir) at the initial stage of work who sketches the outline (yarsum al-shakl), organizes it (yunazzimuh), and then colors it (yulawwinuh), but without embellishing it (min ghayr an yaksuwah z\‘ina), and subsequently brings it to completion (yukmiluh).

(To be noted within this passage is a further clothing metaphor, implying that embellishment [\‘ina] is somehow at one and the same time an independent, secondary, and yet indispensable element.)

A rather fuller statement of this visual metaphor is provided by al-Hasan al-Katib:

> The enharmonic (n\‘azim) is so called by comparison (tasbih-han) with an image (\‘isra) before it is sketched (yarsam) and its various parts defined (tunazzam a\‘d\‘a\‘uh);\(^45\) the chromatic (mulawwan) is so called by comparison with an image that has been dyed (subighat) and colored (lawwinat) and has become clearly delineated (b\‘inat); but the diatonic (muqaww\‘i) is the most perfect of the three, resembling an image that has been dyed and decorated (zeyyinat) and is now finished and beautiful (kamulat wa\‘hasunat).\(^46\)

Given the reference to dyeing, the object in mind is presumably again a fabric, in relation to which the addition of other materials, as with, e.g., a silk \textit{tir\‘az} embroidery on a linen base, could well be integral to the design. In this formulation, therefore, there would seem to be less justification for deducing from the reference to decoration a conceptual distinction between essential constitutive elements and inessential ornamental ones.

As art historians well know, this distinction is in any case highly problematic, and particularly when applied as an etic category to Islamic visual culture.\(^47\) We need hardly be surprised, therefore, that even with an analytical mind as wedded to binary oppositions as that of al-Farabi, the sideways emic glance provided by such visual analogies for music does not result in clearly hierarchical evaluative distinctions, for at least as important as any recognition of categories is the teleological emphasis on completion through the combination of elements that contribute to an aesthetically satisfying end result. Thus the complex analogy offered for the tetrachords is fundamentally unsatisfactory, for the three discrete stages corresponding to the three types are arrived at through the arbitrary segmentation of a seamless creative process.\(^48\) Rather wider in their implications are the binary contrasts insisted on elsewhere. These involve on the one hand a conceptual distinction between representational and non-representational, and on the other a distinction between essential and contingent, and to both, if at different angles, may be related the core contrast in literary thinking between idea (\textit{ma\‘n\‘a}) and expression (\textit{laf\‘z}), with which is intimately connected the traditional analysis of mannerism in terms of artifice (\textit{tasannu\‘}) seen as a playful manipulation of surface, that is, as ornament.\(^49\)

Later theoretical writing fails to take such analyses further: it may be more factually informative but is in general less speculative. As far as other types of literature are concerned, just one text may be mentioned here, a seventeenth-century biography of Mehmet A\‘a, architect of the Sultan Ahmet mosque.\(^50\) The author, a certain \textit{C\‘a\‘fer Efendi}, informs us that when young, Mehmet A\‘a was tempted to train as a musician, and the first chapter contains, promisingly, a section on the theory of music in which the cosmological associations between melodic modes and the zodiac figure prominently. But advised in a dream to forgo an art per-
formed by Gypsies, Mehmet Ağa promptly abandoned music, and there is no hint of any musical symbolism at play in his architectural concepts. The text does, however, contain a musical interpretation of aspects of the internal texture of the Sultan Ahmet mosque and of the actual process of construction. Offered to the author by an unnamed “person skilled in the science of music,” this immediately places itself within a Sufi perspective by first identifying the sound of tools on stone with the sacred “Hū” (“He”) uttered during 

semā’ ceremonies. It then relates with three different sets of modes\(^{51}\) the twelve types of marble used, the ceremonies. It then relates with three different sets of modes\(^{51}\) the twelve types of marble used, the four different pitches produced on them by different intensities of hammering, and the voices of the seven foremen. Noteworthy here are not the identity and cosmologically geared sizes of the modal groupings, which are entirely predictable, but the fact that the architectural hooks for these associations involve only materials and processes. But this, too, is hardly surprising: by the sixteenth century the mathematical expression of intervals and combinations thereof, one of the most prominent features of earlier theory, had disappeared, thereby excluding the possibility of a symbolic interpretation of ratios or other geometric properties of architectural design. Although fascinating as evidence for the continuing vitality of cosmology in musical thinking, the fact that the interpretation offered is received without comment by the author, and that he fails to refer to such ideas either in his following dialogue with the architect or in his subsequent discussion of various qualities and colors of marble, suggests that for him they were marginal and had, at best, the appeal of quaintness.

Since the common expression of musical and architectural relationships through mathematical formulae appears not to have been invested with cultural significance, it is hardly surprising to find that in modern scholarship allusions to the geometrically abstract relate, rather, to mosaic tile patterns. The context is a comparative exploration of the nexus of the non-representational, the ornamental, and the arabesque that attempts to characterize music in analogous terms and to place it together with other arts, and especially the visual arts, in a single aesthetic embrace.\(^{52}\) Perhaps the clearest—and certainly the most ringingly confident—articulations of such parallels and associations are those provided by Faruqi, for whom:

Like the arabesques of the Arab visual arts, musical arabesques are abstract and interweaving designs formed by joining motifs in a pleasing arrangement which seems to have no beginning or end.

and, further:

Ornament in an Arabian improvisation therefore is not an adjunct to a particular tune or to specific notes of that tune. It is itself the melodic substance of the improvisation.\(^{53}\)

The analogy appears seductive, but there are two (related) issues on which one might reflect: one concerns the targeting of improvisation, the other the notion that here ornament is all there is. The first might be thought to imply that in composed pieces different norms somehow obtain: here, perhaps, ornament is an adjunct, and we arrive back at al-Farabi’s analytical distinctions. But the second, in contrast, is semantically subversive, requiring the abandonment of the notion that ornament is a \(x\) that is added to an \(y\) in favor of an ontological shift to an undifferentiated zone of fluid relationships in which there is no hierarchical order: a highly democratic but musically suspect state of affairs.\(^{54}\)

Equally problematic, it may be suggested, and similar in its implications, is the previous reference to a seeming boundlessness, an endless undifferentiated flux.\(^{55}\) It is difficult not to detect here an orientalist subtext—even if no doubt entirely unintended—calling into play such dubious oppositions as static vs. dynamic and passive vs. active, with, in this case, the inference of a musical practice lacking the progressive teleological urge frequently ascribed to Western symphonic thought. The escape is through paradox (if not aporia): the line of an intricate “aural arabesque” consists of “never-ending and ever varying repetitions” within which, however, each phrase creates tension followed by relaxation, that is, forms a set of micro-narratives that fail to shape “a structurally unified statement” yet may aggregate into larger clusters generating higher levels of tension and aesthetic satisfaction at the eventual resolution.

Similar problems arise with another exploration, but this time of macro- rather than micro-structure, and related specifically to the contemporary art-music tradition of Tunisia.\(^{56}\) This begins by quoting an extended visual metaphor (offered, it must be said, by a distinguished Arab scholar) in which a repertoire is pictured as a garden, the essential elements consisting of an enclosure, a central vantage point, and regularity of layout in whichever direction one looks. The ensuing commentary on this passage is subtle and generally con-
ving, but suspicions are reinforced when it adduces further quoted descriptions suggestive of Baudelaire’s orientalist vision:

Là, tout n’est qu’ordre et beauté,
luce, calme, et volupté

with performance being set in a stereotypical aristocratic location that is virtually a sensual paradise.

It is not just a case of the nagging doubts that come with post-orientalist loss of innocence, for the commentary itself plays with a contrast between what is perceived as a “static quality” (even if the “progressive” term of reference is provided not by Western music but by the melodic structure of other Middle Eastern traditions). The atmosphere of refinement, implied nostalgia, and etiolation that is conveyed here should not, however, be accepted as paradigmatic. Scrutiny of the accompanying transcriptions indicates, as one might expect, adherence to formal properties common to other North African repertoires that, in the broadest sense, accommodate patterns of tension and relaxation, while nība performances generally are marked by large-scale alternations cumulative in impact.57 But setting aside the ideological colorations that a particular cultural moment presses upon such imagery, one wonders whether there is not in fact a more deep-seated problem here. At the level of perception, this may be related to the too confident yoking together of the ultimately incommensurable parameters of the spatial and the temporal. Visual scanning, whether of a formal garden or an abstract design, is free to wander, return, reconsider, extrapolate—in short, to take its time. Auditory reception, on the other hand, may be free to vary its levels of engagement with the material it processes, but it cannot alter the temporal flow of a live performance, so that parallel recuperations of what had been previously heard can only work through memory, with the probable attendant creation of a narrative shape, especially when concepts of mode are articulated in the form of a trajectory of initial, medial, and final events.

Another problematic aspect may be summarized as physical and emotional involvement. Whatever might be the meditative potential of contemplating visual arabesques, their musical equivalents in Arab culture—that is, if we accept the identifications offered—are much more likely to appear within a context geared towards the creation and heightening of tarab, an ecstatic state of emotional rapture.58 In short, their potential is dynamic rather than static. Melodic intricacy and microscopic variation neither entail lack of dramatic incident nor imply the infinitely extensible: in the hands of an improvising virtuoso they will be cunningly crafted to achieve increasing intensity, climax, resolution, and an overwhelming emotional response in the audience, while within the confines of a composition variation is subject to the formal controls exerted by modal, rhythmic, and verbal structures, each of which provides beginnings and ends.

Interestingly, if we revert to early Arabic texts, we find clear evidence of narrative interpretation, a song or section thereof being perceived as a form of tone-painting. “Look at this, it is like something that has pounced on something it was hunting” is offered as a characterization of one musical passage,59 while another is likened to a pigeon flying upwards. The technical difficulties of a particular high passage are captured by comparing it to a dangerous mountain path that threatens on one side a fall into the abyss or on the other being crushed against the rock face;60 and a complete song is portrayed as a dramatization of an episode in a polo match.61

The temptation to generalize, it may be argued, has been yielded to a little too readily. And if the concept of a global Islamic music is as suspect as that of a global Islamic art, it becomes all the more difficult to establish parallels between them. Not that the search is vain: the notion that there may be or even, indeed, must be an underlying set of cultural master tropes is seductive, and not lightly to be dismissed. But the arguments that have been discussed here62 concerning homologies between art and music are not wholly convincing, and the relationship between them remains, in certain respects, both mysterious and problematic.

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NOTES

2. Save for the short-necked lute (‘ud), on which see the materials analyzed in E. Neubauer, "Der Bau der Lauten und ihre Besaïtung nach arabischen, persischen und türkischen Quellen des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts," Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften 8 (1993): 279–378. In other cases, however, textual information relating to particular instrument names may vary from the sketchy to the nonexistent.


5. It is significant that where one might have anticipated an adventurous exploration of this terrain, in I. El-Said and A. Parman, Geometric Concepts in Islamic Art (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Company Ltd., 1976), the (brief and final) chapter devoted to music (pp. 137–40) attempts no more than a desultory survey of rhythm, culminating in the decidedly hollow claim that "The subdivision of the metre of poetry into a finite proportion of beats to verbal units constitutes the geometric basis of the ‘craft of music making.’" The section on melody (i.e., scale) refers to Pythagoras on number and Alberth on harmonic ratios (and there is an added note on the Fibonacci series), but there is no development of these themes, and certainly not through any geometric or visual prolongation.


7. It is presumably at least partly in reaction to such stylistic features that we should understand Ma‘bad’s startling rejoinder to the effect that were there a Qur’an for music, this is the form it would take. For the modern reader the attractive pithiness of Ibn Surayj’s definition occasionally obscures the meaning, thus allowing for some latitude of interpretation, as witness the differences between the translations of the beginning offered by H. G. Farmer in A History of Arabian Music to the XIIIth Century (London: Luzac, 1929, repr. 1973), p. 73: "He who enriches the melodies [by means of the ‘gloss’] and who quickens souls" (to which is added the footnote “Or ‘prolongs the breath’”) and, more recently, by E. Neubauer in Arabische Musiktheorie von den Anfängen bis zum 6./12. Jahrhundert, The Science of Music in Islam, vol. 3 (Frankfurt: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1998), pp. 68–69: “derjenige, der die Melodie [abschnitte] voll aus singt (allahdi yushshu‘ al-lähān) und die ‘Atem’ [pausen] mit passender Begleitung” füllt (yamla‘u‘al-anfṣās),”

8. E.g., "The basin, decorated in tones of cobalt, has a high, slightly flaring foot, with a ribbed luting fold. The exterior bears dense floppy lotus blossoms on thin stems, with small florets and coiled leaves. The inside has a central medallion of a seven-pointed star, with pointed half-palmettes and lappets on the sides, again seven in all. The ground between the lappets has interlacing lozenges attached by plaited bands." (J. M. Rogers, Islamic Art and Design 1500–1700 (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1983), p. 108.)

9. Such as a (deliberately evasive) judgment on two singers articulated in terms of a comparison with two eyes, through either of which one can see (Kitāb al-aghanī, vol. 1, p. 315).

10. Vivid characterizations may also appear in a subtype of waṣf, sometimes anthropomorphized, describing instruments and those playing them. A female instrumentalist, for example, is portrayed holding the lute “as if it was a baby which she holds in her lap between her breasts to suckle, continually tickling its tummy, and if it loses concentration she shakes one of its ears” (wa-ka-annahā fi ḥajrihā tīfūn lahā dānnathū bayn tāri‘īn wā-līhānī ābadan tūdadhīghu baṭanāhī fa-īdāhā sāhī ‘arākat laḥā uḥūsān min al-’ahlāhīn); Muhammad b. Ismā‘īl Shīhāb al-Dīn al-Hijājī, Sa‘īf al-mu‘āk wa-na‘fṣāt al-fulk (Cairo: Matba‘a al-Jāmī‘a, 1892/32), p. 469.

11. Kitāb al-aghanī, vol. 10, p. 120.

12. This is not to argue against their still being indicative of the kinds of fundamental metaphorical operations discussed in G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, Metaphors We Live By (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980)—in this case elaborations of “ideas are objects”—but simply to disregard them in favor of more vivid and local instances.

13. E.g., Mumīzājat al-mathnā wa l-bamm kum-mumīzājat al-sūrā wa l-’auz n wās-hū wa-hū al-’adīlid ("The conjunction of the mathnā and bamm strings is like the conjunction of happiness and sadness, which is equilibrium"): Mu‘allaflīyat al-Kindī al-mīṣīqiyya, ed. Zakariyyā Yūsuf (Baghdād: Matba‘a Sha‘fīq, 1962), p. 103, which points neatly both to Aristotelian origins and to the possibility of the subsequent evolution of a theory of musical therapeutics.

14. Ibid., e.g., p. 104: īdhā qurinā l-wardī bi-’l-sufrā al-turmntiyya wa l-’aswa al-banṣafṣṣiṭ takharrak al-pawwa al-sūrātīyya wa l-’uṣūdā mā‘ānī ("If pink is associated with orangey yellow and violet black, the faculties of happiness and joy are set in motion together."). The color-coding of the lute strings associated with Ziyāb is also to be subsumed under cosmology.


16. Where sight is preferred to hearing, day and night are the unhelpful terms of comparison. The generally less fanciful arguments deployed in giving precedence to hearing are as
follows: a) sight is subservient to the perceptions it seeks, while the perceptions of hearing are subservient to it; b) sight only perceives in a straight line, whereas hearing is circular; c) the perceptions of sight are predominantly physical, those of hearing wholly spiritual; d) hearing provides information on that which is not spatially and temporally present, sight only on that which is temporally present.


18. The otherwise sensible Zakariyyā Yusuf has a rush of blood to the head at this point, suggesting that al-Kindī might be providing evidence for an Iraqi origin of the eponymous poetic form (Mu‘alla‘fūt, p. 61n, and, at wearsome length, in Muṣāqī al-Kindī [Baghdad: Matba‘a Sha‘fīq, 1962], pp. 12–20)—which only points to the yawnng gulf that can separate nationalism and objectivity.


20. Al-Kindī appears to have used alphabetic notation only for theoretical purposes: when notating a practically oriented lute exercise (Mu‘alla‘fūt, pp. 138–41), he employs the much more laborious process of verbal specification.


27. Muhammad Kamīl al-Khulāsī, Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-sharqī (Cairo: Maktabat Madbūl, 1994; repr. 2000), before p. 55. To be noted are the cosmological remnants beneath the four note names in the corner roundels, to each of which is assigned an element and a zodiac sign.

28. But on one occasion combined with the gustatory: the perfection (kamāl) of consecutive association (tarīb)—or its opposite—appears in the colors of tazāwqī and in dishes as they are tasted successively (Knk, pp. 75–76, where, in addition, consonant intervals are compared with natural foods, and unbearably loud, high-pitched, and hence “unnatural” sounds with medicines and poisons). Tactile references seem not to occur as explicit comparisons but certainly appear at the level of terminology, vocal quality being characterized by such oppositions as rough/smooth (khusūsh/malāsa) and soft/hard (na‘ma/shidda and also salāba). Also to be noted is the contrast clear/turbid saji/kudra (see Sawa, Music Performance Practice, p. 99).

29. Knk, pp. 56–57. One may also note siḥk lahman for “composing a song” (also, e.g., in Kitāb al-ahhān, vol. 2, p. 397). Al-Farābī also includes an allusion (Knk, p. 61) to carpentry and building, but not as metaphors for musical creativity. Rather, it is appended to, and is meant to illustrate, a complex chicken-and-egg argument about logical anteriority within that process.

30. Knk, pp. 110–11. The first are called usūl al-alhān wa-nabātī‘ah, the second tazāwqī (more common elsewhere in the literature is zawā‘il). The discussion could have lurched into a philosophical discrimination of essential vs. contingent but remains within the area of basic material vs. ornament/embellishment.


32. Knk, p. 111. Min al-alhān mā tazāwqīlāt tazāwqī ladhikhiha tukhīs al-alhān ana‘an akhtar wa-mināh mā lāyat ladhikhiha wā-hiyya mā dhālik mū‘iyya tafsīl al-ladn fī ‘l-masā‘ūm. (The analytical grounds for such internal distinctions are clarified on p. 1058.)

33. Ibid., Kamāl al-muqtaṣārānā fī ‘l-qawmī wa-miṣrī wa-mu‘āammāl li-l-haṣa‘ al-khams wa ‘l-ṣayā‘iṣ idhā ‘qatāran mā wā karawān al-ṭanīṣ wa ‘l-dhāhab idhā ‘qatāran mā wā ‘l-hāṣa‘iṣ wa ‘l-kūf mā ‘qatāran. To be noted is the boldness of these color juxtapositions, which echo the aesthetic appeal of contrast put forward in relation to jewelry by al-Ḥurānī (Behrens-Abouseif, Beauty, p. 38).


35. Knk, p. 69: saḥlihā sabīl al-tazāwqī al-lātī lam tafsīl wā-miṣrīkh li-shayr ‘alī sīyāṭa laḥab mā manzar ladhikhi ḥafṣat. In commenting on the version of the passage quoted above by al-Ḥasan al-Ḥatīb, Behrens-Abouseif (Beauty, p. 142) notes the contrastive relationship on the one hand between ornamental (non-figural) design and (aesthetic) pleasure and on the other between figural representation and the (ethical) portrayal of character and feeling.


39. Al-Ḥasan al-Ḥatīb, Kamāl, p. 78. (On p. 76 he had used the term khatīb, but in the sense of “linear,” referring to music that has only one dimension [melodic] as against two or all three [words + melody + rhythm]. Elsewhere (p. 95) he introduces
a distinction between mursal and muharrar styles, again comparing melody and calligraphy.


42. Knk, p. 30. A briefer version is given by Ibn al-Tahhān (Huwār al-fa’ālin, pp. 29–30): fa’dīl al-qadīm ‘alā ‘l-ghin‘a al-muḥdath ha- fa’dīl al-walāshy al-qadīm ‘alā al-muḥdath la-anna al-qadīma kullumā d‘adī fī al-nazar babas fi ‘l-ayn wa ‘l-muḥdath yafṣūt wa-yuqbuṣ. (A little further on Ibrahim al-Mawṣili is cited as the author of another comparison: the superiority of the old style over the new is like that of good food that even the sated will eat over food that the hungry will even though they know it not to be as good as other food.) For a literary application of the fabric comparison, see Goldziher, Abhandlungen, vol. 1, p. 131. A modern application is provided by al-Ḵuṣṣaŷī (Kītāb, p. 81), who speaks of a composer setting forth his stock of knowledge like garments of different materials from each of which he will choose the most precious.

43. Ibn Khurraḏalḏabīh, Mukhtār min kitūb al-lahw wa ‘l-malchº, pp. 91–93.

44. Al-Kindī has tā’līf, launī, ta’līf (Mu‘allaḵat, p. 59). Al-Farabī (Knk, p. 278) puts forward, not surprisingly given his general analytical methodology, a two-term scheme consisting of qawī (where no interval is greater than the sum of the other two) and layyyīn (where one interval is greater than the sum of the other two). But in a briefer earlier passage (p. 161) the layyyīn is subdivided into rāṣîm and nāṣîm (i.e., enharmonic) vs. mulawwun.


46. Kamîl, p. 75. Ibn Sina’s account (Jawāmī‘ ‘ilm al-musīqī) resembles that of al-Farabī but refers only to sketching in (in relation to the enharmonic) and coloring (in relation to the chromatic).


48. The same trajectory is given by Ibn Sina, but reduced to two stages: kamā ‘an-nal-tawlin b‘d’l-rūṣm huwa al-muḵmil li ‘l-nahph (Jawāmī‘, p. 49).

49. A view that recent analyses, particularly those using a structuralist approach, have attempted to refute: see, e.g., S. Sperl, Mannerism in Arabic Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).


51. Or, more precisely, with four, since the types of marble are first associated, predictably, with the twelve maqāms, but then later also with the set of twenty-four lāris. The other sets are the four shu‘ban and the seven asāṣes.

52. The most generous embrace is that of Altar (Le point culmi- nant), who suggests for eighteenth-century Ottoman culture an equivalence between microtonal scale divisions and a subtle range of color distinctions, while adding for poetry a couple of lines mentioning several colors. Needless to say, this is wholly unconvincing.


54. Ibid. It is interesting to note that although the proposed clas- sification of types of ornamentation (pp. 22–25) lists a standard range of additional elements, it begins by concentrating on variations on the theme of transposition. A quite different view of the relationship of melody and ornamentation (albeit in a very specific context) is put forward by J. During in “L’autre oreille: le pouvoir mystique de la musique au Moyen-Orient,” Cahiers de musiques traditionelles 3 (1990): 57–78.

55. A theme also referred to by H. H. Touma in “The Maqam Phe- nomenon: An Improvisation Technique in the Music of the Middle East,” Ethnomusicology 15, 1 (1971): 38–48; he makes of the “seeming” a vital insider/outsider distinction: “To the unaccustomed listener a maqam performance seems as if it were without beginning or end” (p. 39). Within the culture, then, there are limits, and form is perceptible.


61. Ibid., p. 377.

62. But by restricting itself to one or two examples of ethnomus- icological writing and disregarding the literature on music in the languages of the Middle East, the present discussion has, it must be stressed, only scratched the surface.
Since the early periods of human history, ceramics have been an important part of material culture, either consumed as functional objects necessary for everyday—including ritual—use, or appreciated as works of art because of their aesthetic value. Within the Mediterranean region, where layers and layers of pottery have accumulated through the ages, ceramics are crucial references of intercourse between cultures and societies, leading to an understanding of social systems and trade relations as well as the diffusion of fashions and tastes. Where archival documentation fails, archeological evidence or collections of ceramics provide the path to understanding specific interaction between cultures. Being portable yet fragile commodities, ceramics could be transported from one country or region to another, cutting across cultural boundaries. Artists fleeing foreign occupations or captured and taken to new lands, and itinerant workers looking for more lucrative markets all played an important part in the transfer of traditions and the translation of common expressions. As a result, similar forms, production techniques, and ornamental motifs appear in different geographical areas within a given period.

Another means of distributing forms and styles in ceramic art is by reproduction. The reproduction of an artistic form and its expression in different periods of history and different parts of the world can at times be considered as stylistic revival. At other times it can be viewed as anachronism: an unexpected continuity, depending sometimes on market value, sometimes on the subtle continuation of an ideology. In both cases, what initiates the act of reproduction is either an economic or a social process. Conspicuous consumption activates the need to acquire and to possess objects of value, in their original form when possible or as reproductions when the originals cannot be attained. This desire to possess is of course related to the fact that objects of conspicuous consumption confer a special social status on their owner.

European responses to encounters with Ottoman ceramics start from the fourteenth century. Examples are abundant in Italy between then and the present day; in Holland they are evident in Delft production of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; they occur in France and England in the nineteenth century, in central Europe between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, and in Moscow during the first decades of the twentieth century. The causes of this large distribution were of course various and changed according to country and circumstance. Sometimes the European ceramics were direct copies and imitations of original examples; sometimes the original features were reinterpreted and recreated in a different production technique; sometimes the circulation of both the originals and their reproductions generated new and hybrid stylistic features among craftsmen of different cultural milieus.

European ceramics also had an impact on Ottoman ceramic production, but in different ways. This can be traced to the sixteenth century, when special Italian ceramic forms were reproduced on Iznik plates. Unfamiliar in Ottoman ceramic traditions, these must have been introduced to the repertoire of the Ottoman ceramicist by special Italian orders placed with Iznik workshops. The *tondino* form was the most popular among them. A unique example of an Italian-style portrait placed in the middle of a large Iznik plate evidences another type of production (fig. 15). Similar commercial orders can also be inferred from the existence of Iznik plates with unique heraldry of European origin incorporated within classical Ottoman ornamental schemes (figs. 16–17). Relations between Italy and the Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century could easily foster the exchange of products. Documents show that Italian merchants ordered textiles from workshops in Bursa. Italian glass was imported to Istanbul. Albeit few in number, examples of Italian majolica shards dating from the sixteenth century have been found in the Saracağhan and Tekfur Palace excavations in Istanbul.
The second phase of European impact on Ottoman ceramics occurred after the mid-nineteenth century. *Eser-i İstanbul* productions of the nineteenth century reproduced English and French creamware of the same period, and the Yıldız porcelain factory, founded at the beginning of the twentieth century, was constructed with French expertise from the Sévres porcelain factory. Ottoman merchants placed special porcelain orders from French and German factories at this time. 

Thus, within European and Ottoman relations, networks necessary for ceramic production and distribution seem to have initiated a lively, creative, and lucrative market that has been underestimated in terms of economic history although widely exposed to art historical and archeological research.

Within this framework we can distinguish three periods in European encounters with Ottoman ceramics, which can be classified according to changes in technique or style of ornamentation. The first period covers pottery production of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; the second period extends from the end of the fifteenth century to the eighteenth, and the last phase is the industrial era, which will not be covered in this paper.

The first period is characterized by the use, in both Anatolia and Italy, of similar motifs on glazed red-paste pottery. The thickly potted, coarse, red-bodied ceramics, called Miletus wares in the case of the Ottoman production, used a white slip to coat the body, which was freely painted with brushstrokes and splashes and then covered with a transparent lead glaze. The red body of the proto-majolica production in Italy, however, was covered with a thin layer of opaque tin glaze and painted over. Such ceramics were considered by Waagé to be early examples of the majolica wares for which Italian ceramic production is famous.

Even though the technique of glazing and painting is different, both Miletus and proto-majolica wares have similar decorative motifs in their ornamentation that in certain cases have prototypes in Chinese porcelains that were on the market in the Middle East. Oak leaves, zigzags, and spirals in free strokes, as well as series of downward strokes between the bands dividing zones, reminiscent of silverwork, are among these motifs. In neither case were stencils or cartoons used for the compositions. Although the ornaments chosen to decorate the ceramics are similar, the overall conception of the composition is different, relating each one respectively to its own creative tradition and milieu. Proto-majolica wares, according to their pattern of distribution, were made in Sicily, Apulia, and Naples. Miletus wares, even though found in large quantities in Iznik, also appear in archeological sites in western Anatolia, suggesting a geographical closeness to proto-majolica production. In fact, both wares have been found in excavations in Anatolia and Italy.

What can be concluded from this first phase of interchange? Is it possible that in a given historical period and geographical region two different groups of craftsmen would choose for their repertory the same type of motifs? Or is one the reinterpretation or translation of the other? In fact, archeological evidence and similarities between Miletus ware and proto-majolica in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries show that each ware could be found in the other country, thus encouraging its reception by the other country’s potters. The techniques of production are different, yet each production uses similar quotations, in the form of motifs or colors from another culture, but reintroduces them in a different context, the overall concept of the composition. This feature is characteristic of shards found only in Anatolia and Italy; it cannot be found in other Mediterranean-region productions of the same period, e.g., those of Tunisia or Syria. Therefore, even though one cannot assess specific points of patronage, it can be suggested that the free choice of similar motifs and compositions, which were not controlled by stencils or pre-designed cartoons imposed on the potter by a patron or a centralized institution such as the palace artistic studio, contributed to the private competitiveness of craftsmen in search of a more lucrative market.

But which market? Ottoman historians have not yet been interested in combining archival material with that of archeological finds or architecture: thus the study of the everyday life of Ottoman towns is nonexistent or very limited. In the case of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, written documents are very scarce. Therefore, one could perhaps suggest by analogy. Venetian coins being the money used internationally around the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, they were also minted at sites outside Italy, including western Anatolia near Miletus. Pottery was probably the medium in which these coins could be transferred from one place to another, carrying with it the decorative quotations under discussion. This could explain why such distinctive similarities could be observed in pottery produced in separate geographical areas at a certain period and could also illustrate a concept of interchangeable production networks.

The second period of European encounters with Ana-
Turkish ceramics corresponds to the classical period of Ottoman art and to the Italian Renaissance, with its luxurious way of living. At this stage Chinese porcelains were the mediator. The Ottoman ceramicist wanted to achieve a technical standard by which his motifs and designs would be reflected in lively polychrome colors that did not overflow their contours, fixed over a white ground and under a colorless, vitreous, brilliant glaze that would show by its translucence what was underneath. But before he could technically achieve this polychrome phase, the potter first tried to imitate Chinese blue-and-white porcelain objects. As documented by excavated shards, there are in fact exact copies of Chinese porcelain plates from the end of the fifteenth century in the blue-and-white period of Iznik production (fig. 2). In this case the Iznik examples have a hard, white body because of an increase in the use of kaolin, the clay necessary for white wares, and the decoration was painted on the surface underneath the glaze. The paste had a certain percent of glaze in it that made it harder and brought it closer to porcelain. This phase of Iznik production covered the years from the mid-fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth century.

The Medici family in Italy, great patrons of art, wanted to introduce porcelain production in Italy in response to Chinese porcelains. The first successful attempt occurred between 1575 and 1587, much later than in Iznik. Medici “soft-paste porcelain” was not true or hard-paste porcelain as had been perfected in China, but was near to it. The forms and decoration were varied and showed the influence of Chinese and Middle Eastern wares. Most pieces have imperfections brought about during firing. There were no further attempts to make true porcelain in Europe until the end of the seventeenth century. The production of Medici porcelain was not successful; a few pieces are conserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 1) and the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

Blue-and-white production in Iznik included another group of ceramics called “Golden Horn,” a name coined at the beginning of the twentieth century for wares characterized by spirals and scrolls with no large-scale flowers attached (fig. 5). Quite common in book illumination and miniatures, this style was used to ornament ceramics and, rarely, tiles. This type of decoration seems also to have been popular in Italy (fig. 6), decorating mainly albarcellos produced in majolica technique. Albarcellos were the receptacles in which spices were kept for pharmacological use and exported to other European countries by Italian merchants. An example
Fig. 4. Drawing from C. Piccolpasso, *I tre libri dell’arte del vasaio*. (After *The Three Books of the Potter’s Art*)

Fig. 5. Blue-and-white Ottoman bottle (“Golden Horn” type), British Museum, London.

Fig. 6. Italian majolicas decorated in “Golden Horn” style.

Fig. 7. Ottoman ceramic plate, Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin.

Fig. 8. Delft majolica plate with Iznik decoration, Leeuwarden Ceramic Museum.

Fig. 9. Ottoman ceramic plate, National Museum of the Bargello, Florence.
Fig. 10. Italian majolica plate, National Museum of the Bargello, Florence.

Fig. 11. Italian majolica plate, State Hermitage Museum, Russia.

Fig. 12. Delft majolica plate, Leeuwarden Ceramic Museum.

Fig. 13. Seventeenth-century Ottoman tile, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 91.1.94.

Fig. 14. Seventeenth-century British earthenware, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 15. Ottoman ceramic plate with an Italian portrait, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Fig. 16. Ottoman ceramic plate with European heraldry, British Museum.

Fig. 17. Ottoman ceramic plate with European heraldry, Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin.

Fig. 18. Panel of Italian majolica tiles, Musée municipale Frédéric Blandin, Nevers, nf 17.

Fig. 19. Tile detail, Nevers.

Fig. 20. Majolica stove tile, Arianna Museum, Geneva.

Fig. 21. Detail of tile panel, Nevers.
of such an Italian alberello with “Golden Horn” decoration has been found on a shipwreck in Southampton and is conserved in the city museum.27

The peak of the Ottoman potter’s technical achievement occurred during the sixteenth century and the first quarter of the seventeenth—that is, during the classical period of Ottoman art. Ceramic production during this period is of the best quality not only in its technical standards but also in its intrinsic plastic values. The sources of the designs and drawings for ceramics of this period can be traced to the artists of the Ottoman court working in the nakkashane (palace workshop).28 Ottoman ceramics of the sixteenth century flourished under court patronage and developed according to a court style. Ceramic workshops in Iznik and Kutahya were obliged to produce primarily commissions of the palace, where the court artists, on their part, were encouraged to innovate new styles.

Thus, sixteenth-century Ottoman ceramic art is not just a common craft but a highly developed form defined and nourished by courtly taste, and as such it becomes a mediator to convey the sumptuous majesty of the Ottoman sultan29 and his court, which was arousing considerable curiosity in sixteenth-century Europe.

At the same time, the conspicuous consumption that was part of the Renaissance lifestyle30 encouraged the production of majolica ceramics in Italy.31 The new merchant class was happy to acquire unusual objects and innovate similar ones for their use; such luxurious possessions conferred social prestige on their owners. In England, where it was rare to find Ottoman ceramics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the few examples of ewers that found their way to aristocratic circles were given luxurious mounts for their use as tableware.32

In Italy, centers like Deruta, Faenza, Florence, Doccia, and Naples either imitated or made exact copies of Ottoman plates; sixteenth-century Ottoman ceramic plates in Italian collections (fig. 9) constituted the genuine exemplars from which reproduction could be made. The composition of flowers placed on both sides of a central leaf seems to have been a popular decorative scheme imitated on many majolica plates (figs. 8, 10, 11, and 12) Focusing on a specific type of floral decoration reminiscent of the saz style initiated by Nakkaş Şahkulu,33 this composition seems to illustrate what was distinctively intended for the Italian market, since compositions with human and animal figures, geometric patterns, or stylized palmette or half-palmette ornamentation were not reproduced. Such a specific choice was influential in European perception of the “pure” Ottoman style as the floral style of the classical period. The “Baba Nakkaş style,” for example, although very common in the same period on Christian metalwork from the Balkans,34 is completely absent from these ceramic reproductions. It is interesting to note how the understanding of what constitutes “Ottoman style” could so differ from one society to another, or from a dominant culture to its subgroups.

The Italian reproductions are later in date than the Ottoman originals, which date from the second half of the sixteenth century. In Italy, the compilation of
design books and of crafts from the East encouraged the introduction and continuity of designs in Italian production. Piccolpasso’s study of ceramic designs is such an example; it introduces ornamental styles including the arabesque and the porcelain style (figs. 3, 4), but one does not encounter in it the Ottoman flowers of the second half of the sixteenth century, thus suggesting that this style was introduced in Italy at a time after the Piccolpasso manuscript was compiled.

Similar variations of the saz-leaf and flower composition mentioned above were reproduced by Italian potters as they moved to other countries and promoted its distribution in Europe. In the early 1500s, Italian potters started to emigrate and set up workshops in Spain, France, Belgium, and, eventually, in Switzerland. From Belgium, the technique traveled to Holland, Germany, and England. From Switzerland, it moved eastwards to Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Hungary. Thus from different versions in majolica of the same Ottoman plate (fig. 7), one can follow the route of these Italian potters or the taste for Ottoman ceramic reproductions initiated by them (fig. 8). Another variant of the design can be traced from an Ottoman example in the Bargello Museum in Florence (fig. 9) to Delft productions in the Leeuwarden Museum in Holland (fig. 10) and a similar, probably European, example in the Hermitage Museum (fig. 11).

Flowers bunched in a vase was another Ottoman motif popular in Europe. Used by the Ottomans mainly on tiles made after 1575 (fig. 13), this composition was later taken up and reinterpreted, with tulips, by Delft ceramists and became popular on Dutch tiles. From Holland it moved to England in the seventeenth century and was reinterpreted on tin-glazed earthenware (fig. 14).

On their majolica, Italian ceramists not only reproduced exact copies of Ottoman plates but, following the tradition of Italian Renaissance painting, also included figural compositions as a decorative theme in itself—mainly portraits of turbaned men or equestrian figures in Ottoman costume. These were popular subjects on alberellos produced in Sicily. Such new interpretations were of course compatible with Italian painting of the period as well as with Italian majolica production nourished by the drawings of Italian painters; Ottoman or oriental figures were a part of both of these.

A tile panel conserved in Musée de Nevers, France, is unique (fig. 18); in both museum and private collections, representations of Ottoman figures are more commonly found on Italian majolica plates and alberellos than on tiles. On the Nevers panel, the figures are not imaginary but have been taken from the illustrations of a printed book and thus can be authenticated as Ottoman or Middle Eastern (figs. 19, 21, 22). They are, in fact, copied from the engravings of Nicolas de Nicolay (1517–83), whose illustrations are among the earliest European representations of Ottoman subjects (fig. 23). Nicolas de Nicolay, sovereign of Auvergne and count of Artefeuille, was the geographer of the French kings Henry II, Charles IX, and Henry III. His book Les navigations, pérégrinations et voyages, faicts en la Turquie was first published in 1567–68 in Lyons under the title Les quatre premiers livres des navigations et pérégrinations orientales ... avec les figures au naturel, tant d’hommes que de femmes... and further editions were made in Anvers in 1576 and in Venice in 1580. Nicolay was in Istanbul in 1551.

According to the information given by Françoise Reginster, curator of the Musée Municipale Frédéric Blandin in Nevers:

The engravings of the book were made after Titian’s drawings representing figures with different Turkish or Middle Eastern costumes and certain professions. The tile panel was part of the collection of Jacques Gallois, one of the first donors of the Museum in Nevers in 1847. The panel was given to him in 1845 by a certain Bonnot, who had a bookshop in Nevers; it was then mounted as it is today, but contemporary research showed that the mounting is completely artificial and needs a more coherent compiling. The figures are framed by a border illustrating putti with classical divinities like Bacchus and nymphs painted in between. The composition is inspired by an engraving of Louis Elle, known as Ferdinand (1612–89), after a drawing by Tetelin (1615–55). For a very long time the tile panel was considered to have come from “La Gloriette,” the second Palace of the Duc de Nevers, Louis de Gonzague. This hypothesis, which is challenged in our days by archeological excavations on the site, was due to the writings of G. F. L. du Broc de Segange in 1863 giving the biography of ceramic production in Nevers. Louis de Gonzague was brought up in the court of King Henry II and could have met Nicolas de Nicolay. However, nothing seems to prove that these tiles decorated the castle he built between 1601 and 1637. Recent archeological excavations have not revealed anything even similar to these tiles. Nevers during the time of Gonzague had illustrious houses and monuments. The tiles date from the first half of the seventeenth century.

Italian potters had emigrated after 1500 to various
parts of Europe and set up ceramic workshops introducing majolica production locally. These emigrations continued in the following centuries as well, and it is generally accepted that glazed pottery production in Nevers had been introduced by such a group from Italy. On the tile panel, which dates from the first half of the seventeenth century, the quality of the drawing is reminiscent of the Italian tradition with some local interpretation. Four of the figures have written explanations as in the book of Nicolas de Nicolay. Among the seven figures represented, six are women; a man in the top left corner sports a turban and a moustache. A figure very similar to this one is painted on a majolica stove tile preserved in the Ariana Museum in Geneva (fig. 20), although in the latter the turban is much more spectacular and its wearer carries in his hand a European-style scepter as a sign of sovereignty. He is in fact identified in writing as Sultan Mehmet II, the conqueror of Istanbul, and is represented as an old man with a beard and moustache. His costume is not Ottoman, and his turban is folded in an imaginative fashion. What influenced the choice of this fifteenth-century sultan on a stove tile would of course be an interesting iconographic issue to study further—not forgetting, however, that image and inscription may not necessarily be mutually explanatory.

Unlike Portugal and Spain, France had no tradition of using tiles as part of the decorative programme of buildings. Therefore it is no surprise that further tiles were not found during the excavation of the duke’s palace in Nevers. Yet Ottoman tiles were ordered for eastern European palaces in Jassy (Iaşi), Romania, and Sárospatak, Hungary, in these cases for limited use in decorating only specific parts of the buildings—at least one or two rooms. Similarly in Nevers, the tiles could have been made as a special order, since their subject is so specific, and used in only one part of the palace.

One might add further examples of European productions imitating or reinterpreting Ottoman ceramics or introducing Ottoman themes. Archeological research in Iznik may in time reveal further examples of Italian influence on Ottoman ceramics. More exhaustive study could be made of the routes of iconographic exchange between Europe and the Ottoman Empire before the nineteenth century—that is, before the industrial era, when technology changed the means of ceramic production. This paper has attempted to summarize the main lines by which one can trace European encounters with Ottoman ceramics and demonstrate how such a relationship can be observed when specific written sources are not available.

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NOTES

Author’s note: This article is based on my research for the Europaalia Exhibition, which was to take place in Lille, France, in 1996 but which, with other exhibitions on Turkish culture in Belgium and Holland, was canceled. Since then this research has been presented in papers given at various academic occasions. The large number of illustrations from many museums in Europe and the time needed to coordinate the project has precluded its publication until now. I took the majority of the photographs during my visits to these museums since 1987, and I would like to thank all that have allowed me to publish this material. I hope that this article will in the future form the core of the exhibition for which the research was initially undertaken.

1. “Phénomène d’imitation dans la production de vaisselle de table aux époques médiévales et modernes” was the theme explored by scholars in February 2004 during an international doctoral seminar organized by Véronique François in Damascus at the Institut Français du Proche-Orient.


3. In the Victoria and Albert Museum: see Atasoy and Raby, Iznik, p. 119, fig. 179.

4. Four small plates of this kind are in a number of museums in Europe: see Atasoy and Raby, Iznik, p. 263, figs. 575–86. Fig. 577 on p. 265 depicts a broken piece of the same type found during excavations in Iznik. See F. Kırmlı, “Iznik çini türcher” in Antika 27 (1983): 50–51.


8. The shard was found in 1999 outside the excavation site in a nearby street during the installation of natural gas pipes by the Istanbul Municipality.


14. There is no substantial study on the impact of Chinese porcelain on Miletus ware or on proto-majolica.

15. The use of stencils and cartoons represents a more organized network of production. This issue can be discussed both for majolica production in Italy and for the production of Iznik wares during the classical period in the Ottoman Empire. For the latter, see W. Denny, “Turkish Ceramics and Turkish Painting: The Role of the Paper Cartoon in Turkish Ceramic Production,” Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn, ed. A. Daneshvari (Malibu, 1981), pp. 29–35.


20. Miletus ware in fact had a long period of production in Anatolia—from the fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth century. Now that the number of archaeological excavations has increased and more and more experts study the medieval period of these sites, a study should be taken to differentiate between the phases of production of this ware and determine its local variations.


26. “Tuğrağe style” was later proposed by Atasoy and Raby, İznik, due to the resemblance of the motifs to the ornamentation of tughras of the same period.

27. See also Atasoy and Raby, İznik, p. 267, fig. 589.


32. See Atasoy and Raby, İznik, p. 271, figs. 594, 597, 599, 600, 601, 605.


34. S. Alp, “Balkan’ıkarda Osmanlı dönemi maden sanatı” (PhD diss., Hacettepe University, Ankara, n.d.).


37. For English tin-glazed earthenware, see Caiger-Smith, Tin-Glazed Pottery, pp. 161–79.


40. My special thanks go to François Regenstein, curator of the Musee municipale Frédéric Blandin in Nevers, who has shared this information.

41. Caiger-Smith, Tin-Glazed Pottery, p. 106.

42. For a comparison of the figures on these tiles, see Pudisahan Potters: Tesâvîr-i Âlî Osman, cat. of an exh. at the Topkapı Sarayı Museum, İstanbul, June 6–Sept. 6, 2000 (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayını, 2000).


44. The design and composition of these tiles could have been sent from Hungary, since the pomegranate motif is uncommon on Ottoman earthenwares and tiles. Yet this design was reinterpretated by the Ottoman ceramists on a tile now conserved at the Çini Kôşk Museum in İstanbul: see Alpay Pasinli and Salih Balaman, Türk çini ve keramikleri, Çini Kôşk (İstanbul: Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri, 1992), p. 86.