ARS ORIENTALIS

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ARS ORIENTALIS VOLUME 42

Earlier versions of these papers were presented at "Objects, Collections, and Cultures," a two-day symposium organized by the Historians of Islamic Art Association and held at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in October 2010. Massumeh Farhad and Marianne S. Simpson, symposium program cochairs and guest editors.

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MASSUMEH FARHAD AND MARIANNE S. SIMPSON

PREFACE

In 1954, the Freer Gallery of Art and the Department of the History of Art at the University of Michigan jointly sponsored *Ars Orientalis* to replace and expand upon the journal *Ars Islamica*, first published in 1931. Since that time, *Ars Orientalis* has remained one of the premier scholarly forums for the publication of new and often groundbreaking research in the arts of Asia and the Islamic world. Among the many distinguished art historians who have contributed to the journal over the years, perhaps none played a more active role than Oleg Grabar. He both served as Near Eastern editor (1957–70) and provided important articles and reviews during *Ars Orientalis*'s early decades.

Indeed, Professor Grabar was also to write the introduction to this current volume, comprising the selected proceedings of a symposium held at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in October 2010. Sadly, his sudden death on January 8, 2011, precluded that contribution. Instead, we dedicate *Ars Orientalis* volume 42 to the memory of this prolific scholar and inspiring teacher and include a special tribute to Professor Grabar by one of his colleagues at the University of Michigan.

In October 2008, the Historians of Islamic Art Association (HIAA), an academic and professional organization that promotes the study and teaching of the arts, architecture, and archaeology of the Islamic world, launched a program of biennial conferences designed to highlight new discoveries, scholarship, and methodological approaches. Renata Holod, HIAA's president from 2008 to 2010, organized the association's inaugural symposium on the theme of "Spaces and Visions" at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The sessions, papers, and workshops, which ranged from the study of the medieval city of Merv to Lebanese modern art, were an indication of the discipline's remarkably broad and diverse interests.

The second HIAA Biennial Symposium was held at the Freer and Sackler in 2010. The program was devoted to the art of the object and its place, both singularly and collectively, within a broader historiographic and methodological framework. Titled "Objects, Collections, and Cultures," the two-day symposium addressed the materiality, functionality, and iconography of individual works; their role(s) as economic and cultural commodities; and their collective meaning and significance within a wider conceptual context. While the thematic scope of this conference was intentionally focused, the program considered multiple media, historic periods, collecting practices, and cultural traditions. The complete program is available at www.historiansofislamicart.org.

Julian Raby, the Freer and Sackler's director, opened the gathering with a keynote address on the study of medieval metalwork in the Arab world. Over the next two days, seven panels organized around formal presentations and commentary alternated with six workshops that took place in the Freer's storage and conservation spaces. One of the symposium's highlights, these workshops were intended to encourage informal discussion and careful examination of individual works of art among a small group of participants. Another innovative session was a roundtable during which four panelists and the symposium audience talked about the challenges and approaches to the study, collecting, and display of objects and their place within the history and discipline of Islamic art today. Finally, the contemporary world was addressed through a series of presentations on films from Turkey, Iran, and Egypt. The program's variety encouraged lively debates among established and emerging scholars and university and museum professionals throughout the symposium's duration.

This volume includes a selection of the conference presentations and workshops, organized in six sections with some inevitable overlap. It opens with "The Language of Objects in the Islamic World," Lisa Golombek's summary of the roundtable session, without the give-and-take between the audience and panelists—Golombek, Oya Pancaroğlu, Oliver Watson, and Stefan Weber—that marked the original discussion.

In the next section, "Objects as Paradigms and Enigmas," Metzada Gelber focuses on an early incense burner from Egypt in the Freer's collection. Her paper considers the object in relation to both medieval Arab literature and contemporaneous architecture to explain its architectural form and propose a possible function. Revisiting the Pisa Griffin, Lamia Balafrej considers this celebrated object within the interface of medieval Islamic and Christian history and memory. Bernard O'Kane draws attention to some of the unusual features of al-Wāsiṭi's celebrated *Maqāmāt*, in particular the inclusion of several double-page compositions, which so far had gone unremarked.

The four papers in the third section, "Object as Document," offer close readings of a single object or workshop practices to reveal richly coded documentary information. By carefully examining the text of sixteenth-century illustrated copies of the *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt*, Karin Rührdanz proposes a notable shift in artistic patronage in Safavid Iran. In her careful study of a Mosul ewer dated 1232, Ruba Kana'an suggests both a patron and recipient for the object and highlights the subtle working relationships of medieval craftsmen by examining particular names and titles. Based on the unusual decoration of an Artuqid candlestick, now in the Aqsa mosque, Hana Taragan argues that the work may have been sent as a special gift to Jerusalem to celebrate the Muslim triumph over the Crusaders. While these papers center on singular objects and their "documentary" importance, Bahattin Yaman focuses on the production of Ottoman royal kaftans and other clothing, and the organization of court tailors by analyzing a series of workshop documents.

In section four, "Cultures of Collecting," May Farhat considers the creation, meaning, and implications of the Henri Pharaon collection in Lebanon. Barbara Karl focuses on the history of collecting Islamic art during the Habsburg era at its apogee in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which was marked by the formation of chambers of art and wonders *(Kunst-und Wunderkammern)*. Emine Fetvacı discusses the phenomenon of collecting within the covers of an album of painting and calligraphy prepared for the Ottoman ruler Ahmed I.

Cross-cultural connections across time and space is the subject of the fifth section. In her paper on a copy of the *Gulistan* of Sa'di, now in Tehran, Nourane Ben Azzouna describes successive interventions into the manuscript's form and content over several centuries. Another example of intervention and appropriation is the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, an early fourteenth-century text, discussed by Yael Rice. This copy of the universal history was first refurbished in late fifteenth-century Herat and then more extensively during Akbar's rule in Mughal India. Krysta Black's study of the profusely illustrated León Bible of 960 throws light on the manuscript's pictorial language, which draws largely on unnoticed Umayyad designs and motifs.

Finally the sixth and last section, "Close Encounters in the Freer," presents summaries of three workshops that focused on works of art in the Gallery's collection: Heather Ecker and Teresa Fitzherbert discuss the function and origins of a celebrated medieval "canteen"; Renata Holod deconstructs the so-called Siege Scene (a.k.a. Battle) Plate; and Lawrence Nees offers a function for a small silver stand with eagles.

For the first time, *Ars Orientalis* includes a digital component. The papers presented at the symposium session on "'Cinematic Realism' in the Middle East" are also available, accompanied by film clips, on the Freer and Sackler website: www.asia.si.edu. This electronic offering constitutes the most recent and innovative development in the journal's almost sixty-year publication history. The collaboration of *Ars Orientalis*, the Historians of Islamic Art Association, and the Freer and Sackler in the production of this volume marks another milestone—for the journal, the association, and the museums alike—combining as it does the continuation of well-established scholarly practices and the forging of new and fruitful institutional relationships. We anticipate that *Ars Orientalis*, in concert with academic and museum organizations, will continue to present original and innovative scholarship in both content and format and remain a dynamic forum for the study of the art, architecture, and archaeology of the Islamic world.

Massumeh Farhad, PhD (Harvard), 1987, joined the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in 1995 as associate curator of Islamic art. In 2004, she was appointed chief curator and curator of Islamic art. She is a specialist in the arts of the book from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iran. She also has curated numerous exhibitions on the arts of the Islamic world at the Freer and Sackler, including *Art of the Persian Courts* (1996), *Fountains of Light: The Nuhad Es-Said Collection of Metalwork* (2000), *Style and Status: Imperial Costumes from Ottoman Turkey* (2005–2006), *Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran* in the *Moscow Kremlin* (2009), *Falnama: The Book of Omens* (2009), and most recently, *Feast Your Eyes: A Taste for Luxury in Ancient Iran* (2012). She has written extensively on seventeenth-century Persian painting, including *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites in Safavid Iran* (2004) and *Falnama: The Book of Omens* (2009). E-mail: farhama@si.edu

Marianne Shreve Simpson, PhD (Harvard), 1978, formerly curator of Islamic Near Eastern art at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, is an independent scholar of Islamic art and president of the Historians of Islamic Art Association (2011–13). She is the author of *The Illustration of an Epic: The Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts* (1979), *Arab and Persian Painting in the Fogg Art Museum* (1980), *L'Art de l'Islam en Asie* (1983), *Sultan Ibrahim Mirza's "Haft Awrang": A Princely Manuscript from Sixteenth-Century Iran* (1997, in collaboration with Massumeh Farhad), *Persian Poetry, Painting and Patronage: Illustrations in a Sixteenth-Century Masterpiece* (1998), and more than sixty scholarly articles and reviews. She also served as coeditor, with Herbert Kessler, of *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (1985). She currently is coediting a volume of *Shahnama* essays. E-mail: shrevesimpson@gmail.com

MARGARET COOL ROOT

OLEG GRABAR AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Oleg Grabar. Courtesy Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ. Photo by Cliff Moore.

In the spring of 2003, the University of Michigan awarded Oleg Grabar (1929–2011) the degree of doctor of humane letters. This honorary degree acknowledged not only his preeminence as a scholar of Islamic arts but also his extraordinary significance to the missions of the university.

Oleg began his career at Michigan, teaching in the Department of the History of Art from 1954 until 1968, the year he accepted a post at Harvard University. Stepping into the first academic position specializing in Islamic art in the United States, he transformed the program's scope and impact.[1] Through his charismatic capacity to excite all levels of audiences, he developed the fledgling field of Islamic material and visual culture right here in Michigan. Indeed, he was the "prince of Ann Arbor" during this era, noted his friend and colleague Jacob Lassner during the American Oriental Society's 2011 tribute to Grabar.[2] He trained more than sixty PhDs at Michigan and Harvard, and they have fanned out around the world in museums and academic positions, energizing sequential successive generations of specialists.

At Michigan, he inaugurated many research initiatives, which blossomed later into paradigm-shifting studies. Exhibitions, epigraphic studies, codicological investigations, text and image questions, architectural and archaeological fieldwork were all within his purview and the scope of his massive energies.[3] A few examples are listed here: *Persian Art before and after the Mongol Conquest*, the 1959 exhibition at the University of Michigan Museum of Art, was the first effort to gather the pages of the dispersed the great Ilkhanid *Shahnama*.[4] The 1965 exhibition *Sasanian Silver* addressed the nature of late antique and early medieval court cultures, diplomatic gifts, and the massive finds of Sasanian and Soghdian silver within the territories of the former Russian empire.[5] Close readings of the history of structure were first addressed in seminars on Seljuk architecture,[6] while analyses of architectural ornament developed the interpretations of intention.[7]

As a member of the Michigan faculty, he was on the editorial board of *Ars Orientalis*, where he published key studies on the Dome of the Rock and the *Maqāmāt* illustrative cycle, and also provided shorter notes and review articles. Michigan's close ties to the Freer meant that Oleg could hold regular graduate seminars with Richard Ettinghausen on the Gallery's stellar collection of Islamic art. This collaboration is also reflected in their eventual coauthored volume in the Pelican series, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 650–1250*.[8]

He also was an associate of the university's Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, through which he was provided with an unrivalled opportunity to extend his field experience. Oleg's dissertation had focused on Umayyad sites, and he continued his intensive art historical and historical studies and fieldwork by focusing on the Khirbat al-Mafjar and Qusayr Amra' paintings as well as the Haram al-Sharif and

Oleg Grabar on location in Afghanistan, 1973. From the Shelby White and Leon Levy Archives Center, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ. Photo by Deborah Klimburg-Salter [FAC GRA 006].

the Dome of the Rock. In 1956, the Kelsey Museum's director, George H. Forsyth, Jr., took a small group of colleagues on a reconnaissance expedition to the Middle East in search of good sites for excavation. Among them was the young Oleg. The group explored five countries, traveling along dusty desert tracks. While Forsyth settled on the famous Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai for his own multiyear project, Oleg fixed upon the dramatic and extensive ruins east of Palmyra, currently called Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, in Syria. When he first came upon the site, its majestic ramparts beckoned with promises of another decorated Umayyad villa. The excavations eventually revealed that the site, located strategically in the semi-arid region between the Euphrates and Damascus at the foot of a key mountain pass, was much more complex in its intention, uses, and subsequent history. A fortified agricultural and commercial installation with an elaborate water-management system and an external reception hall and bath, it flourished through the eighth century, suffered destruction in a tenth-century earthquake, enjoyed a renewal in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, and then was abandoned by the fourteenth century in the wake of the Mongol destruction of its trade partners in the region and on the Euphrates. The expedition's findings gave Oleg the opportunity to redefine the nature of Umayyad, Abbasid, and later archaeology in the Middle East. He reframed the focus on long-term regional, social, and commercial networks and the nature of daily life at a typical medieval site. In doing so, he issued a challenge to archaeologists, which has been taken up by many in the ensuing decades.

Oleg worked at Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi for five seasons between 1964 and 1971, publishing numerous preliminary reports and an extensive interpretive article in *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970). He maintained his connection with Michigan through that archaeological effort after he moved to Harvard. He went on to publish a two-volume monograph on the site, *City in the Desert: Qar al-Hayr East* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), with Renata Holod, James Knudstad, and William Trousdale.[9]

When Oleg returned to Ann Arbor in 2003 with his wife, Terry, his colleagues in the Department of the History of Art and at the Kelsey Museum had a wonderful time renewing old ties and forging new ones. On the agenda were witty conversation and good food and drink, and we brainstormed about a possible new project to annotate and publish the archives of the Qasr al-Hayr excavations. We hope that this can still happen, with Oleg's fervent blessing!

Margaret Cool Root, PhD (Bryn Mawr College), 1976, is professor of classical and Near Eastern art/archaeology in the Department of the History of Art and the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology as well as curator of Near Eastern archaeology at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is author of several monographs beginning with *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art: Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire* (1979), editor of others, and has written many scholarly articles on problems in the art archaeology of ancient Iran and the larger Mediterranean cultural environment. She is currently completing volumes 2 and 3 of *Seals on the Persepolis Fortification Tablets* with coauthor M. B. Garrison. E-mail: mcroot@umich.edu

NOTES

1 The first holder of the position was Mehmet Aga-Oglu, who held it from 1933 to 1938; he was followed by Richard Ettinghausen and David Storm Rice. Oleg Grabar was first appointed to a position split between the Near Eastern Studies and the History of Art departments.

2 I thank Professor Lassner for sharing the text of this address and giving me permission to use it. I also extend profound thanks to Renata Holod for her generous help on this essay, not least in glossing it with additions informed by her own time as an MA student at Michigan under Grabar, her continued PhD studies in Islamic architecture with him at Harvard, and her multi-season team membership on his Michigan-sponsored excavation (see below).

3 The generous teacher and mentor that he was, Oleg Grabar left a carefully arranged legacy of all his articles in four collected volumes: *Constructing the Study of Islamic Art* (Ashgate Variorum, 2005), available for download at www.archnet.org. Volume 4 contains a bibliography of his work up to 2004, and an update can be found in *Muqarnas* 25.

4 The investigations of these periods resulted in his redefinition of Seljuk and Ilkhanid art and architecture, published in 1967 as "The Visual Arts 1050–1350" in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, and the first data collection on Persian painting carried out under his direction by J. Norgren and E. Davis, *Preliminary Index of Shah-nameh Illustrations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1969) as well as in the subsequent study he coauthored with Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

5 He discussed some of these concerns more fully in *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, rev. 1987).

6 His method of architectural investigation and analysis is best summarized in *The Great Mosque of Isfahan* (New York: New York University Press, 1990).

7 Subsequently developed in *The Mediation of Ornament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) and in *The Shape of the Holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

8 Grabar's early draft on the architecture was completed at Michigan by 1965, and was circulated among his students as a mimeographed copy. The completed first edition did not appear until 1987, more than a decade after Richard Ettinghausen's death in 1975.

9 *Editor's note*: After he left Michigan, Oleg Grabar had a long and distinguished career, writing numerous books and hundreds of articles. He also was the founding editor of the journal *Muqarnas*. In 1980 he was named the Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture at Harvard University, retiring from there ten years later to join the Institute of Advanced Studies at Princeton.

Lisa Golombek

The Language of Objects in the Islamic World: How We Translate and Interpret It

Commentary on the symposium roundtable "Objects of and in Islamic History and Culture

Moderator: Marianna S. Simpson
Participants:
Lisa Golombek, University of Toronto (emerita) and Royal Ontario Museum (emerita)
Oya Pancaroğlu, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul
Oliver Watson, Oxford University (previously Museum of Islamic Art, Doha)
Stefan Weber, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Pergamonmuseum, Berlin

This roundtable discussion was based on the premise that within the study of the Islamic arts of the object, a great deal is known about materials, techniques, and methods of manufacture; period and regional styles and production centers; typologies of form, decoration, and function, and to a somewhat lesser degree, the identification of makers, patrons, and consumers; the interpretation of singular objects; and the evaluation of groups or types of objects from particular places and periods. Given all this information, have we reached the position where we can now deal with questions of motivation behind the making of the object, the aesthetic value of objects, and the extent to which a class of objects represents a "unique" achievement? Or to put it another way, are we now up to the task as defined so cogently by Oleg Grabar in his seminal 1976 article "The Arts of the Object": "[The] true challenge [in the study of Islamic objects] lies in discovering the motivations behind a unique artistic achievement which succeeded in lifting all its techniques and almost all its subjects to the level of works of art, and in the process endowed nearly all aspects of life with beauty and pleasure." [1]

This commentary on the roundtable discussion, including the panelists' remarks and audience comments, can be divided into two groups. The first encompasses questions about the phenomenon of the object and problems posed by its inherent nature. The second concerns approaches to the display of Islamic objects.

Problems in Understanding the Object

Lisa Golombek initiated the discussion by calling for an awareness of the "laws of behavior" of diverse media. Different valuations were attached to different media; thus, we must know the *modus operandi* of the medium—the constraints of its production, the accessibility of materials, how artisans worked (alone, in groups, under direction), and the specific marketplace for that medium. How portable was the medium? Could it have served to spread ideas? To answer these questions, we need a representative database, one culled from as many collections (public, private, and archaeological) as possible.

One of the key questions for Grabar was the determination of an object's "social index." For whom was it made? Sometimes this information is conveniently written somewhere—in inscriptions or texts—but more often we have to make intelligent guesses. With enough data we can place an object within the pecking order or hierarchy by identifying the "knock-offs." When arranging objects for display, we definitely should not neglect or reject the "knock-offs": they help to confirm which superior objects were impressive to viewers not only today but also in the past. Golombek's favorite "indexed series" is the so-called Kubachi blue-and-white wares from Safavid Iran, since they signal the importance of finer Kirman chinoiserie wares. Although seventeenth-century "Kubachi" wares are poorly painted, they may have been considered "beautiful" in their day because they made generous use of a gorgeous cobalt blue.

Once we know something about the "social index" of a particular medium, we then can better understand its "laws of behavior." From there we may begin to ask whether the arts of the Islamic object behave any differently than those of other cultures. For example, does the detachment of most Islamic objects from religious involvement make them very different in their reception by Islamic society than, say, Christian objects within medieval Europe?

Oliver Watson pointed out that, from the information standpoint, we lack the kind of documentation—for instance, factory and individual archives relating to the production and consumption of objects—that survives in Europe from Renaissance times onwards, nor do we have a literature of connoisseurship in the Islamic world comparable, say, to that of China. Thus, we depend on the object, which has its own technical and stylistic history, to tell us about its production and use. We need to know how to examine objects closely and retrieve information from various perspectives.

At the level of the individual object, this is what we see magisterially performed by D. S. Rice in his studies of metalwork[2] and by Julian Raby, who re-examined much of the same material in his symposium opening address on "The Principle of Parsimony and the Problem of the 'Mosul School of Metalwork.'" We might be able, however, to extend further the study of individual objects by trying to understand in more detail the nature of the enterprise in which the makers of our arts were engaged. Two issues come to mind: the implications about how craftsmen worked, and the reliability of the surviving sample.

1. What is a "workshop"?

What does a pottery workshop or an individual metalworker need in order to be able to work? By this is meant not only the different materials and technologies used directly by metalworkers or potters, but also equally importantly are the "support" industries needed for their particular enterprise and the required social and economic environment. Ceramics require an enormous pyramid of trades and skills to allow a fine luxury object worthy of the name of "art" to be produced: sourcing and preparation of body, glaze, and pigment materials, the making of tools, the provisions and skills related to the construction and operation of kilns, and the means of transport to market. Thus, the transfer of a luxury pottery type (such as lustreware), even into areas where there was an already established high-level industry, required time and money.[3]

Similar conclusions might be drawn about cast-metal technologies, although the question arises as to whether the movements of purely decorative technologies (such as inlaying brass with copper and silver) are as complex as those of ceramics. Might the ability of such crafts to migrate easily explain the proliferation of production centers for Mosuli metalworkers and provide an "excluded middle" from the choice that we otherwise seem to face, that is, a single center supplying a vast area, or an implausible number of competing centers?[4]

2. Survival

We naturally try to make sense of the material (i.e., objects) we have. It is salutary and sobering, however, to estimate now and again whether the material we have can reasonably sustain the weight of interpretation we impose upon it. Are the patterns we see in the surviving material a real reflection of their history, or are they chance patterns created by the vagaries of survival?

In the case of Mosuli metalworkers, we might estimate that over the course of a century many thousands of fine metal pieces were made. (If roughly a dozen craftsmen each produced twelve pieces a year, this results in some 1,500 pieces a decade and 15,000 over the century.) The couple of hundred pieces that actually survive to our day represent just one or two percent of this total. How reliable is this sample? To answer this, we must take an interest in how and why things do survive, which is another subject ripe for research. It is immediately apparent that different materials and objects survive at various rates. To consider this, we must look to the recyclability of material, the rarity or expense of objects, and the existence of institutions dedicated to looking after things (e.g., libraries, treasuries, shrines, palaces, and nowadays also museums).

Since Muslims do not bury goods with the dead, the enormous riches of tomb-finds in pharaonic Egypt, ancient China, and the classical world are not available to us. The vagaries of political history have meant that, for the most part, the fabulous libraries and treasuries of Islamic dynasties down through the centuries have been dispersed or destroyed. We are left with the Topkapı Saray in Istanbul—important as holding the remnants of the treasury, library, and palace collections of one of the world's richest imperial powers—but this repository is significant for more than the fabulous objects it contains. Its vast collection provides an indication of the enormous quantity of objects and the extraordinary wide range of materials and objects types that made up the categories of so-called Islamic court arts through the centuries, the overwhelmingly large part of which is now lost. An important question that remains is how to incorporate this observation into the histories we now try to construct.

Oya Pancaroğlu pointed out another fact about three-dimensional objects that affects our ability to understand them: the difference between studying objects and studying manuscripts or architecture. The difference begins at the point of looking. We can see an object at once, but we cannot see a book or a building at once. Books and buildings require multiple, linked views, and it is only after the accumulation of a multiplicity of views that we can securely say we have seen this book or that building. This necessary effort almost automatically lends a depth of perspective. As an extended experience, the processes of looking and seeing also reinforce the thinking process. At the very least, there is an extension into the text of the book and therefore into a literary realm. In the case of buildings, the thinking process extends itself to numerous avenues ranging from epigraphy and function to social history and patronage.

With an object, we might have to handle it, turn it around, consider its technique of production, and so forth, but the process is rarely as extended or extensive as it is in the case of manuscripts or buildings. Pancaroğlu thought this manner of relating to objects, as opposed to manuscripts and buildings, is somewhat of a disadvantage because it reduces the depth of perspective. The object is right there in front of us—"in your face." What more could there be to the object?

Stefan Weber felt that, next to their materiality and technical quality, objects are part of systems, social systems, that must be understood if we are to grasp the meaning of any single object in terms of its aesthetic and social value.[5] First and foremost, they belong in a setting, such as the Aleppo Room in Berlin's Pergamonmuseum. This early-seventeenth-century room from the house of a Christian merchant who lived in Aleppo must have been filled with objects that shared the same visual language as the paintings on the walls and ceiling. Objects are never alone. As products of their time and place, they are a nonverbal form of communication about and within that society. Sources to investigate beyond the object are gift lists, heritage records, archaeological contexts, poetry, and anything that might increase knowledge about the object.

Displaying Islamic Art in the Museum

Remarks and questions from the symposium audience focused on what we want objects in a museum gallery or installation to tell visitors. Several comments dealt with the appreciation of Arabic calligraphy. While translating the text may enhance understanding an object (e.g., a Koran page), it does not necessarily speak to the beauty of the calligraphy.

At this point the discussion turned to the question of value, a question that affects both the study of objects and their presentation. In general the panelists felt it is important to display objects that range in quality, not just those that are unique or exceptional pieces, in order to present a more complete picture of the society and of the place that the unique piece holds among its lesser "siblings." For example, sixteenth-century illustrated manuscripts from Shiraz have long been considered "provincial,"[6] but by whose standards? What features are missing from such works that are manifest, for instance, in court manuscripts? Which features could museum visitors recognize and distinguish? More expansive and flexible installations, such as the open-storage displays at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, allow the curator to try a different approach by showing, for instance, the full range of a genre's production.

Moving from the objects privileged in most museum galleries to the less displayable category of the archaeological object, Pancaroğlu pointed out that such works are not as "in your face." Each comes with a context and requires other types of resources to understand it. The question then arose, what can an art historian bring to archaeology? Perhaps one approach is to differentiate objects, such as identifying a work that might be considered an "heirloom." Weber raised as an example a blue-and-white sherd found at the Dome of the Rock, which represents many stories associated with this site.[7] Watson pointed out art history does have a different set of questions than archaeology.

As the discussion drew to a close, Weber mentioned that we had not yet considered the secondary history of objects (the "biography of objects"), that is, what happened to them after they left their original owners. Speaking from the audience, Sheila Canby of the Metropolitan Museum of Art noted the defacement of paintings as well as the many notations (sometimes resembling graffiti) written on the flyleaves of manuscripts. As objects (as well as manuscripts and buildings) are handed down to subsequent generations, their meanings and functions change. A plea was made for the inclusion of such information (former owners, dealers, etc.) in online databases.

Finally, it would seem appropriate here to return to the questions raised by Oleg Grabar. To what extent have we become more knowledgeable about the role of objects in the Islamic world? Are we able to muster evidence backing claims of uniqueness or specialness about certain individual objects? It seems that as data, generated by both the object and its social context, accumulates, we can begin to make such assertions. It is clear, however, that the object alone is insufficient. It must be probed, and its circumstances of production as well as its place among its many siblings (most of which have disappeared) must be taken into consideration. With the growth of the field and the increasing specialization of knowledge-seeking (not only by medium, geography, and chronology but also by disciplines, such as paleography, petrography, poetry, etc.), our appreciation of the object will only become more defined and refined. When Grabar first raised such issues in 1976, the field of Islamic art history was very young. It has grown exponentially, and if objects are the last horizon (following architecture and painting), they are rapidly catching up. The expansion of museum and public collections has certainly been a catalyst in moving our research forward. The consensus of the roundtable discussion was that displays of Islamic art must convey not only the beauty of the object but also its complexity.

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NOTES

1 Oleg Grabar, "The Arts of the Object," *Artforum* 14 (1976), p. 43.

2 Although now challenged, D. S. Rice's work on medieval inlaid metalwork is still unparalleled for its attention to detail, which is beautifully documented in his photographs and drawings. See, for example, Rice, *Le Baptistère de Saint-Louis* (Paris: Les Editions du Chénes, 1951); Rice, "Inlaid Brasses from the Workshop of Ahmed al-Dhaki al-Mawsili," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957), pp. 283–326.

3 Watson had in mind the transfer of the lustre technique to Egypt in the tenth century and the subsequent transfer of frit-based ceramics and new decorative techniques eastwards from Egypt in the twelfth century.

4 See Ruba Kana'an's article "Patron and Craftsman of the Freer Mosul Ewer of 1232" in this volume.

5 For a thoughtful discussion of this point, see Stefan Weber, "A Concert of Things: Thoughts on Objects of Islamic Art in the Museum Context," in B. Junod, G. Khalil, S. Weber, and G. Wolf, *Islamic Art and the Museum: Discussions on Scientific and Museological Approaches to Art and Archaeology of the Muslim World*, Proceedings of the Berlin Symposium (London: Saqi Books, forthcoming).

6 This attitude now has been persuasively contested by Lale Uluç, *Turkman governors, Shiraz artisans, and Ottoman collectors: Sixteenth century Shiraz manuscripts* (Istanbul: Iş Bankası Kultur Yayinlari, 2006).

7 According to Weber, the excavations at Suq al-Sagha of the Umayyad palace of Mu'awiya south of the Aqsa Mosque yielded Mamluk blue-and-white sherds.

METZADA GELBER

A POETIC VESSEL FROM EVERYDAY LIFE: THE FREER INCENSE BURNER

1
Metal incense burner, 8th–9th century. H: 31.5 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, F1952.1.

Abstract
The Freer incense burner (Freer Gallery of Art, F1952.1) is an enigmatic and hybrid object that simultaneously presents architectural features and serves as a vessel for domestic use. The incorporation of architectural features in a utilitarian object is a universal and well-known phenomenon that is usually loaded with meaning. With our object, however, the message and purpose are unclear. Furthermore, the vessel's origin is obscure; although generally considered Islamic, it also has been said to have been produced along the borders between pre-Islamic and Islamic cultures. This essay reexamines the Freer incense burner as a visual metaphor; it focuses on actual and metaphorical process of borrowing architectural elements in both objects and literary arts, specifically poetry, of the Islamic world.

THE FREER GALLERY OF ART'S INCENSE BURNER (fig. 1)[1] is a metal vessel that incorporates distinct architectural components. In this respect, it belongs to a large group of objects, spanning a wide time range, whose features have been borrowed from architecture. Such objects reflect a universal phenomenon that has existed in numerous cultures and time periods. Yet virtually nothing is known about the Freer object. It has no inscriptions, and there is no solid evidence concerning the place or date of its creation. Indeed, there has been much speculation regarding its origin. Although it is usually described as Islamic, a strain of doubt hovers over this identification. Some scholars believe the incense burner was produced along the borders between Islamic and Byzantine or pre-Islamic cultures and has no specific cultural or stylistic domain.[2] It appears that the inability to determine its exact origin has reduced its value and has led to its neglect.

In this article, I reexamine the duality of the incense burner's design—as a representation of fragmentary architecture and as a vessel—in order to find the cultural mechanism that created it. To accomplish this, I will look for literary references to architecture in poetry, where metaphorical borrowing frequently occurred, to find common characteristics that might shed some light on the Freer object.

The incense burner is a square metal object whose upper part comprises five domes—a large central one and four smaller ones on the corners (fig. 2)—that are surrounded by two tiers of graded crenellations. Each dome is adorned with pierced floral and geometric motifs and originally housed a figure of a bird as well. The domes stand upon a flat lid that is connected to the object by two hinges. The lower part of the incense burner is a square body pierced by a pattern of diagonal crisscrosses. In addition, there are four legs, each one adorned with animal masks and paws, and a long horizontal handle, terminating in a kneeling quadruped.[3]

This brief description of the vessel does not leave any place for doubt about its connection to architecture. It also provides a prominent sense of a hybrid object. A quick review suggests that there are two methods of applying architectural features to objects. In the first, the object resembles a miniature version of a habitable building. In the second, it includes several fragmentary architectural features, such as domes and crenellations, but does not have other fundamental components, such as columns, towers, gates, and openings.

The Freer object belongs to the second method: objects that employ fragmentary architectural features. Within this group there are many incense burners,[4] none of which bear distinctive cultural "signs," such as an apse or *mihrāb* (prayer niche), yet they are all "suspected" to be Islamic.[5] Although some share more features than others, none are completely identical in shape (see fig. 3). They also do not look like miniature versions of actual buildings, which has proved confusing to scholars who seek to determine the Freer incense burner's origin based on its architectural features.[6] The wide range of suggested models extends from Central Asian buildings, such as the mausoleum of Ismail at Bukhara,[7] a Soghdian structure,[8] and a Buddhist stupa,[9] to Coptic[10] and Byzantine models.[11] These efforts expose the problems that may occur when examining an object using a strictly East/West, Islam/Byzantium methodology.[12] Indeed, there might be no specific model for these objects. Their architectural elements can be considered universal, because they do not display specific stylistic features. Furthermore, because these objects are usually ascribed to pre-Mongol conquests, scholars tend to see in their designs traces of pre-Islamic cultures that existed in both the East and the West.[13]

The uncertainty over the cultural identity of the Freer and similar incense burners led me to examine the concept of borrowing in art, specifically in Arabic poetry, where the use of metaphors was extensive. In fact, metaphors were a major element in medieval Arabic poetry and language. I will begin by showing that the Freer vessel is a visual metaphor that shares characteristics with the literary metaphor.

The term "metaphor" derives from Greek, and its initial and narrow meaning was the transference or replacement of a notion from one domain to another.[14] The closest term in Arabic is استعارة *isti'āra* (borrowing), but there are additional terms, such as مثل *mathal* (likeness), تمثيل *tamthīl* (analogy), or تشبيه *tashbīh* (simile), that demonstrate the tendency to broaden the boundaries of the definition.[15] Some of these terms appeared as early as the eighth century in texts by medieval Muslim writers[16] and literary critics and also in Koranic exegesis.[17] Medieval texts do not always produce a clear distinction between the various meanings of these terms, which sometimes has led to disputes between scholars in both the medieval and modern periods.[18] However, the texts do confirm that, in medieval Islamic society, the pursuit of these issues was intense. I contend that this tendency was not restricted to

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Detail of fig. 1, the domes and crenellations on the Freer incense burner.

the literary world and may have triggered the creation of visual metaphors.

Each component of a literary and visual composition acts in accordance with the distinctive rules of each respective art form, and is affected by diverse factors such as time, space, or grammar. The differences between art forms have to be considered when making comparisons. Carroll,[19] for example, stipulates that the shift from a literary to a visual metaphor begins with the creation of a concrete composite object that has a coherent contour and encloses homogeneous space. According to Carroll, such conditions bridge the gap between different art forms[20] and make the comparison possible. These conditions are clearly manifested in the Freer vessel, which meets the definition of a visual metaphor.

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (a grammarian and a theorist of Arabic literature who died in 1078) was probably the first to discern the nuances within the Arabic definitions for metaphor.[21] According to al-Jurjānī, it was precisely the apparent differences between the referred elements that fascinated people.[22] This fascination became the desired goal of the metaphor, and is also found in the dissimilarity between the architectural and utilitarian components of the Freer object. Although Muslim writers used linguistic terms in their definitions, those terms portrayed broad concepts that mirrored each artist or poet's profound and imaginative internal thinking process.[23] Therefore, it is hard to decipher the connections that were conceived in the creator's imagination.[24] Yet, similar to the literary metaphor in which the reader is asked to understand an idea through its components, we are also required to perceive the Freer object through its architectural elements.

Architecture has qualities that last beyond specific period, place, or function. These qualities include universal, psychological, and spiritual ideas, such as magnificence, beauty, power, stability, order, protection, etc.[25] Similar qualities can be

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Metal incense burner, 10th–11th century. H: 14.5 cm. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection, MTW 1065. Copyright Nour Foundation. Courtesy of the Khalili Family Trust

found in literary metaphors written by Muslim poets over the course of time. Vildan Serdaroglu, for example, has shown that Ottoman poets often portrayed lovers using architectural metaphors that expressed beauty and dignity.[26] Earlier poets, such as ʿAli ibn al-Djahm (died 863), al-Buhturī (died 897), Ibn al-Mu'tazz (died 908), and Abū-Nuwās (died circa 814), saw architecture as representing a silent memory of glorious past and a commemoration of its patrons' power. To others, such as Nāsir-i Khusrau (died circa 1072), architecture was an expression of order and symmetry that reflected the cosmic order.[27] A verse from one of his poems states:

> … A palace of my poem I'll make, in which
> from its verses I'll form flower beds and verandas.
> One spot I'll raise up like a lofty prospect,
> Another make wide and spacious like a courtyard.
> At its gate, some rarity of meter
> I'll set, trusty and wise, to be its gateman …[28]

In these lines, Nāsir-i Khusrau indicates that construction and poem, building and writing, are one and the same.

The use of metaphors in these early poems resembles a mosaic: fragments combined to produce a layered picture. However, the poems do not offer coherent, detailed descriptions of the buildings themselves.[29] Khusrau's poem, for example, does not provide a clear sense of the palace's shape or size. Even the gate, which appears to be a significant feature, is not described in detail. Instead, these poems relate to architectural elements that help recall memories and feelings. By focusing on domes and other architectural elements, poets activated their readers' imaginations. Furthermore, the meaning becomes clear only by tracking the poem's central theme, tying its pieces together like a string connects pearls to form a necklace.[30] This formal construction of an Arabic poem has been defined by some modern scholars as "atomic" or "molecular,"[31] words that instantly recall the connections between the domes and crenellations on the Freer incense burner. But, unlike the literary metaphor, our object is like a pearl separated from its necklace; it has no text and is taken out of context.

Arabic literary metaphors[32] were also derived from other visual arts, such as goldsmithing, weaving, and painting. [33] Arab poets clearly demonstrated a great appreciation for both literary and visual works of art and indeed regarded borrowed elements as magnificent creations in themselves. Thus, their literary metaphors comprised components from various non-art fields as well.[34] However, the elements that were derived from the visual arts play multiple roles in poetry, shaping and unifying the text through the "rules of construction" that exist in both visual and literary works.[35] In fact, both types of art require a careful selection of fragmentary components and demand a meticulous and formal adjustment of their parts in order to produce an organized and harmonic unit.[36] Thus, similar to a metaphor's function in a poem, the architectural elements on the Freer incense burner provide a sense of order and symmetry. Moreover, the rules of construction in visual and literary metaphors are in fact threads that tie together diverse types of cultural expression,[37] whether they were used by poets or visual artists.

Some scholars have raised the idea of shared rules existing for different media in Islamic art, such as glazed ceramics featuring excerpts from the *Shahnama* and visual images appearing on objects. Simpson, for example, points to one mechanism that abbreviated both images and text.[38] We might also recall the ongoing efforts to "read" the Alhambra palace in Granada, where verses of poems and patterns of ornament decorate the walls.[39]

Clearly, underlying all these efforts is the concept that there are rules for activating various types of cultural "signs." The connections between the visual and written arts as well as the rules that govern them indicate that a deep significance is given to formal values within Islam. Structural, formal, and aesthetic values receive more emphasis than the content itself. These connections also bring to mind the fluid boundaries that exist between content and shape in Arabic poetry and visual art.[40] This partially explains our inability to understand the meaning of connecting architectural elements with a utensil. However, it does explain the cultural background that activated the borrowing of elements in Islamic art.

I would like to emphasize two points: first, metaphors and architectural descriptions were widely used in Arabic poetry during pre-Islamic times. But during the Abbasid period, there were significant innovations in that area. Innovations of new types of metaphors, such as the *badī'* (new style),[41] and literary genres, such as the *wasf* (description), reached their peak in the eleventh century.[42] Underlying these developments was the significant role Arabic played in preserving the traditional wording in the Koran.[43] The cultural atmosphere, which seemed secular but in actual fact was not at all so, became a greenhouse for the growth of figurative language loaded with metaphors. This atmosphere was reflected in various activities, such as gifts presented with short poems, diverse types of objects inscribed with poetic verses,[44] and the *ma'ānī* (guidebooks), which included motifs, idioms, and phrases arranged in themes[45] and were like a "thesaurus of ornate combinations" for poets, writers, and clerks.[46] These books demonstrate that poets were deeply influenced by their predecessors and became formative factors in everyday life. While such books and objects revealed the connections between art forms, they also showed an extensive interest in the Arabic language in general, and in poetry in particular—not only in courts or educated circles but in all segments of the population. They inspired and influenced Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Wasserstein, for example, points to the quick expansion of Arabic language and mentions the Abbasid translation "enterprise" that turned Greek and Latin into unessential languages.[47] Thus, Arabic language and literature played magnetic and powerful roles in medieval Muslim and non-Muslim societies. Metaphorical language became a natural verbal currency in everyday life and thought in Islamic lands. It unified the entire population, creating a close contact between the literary and visual realms in Islamic art.

Like literary metaphors, the architectural elements found on the Freer incense burner and similar objects are neither specific nor distinctive. This helps explain their elusive character and the difficulty in determining their origin. While the objects "speak" a universal language, the metaphorical process enables us to read, interpret, and experience them individually and freely. Thus, they might have appealed and belonged to different ethnic groups under Islamic rule.

In conclusion, the Freer incense burner is a visual metaphor that unites utensil and architecture. Its junction point reveals a twofold meaning. One points to the meeting between the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds as represented by architectural components and the function of the vessel itself. This creates an additional link in a chain of complex umbilical connections between Islamic and non-Islamic cultures, based on popular norms that prevailed during the early centuries of Islam. The second level exposes the enormous importance given to the Arabic language and poetry as fundamental factors in this culture. This spiritual and cultural world could have affected both the verbal and the visual language, producing one mechanism for both. Thus, the cultural roots inserted in the metaphorical mechanism convert the Freer incense burner from a hybrid object into a poetic one.

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NOTES

1 Purchase, F1952.1, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Maximum height: 31.5 cm; maximum width, including horizontal handle: 40.8 cm.
2 Esin Atil, W. T. Chase and Paul. Jett, *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1985), pp. 58–61; Esin Atil, *Art of the Arab World* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1975), pp. 28–29
3 Atil, Chase, and Jett, *Islamic Metalwork*, pp. 58–61. Atil, *Art of the Arab World*, pp. 28–29.
4 Examples include: Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin, inv. no. I1301; see Heinrich Gluck, *Die Kunst des Islam* (Berlin: Propylaen, 1925), p. 438. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, inv. nos. MTW1065, MTW 1417; see M. B. Piotrovsky, ed., *Heavenly Art Earthly Beauty* (Amsterdam: De Nieuwe Kerk, 1999), nos. 183 and 184. Tarek Rajab Museum, Kuwait, inv. nos. MET-2375-TSR, MET-1284-TSR; see Geza Fehérvári, “Islamic Incense-burners and the Influence of Buddhist Art,” in *The Iconography of Islamic Art*, ed. Bernard O'Kane (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), figs. 8.5, 8.10. Kuwait National Museum, inv. no. LNS 41 M; see Marilyn Jenkins, ed., *Islamic Art in the Kuwait National Museum: The al-Sabah Collection* (London: Sotheby Publications and P. Wilson, 1983), p. 40.
5 It is generally accepted by scholars of Islamic art that these objects were produced by Muslim metalworkers or workshops, although there is no clear-cut evidence.
6 Atil, Chase, and Jett , *Islamic Metalwork*, pp. 58–61. Eva Baer, *Metalwork in Medieval Islamic Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), pp. 46–50. J. W. Allan, *Metalwork of the Islamic World: The Aron Collection* (London: Sotheby's, 1986), p. 26. Fehérvári, “Islamic Incense-burners,” pp. 127–141.
7 Allan, *Aron Collection*, p. 26. Fehérvári, “Islamic Incense-burners,” p. 129.
8 Baer, *Metalwork in Medieval Islamic Art*, pp. 48–49.
9 Fehérvári, “Islamic Incense-burners,” pp. 127–41.
10 Allan, *Aron Collection*, p. 26.
11 Allan, *Aron Collection*, p. 26. Atil, Chase, and Jett, *Islamic Metalwork*, pp. 58–61. Atil, *Art of the Arab World*, p. 28.
12 Eva Hoffman describes this concept in “Between East and West: The Wall Paintings on Samarra and the Construction of Abbasid Princely Culture,” *Muqarnas* 25 (2008), pp. 107–132.
13 See the references to cylindrical incense burners in M. Aga-Oglu, “About a Type of Islamic Incense Burner,” *The Art Bulletin* 27 (March 1945), pp. 28–45. A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World, 8–18th Centuries* (London: H.M.S.O., 1982), pp. 31–32.
14 For the classical definition, see Aristotle, *Poetics*, Loeb Classical Library edition (Harvard: University Press, 1960), pp. xxi, 13–26.
15 W. P. Heinrichs, “Metaphor,” in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* 2 (1998), pp. 522–24. S. A. Bonebakker, “Isti'āra,” *Encyclopedia of Islam (EI)* 4 (1978), pp. 248–52.
16 Heinrichs mentions that Abu'Amr b. al-'Ala' (died 770) was the first to use the term *isti'āra*. W. P. Heinrichs, *The Hand of the Northwind* (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Ges, 1977), pp. 10–11. See also Bonebakker, *EI*, pp. 248–52.
17 Bonebakker, *EI*, pp. 248–52.
18 J. S. Meisami, *Structure and Meaning in Medieval Arabic and Persian Poetry* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 319–23. Heinrichs, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, pp. 522–24.

19 Noel Carroll, "Visual Metaphor," in *Aspects of Metaphor*, ed. Jaakko Hintikka (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), pp. 189–218.

20 Carroll has coined the term "homospatiality." Carroll, "Visual Metaphor," p. 198.

21 This evaluation of ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī is mentioned by several scholars. See, for example, Heinrichs, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, p. 524; Bonebakker, *EI*, pp. 248–52; Margaret Larkin, *The Theology of Meaning: ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's Theory of Discourse* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1995), p. 10.

22 Al-Jurjānī, *Asrār al-Balāgha*. Cited in Kamal Abu Deeb, *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1979), p. 68.

23 See, for example, Larkin, *Theology of Meaning*, p. 60.

24 Abu Deeb *Al-Jurjānī's Theory*, p. 78.

25 See, for example, John Onians, "Architecture, Metaphor and the Mind," in *Architectural History* 35 (1992), pp. 192–207.

26 Vildan Serdaroglu, "When Literature and Architecture Met: Architectural Images of the Beloved and Lover in Sixteen-Century Ottoman Poetry," *Muqarnas* 23 (2006), pp. 273–88.

27 J. S. Meisami, "Symbolic Structure in a Poem by Nāsir-i Khusrau," in *Iran* 31(1993), pp. 103–17. This idea is repeated in later poetry as well. See, for example, A. M. Sumi, "Poetry and Architecture: A Double Imitation in the Sīniyyah of Ahmad Shawqī," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 39 (2008), pp. 72–122, esp. p. 75.

28 Translated by J. S. Meisami in *Structure and Meaning*, p. 16.

29 J. S. Meisami, "Palaces and Paradises: Palace Description in Medieval Persian Poetry," *Islamic Art and Literature*, ed. Oleg Grabar and Cynthia Robonson (Princeton: M. Wiener, 2001), p. 42. See also D. F. Ruggles, "Arabic Poetry and Architectural Memory," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993), pp. 171–78.

30 This is a recurring metaphor in classical Arabic poetry. Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, p. 13–15; A. J. Arbery, "Orient Pearls at Random Strung," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1946), pp. 699–712; Joseph Sadan, "Maidens' Hair and Starry Skies," *Israel Oriental Studies* 11 (1991), pp. 57–88, esp. pp. 86–87.

31 Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, pp. 13–15.

32 It should be noted that Persian poetry is derived and developed from traditional Arabic poetry. See Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, p. 31.

33 J. W. Clinton, "Esthetics by Implication: What Metaphors of Craft Tell Us about the 'Unity' of the Persian Qasida," *Edebiyat* 4, no. 1 (1979), pp. 73–96; J. W. Clinton, "Image and Metaphor: Textiles in Persian Poetry," in *Woven from the Soul, Spun from the Heart*, ed. C. Bier (Washington, DC: Textile Museum, 1987), pp. 1–7; Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, pp. 16 – 17 .

34 This appreciation for diversity includes metaphors that were derived from nature, like flowers and animals, and can be seen in the Freer vessel itself, in the variety of animal images on its domes, legs, and handle.

35 Clinton, "Esthetics by *Implication*," pp. 73–96; Clinton, "*Image and Metapho*r," pp. 7–11; Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, pp. 16–17. Sadan, "Maidens' Hair," pp. 64–65.

36 Clinton, "Esthetics by Implication," pp. 73–96; Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, pp. 15–19.

37 See also D. K. Washburn, "Toward a Theory of Structural Style in Art," in *Structure and Cognition in Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1–7.

38 M. S. Simpson, "Narrative Allusion and Metaphor in the Decoration of Medieval Islamic Objects," in *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. H. L. Kessler and M. S. Simpson (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1985), pp. 131–49.

39 See, for example, O. Bush, "The Writing on the Wall: Reading the Decoration of the Alhambra," *Muqarnas* 26 (2009), pp. 119–47 and the bibliography; Valerie Gonzalez, *Beauty and Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris and Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2001), pp. 60–62.

40 W. P. Heinrichs, "lafz and ma'nā" and "ma'nā," *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, pp. 460–61, 504. Vicente Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), pp. 46–54. Sadan, "Maidens' Hair," pp. 62–66.

41 For the exact designations, see W. P. Heinrichs, "badī," *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, (London: Routledge, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 122–23.

42 Heinrichs, *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, p. 523; A. Arazi, "wasf," *EI*, pp. 153–58.

43 Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics*, pp. 9–19.

44 For example, the gold wine bowl from the eleventh century in the British Museum, OA1938.11-12.1. See Rachel Ward, *Islamic Metalwork* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), p. 56, fig. 38. For examples, see Richard Ettinghausen, "The Flowering of Seljuq Art," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 3 (1970), pp. 113–31.

45 Sadan, "Maidens' Hair," pp. 70–71.

46 Sadan, "Maidens' Hair," p. 71.

47 D. J. Wasserstein, "Why Did Arabic Succeed Where Greek Failed? Language in the Near East after Muhammad," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 22 (2003), pp. 257–72.

LAMIA BALAFREJ

SARACEN OR PISAN?

The Use and Meaning of the Pisa Griffin on the Duomo

Abstract
The largest surviving medieval Islamic bronze sculpture, known as the Pisa Griffin, was displayed on the Duomo in Pisa from the Middle Ages until 1828. While it might have been acquired during one of the Pisan campaigns against the Saracens, the traditional interpretation that it was displayed as war booty needs to be reconsidered. The Griffin was placed on the roof of the apse at a time when the Islamic world and the Latin West, despite many war episodes, had not yet been separated into two cultural and epistemological categories. There is little chance that, in the Middle Ages, the Griffin was perceived as a Saracen object whose exhibition would be a sign of Pisa's victory over the Saracens. It is more likely that the display of the sculpture on the Duomo obliterated its Islamic origins and reflected local cultural beliefs. During the same period, a griffin was made in Genoa for the Cathedral of San Lorenzo and an Islamic bronze falcon was transformed into a rooster and mounted on the apse of the church of San Frediano in Lucca. It is within this local context that the use of the Pisa Griffin on the Duomo should be examined.

AS SOON AS ONE HEARS ABOUT THE DISPLAY of the original bronze Griffin on the Duomo in medieval Pisa (see fig. 1), at the same position where its cement copy can be viewed today (fig. 2), the question arises: how did an Islamic object come to be exhibited on a Christian monument in such a prestigious and meaningful position—an act that would cause much controversy today? This question has attracted a lot of attention among historians of Pisa and specialists of Islamic art. It often has been said that the Griffin was displayed as war booty and provided a visual echo to the epigraphic inscriptions on the Duomo that celebrated the victories of the Pisans over the Saracens.[1] As a result, it is now considered a touchstone of the so-called cross-cultural relationships between Islam and the Latin West in the Middle Ages.[2] However, an important aspect of this question needs further study: could the Griffin even be considered Islamic, or more accurately Saracen, in medieval Pisa? This paper focuses on the ways in which the Griffin's display on the Duomo might have reflected the local culture, rather than stressed its origins, whether or not those could be known at the time.

Based on the Griffin's formal and stylistic features and after comparison with other bronze animals, recent studies have attributed its origins to al-Andalus (Islamic Spain), around the eleventh century.[3] Produced (and probably used) somewhere in the Islamic world, it eventually reached Pisa at the latest in the fifteenth century or at the beginning of the sixteenth century, depending on the date of the first-known representation of the Griffin, a marquetry panel on a seat in the Duomo's chancel (fig. 1). In 1552, a new capital was made to support it.[4] Until the

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1
Marquetry panel showing the Duomo and the bending tower of Pisa, late 15th–early 16th century. Photo from: http://piazza.opapisa.it (accessed February 22, 2011).

2
Cement copy of the Griffin above the apse of the Duomo. Photo taken from the Leaning Tower of Pisa by Ayse Ercan.

beginning of the nineteenth century, the Griffin was mentioned and depicted in various images and texts. At the end of the sixteenth century, it was described as an antique Egyptian bronze sculpture, partly because the Arabic inscription that runs around the object was thought to be hieroglyphs.[5] In 1643, Paolo Tronci talked about a big and fierce animal that was caught in the woods and transformed into a bronze statue, thus describing the Griffin as a new Heifer of Myron.[6] At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Giuseppe Martini portrayed it as an animal of the Apocalypse, incorporating Christian symbolism.[7] At the end of that century, Alessandro da Morrona became perhaps the first to climb the Duomo in order to examine the object closely and make a drawing of it (fig. 3). He didn't recognize the Arabic inscription and thought the "hippogriph" was Etruscan or a Roman replica of an Etruscan sculpture.[8] This interpretation reflects the political and cultural tendency in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to praise Pisa as the legitimate rival of Rome throughout history. The Griffin was thought to be, as were the Duomo's antique columns and capitals, a monument that represented the city's glorious past. In 1812, another historian, Sebastiano Ciampi, rejected this interpretation and suggested a medieval Pisan origin.[9] The Griffin was taken down that same year to be restored. It was exhibited in 1828 in the Camposanto, which was turned into a *museo civico*, a museum about Pisa.[10] The Griffin was presented as a local work of art. Its "Oriental" character was discovered in 1829 by Michelangelo Lanci, who was the first to decipher the Arabic inscription.[11] A cross replaced the statue on the apse until 1934, the year a cement copy of the Griffin was made.[12] In 1986, the Griffin was displayed in the Museo dell Opera del Duomo in a room that bears its name and is dedicated to objects of foreign origin.

Primary sources about the Pisa Griffin suggest a history of oblivion: no reference is made to its Islamic origins until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. In addition, the object's cultural and political values have fluctuated considerably over time. These fluctuations happened in different contexts, and they now form layers

3
Ippogrifo di bronzo situato sul comignolo del Duomo di Pisa, verso Levante by Alessandro da Morrona. Drawing, late 18th century. After Alessandro Da Morrona, *Pisa Illustrata nelle Arti del Disegno* (Livorno: G. Marenigh, 1812), vol. 1.

that need to be excavated in order to sketch a "cultural biography," as Igor Kopytoff has proposed.[13] Two significant shifts have been revealed by two symmetrical "gestures" (in the Foucaldian meaning of an act that has deep epistemological implications). The first was the raising of the Griffin to the top of the Duomo, obliterating its Islamic origin at the same time. The second gesture took place centuries later: the relocation of the Griffin in the museum and the beginning of its re-Islamization. This paper focuses on the first of these gestures and seeks to answer the following questions: Under what circumstances did the Griffin arrive in Pisa? Why was it appreciated and adopted? How was it used and redefined?

In the absence of medieval sources that deal directly with the Griffin, it is necessary to consider the context in which the Pisans likely acquired this object. It must have arrived in Pisa during the city's hegemony over Tuscany and the Mediterranean, i.e., the twelfth to the fourteenth century. There is no evidence that the city established any diplomatic or cordial relationships with the Islamic lands: therefore, it is unlikely that the Griffin was a gift. Perhaps it was bought by the Pisans. However, trade between Pisa and the Islamic world involved less precious and more common objects, such as the ceramic vessels called *bacini*.[14] Most scholars believe that the Griffin was war booty, captured by the Pisans during one of their campaigns against the Saracens. Preference is given to the campaigns of the Balearic Islands, which took place between 1113 and 1115. One argument for this is the written sources that mention that war booty from that expedition was the main financial and decorative resource for the Duomo.[15] It can be assumed, then, that the Griffin was set above the apse just before the Duomo's consecration in 1118.

Does the assumption that the Griffin was war booty necessarily imply that it was used to show the supremacy of the Pisans over the Saracens? This presupposes that it was considered, appreciated, and exhibited as a Saracen object, a hypothesis that should not be dismissed.[16] Still, the Griffin also reflected local beliefs. In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault explains that during the Latin Middle Ages, knowledge was based on resemblance: people interpreted alien phenomena in terms of what was familiar.[17] This statement can be used to describe the reactions of medieval Christians to Islam. According to John Tolan and Robert Irwin, most Christians did not consider Islam a new religion but as the variant of an old heresy; indeed, many took no interest in it.[18] In this epistemological context, it is worthwhile to consider that the Griffin would have attracted the attention of Pisans not because of its "otherness" (which is highlighted today in the museum) but because of its similarities to the local culture. What were these similarities? How were they emphasized?

The Griffin was isolated and set apart. Then it underwent an "elevation" that transformed it from a foreign object meant to be seen and admired closely (as its incised decoration indicates) to a work viewed only from afar. Once it was perched

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4
Griffin in white marble, Genoa, 1315. After Enrico Castelnuovo, *Niveo de marmore: l'uso artistico del marmo di Carrara dall'XI al XV secolo* (Genoa: Colombo, 1992), cat. no. 75.

5
Apse of the church of San Frediano in Lucca. Engraving, late 19th century. After Georg Gottfried Julius Dehio and Gustav von Bezold, *Die Kirchliche baukunst des abendlandes* (Stuttgart: J. G. Gotta, 1887–1901), plate 240.

on top of the Duomo, the only characteristics that could be perceived by the spectator were the fact that it was a bronze sculpture of a winged quadruped. What values were associated with these characteristics? The bronze must have recalled Rome and its antique statues, especially since Pisa had the ambition to be the new Rome.[19] Many interpretations could have been associated with the Pisa Griffin, the most popular being that griffins were considered representations of Christ.[20] It was juxtaposed with other symbolic objects around the elliptical dome: the Madonna diametrically opposite and the Pisan crosses on both sides of the transept that give the Duomo a political aura.[21] The Griffin was more than decorative; it also had potential symbolism.

The Griffin must be placed among a particular group of objects: the bronze statues associated with major Christian monuments, especially in two cities that were rivals of Pisa: Genoa and Lucca.[22] Until the beginning of the twelfth century, the cities of Tuscany shared a political history under the rule of the marquisate, whose capital was Lucca, located at some twenty kilometers northeast of Pisa. This era ended in 1115 after the death of Matilda of Tuscany (or of Canossa) and gave way to a new era of independent city-states in northern Italy. Pisa gained power. Lucca struggled to retain her influence but suffered because it had no access to the sea. In every conflict, Lucca joined the side that opposed Pisa. During the Balearic war, Lucca, accompanied by Genoa, withdrew from the expedition in order to affirm its independence. This expedition marked the peak of Pisa's power but also the beginning of its decline and Genoa's rise.

It is within the context of these rivalries that cities erected monuments to embody their religious and political ambitions. In 1227, for example, a bronze griffin was made to adorn the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa. The statue was meant to symbolize the city and its willingness to offer a third option after the papacy, symbolized by the lion, and the empire, symbolized by the eagle. The Genoa griffin was lost or damaged in a fire that destroyed the cathedral in 1297, and a marble copy was made in 1315 (fig. 4).[23] Its original location in the cathedral remains unknown. That the Pisa Griffin was meant to quote or mimic the Genoa griffin, or vice versa, might be impossible to prove, but if it were a victory trophy, it may have celebrated the defeat of the Genovese rather than of the Saracens.

6

7

6
Gilded rooster, 13th century, Lucca, 40 x 20 x 49cm, concealing an Islamic bronze falcon from the 9th or 10th century. Treasury of the Church of San Frediano, Lucca. After Clara Baracchini et al., *Lucca e l'Europa: un'idea di Medioevo, V–XI secolo* (Lucca: Fondazione Ragghianti, 2010), p. 198.

7
Islamic bronze falcon, 9th or 10th century (?)., H: 38cm, Treasury of the Church of San Frediano, Lucca. After Baracchini et al., p. 196.

Lucca tried to reaffirm its power by rebuilding the church of San Frediano in 1112. It might have been in this same context, or a little later, that a gilded bronze rooster was set on top of the church (fig. 5). Did that happen at the same time the Pisa Griffin was placed on the Duomo? In 1960, when Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti examined the rooster closely (fig. 6)—removing the gilded copper plates, the beak and its funnel, and the crest and the tail—he discovered that it covered an Islamic bronze sculpture of a falcon (fig. 7). Thus, the object is identified within Italy as the *gallo-falco*.[24]

Was the falcon dressed up as a rooster to conceal its Islamic provenance? Or was the goal to meet the expectations and beliefs of the sculpture's new cultural and religious environment? As discussed earlier, the second argument fits better within the cultural and political context. Not only did the Islamic falcon have to carry new values, but it also underwent a physical reshaping that can be interpreted as the concrete expression of an abstract shifting of values. The crest and the tail made the object easily recognizable as a rooster. According to Ragghianti, the beak and the funnel were added to make the rooster whistle.

Examples of bronze roosters mounted on top of churches or their bell towers are not rare in Italy. Some of them also emit sounds. In Brescia in the ninth century, Bishop Ramperto commissioned a weather vane made of a gilded plates for the monastery of San Faustino Maggiore.[25] There are also accounts mentioning singing bronze birds in Rome, including a bronze rooster dating from the eighth or ninth century that was placed in the bell tower of San Silvestro in Capite during the twelfth century.[26] The stories told about these objects are not to be taken literally. However, the repetition that occurs in the sources shows that, at a minimum, they were expected to produce sounds. One Latin poem, generally dated between the twelfth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, provides further information about the beliefs surrounding these figures.[27] The poem draws a comparison

8

8
Interior of the Pisa Griffin showing the vessel. Photo by Anna-Maria Carruba.

between the rooster on the church and the priest, implying that the rooster stands as the guardian of the church and more generally of the Christian community. The rooster faces the wind, and its crow is a shield against the devil:

> On the church a rooster faces the wind.
> He raises his head diligently
> Like the priest, he knows when the devil is coming
> And he then intervenes between the flock of sheep …
> The lion usually fears the crow of the rooster
> And the devil flees for the same reason.[28]

The Lucca rooster-falcon sheds light on possible uses of the Griffin and the beliefs and desires that it might have embodied. It demonstrates on the basis of physical evidence that an Islamic object could be redefined and manipulated for that purpose. It shows that a bronze birdlike sculpture located on top of a church could be connected both to the rooster and its religious and apotropaic symbolism and also be expected to produce sounds. It also helps us formulate new questions. Did the Pisans' symbolic manipulation of the Griffin affect only its extrinsic characteristics? Did it have a sound-producing mechanism? In her comprehensive article about the Pisa Griffin, Anna Contadini mentions some written sources that state that the Griffin emitted sounds when it was windy.[29]

Contadini also discovered a bronze vessel welded to the inner surface of the rear of the sculpture, which can still be seen through a big and roughly made aperture in the belly (fig. 8). This discovery made her think that the whole sculpture was an elaborate device for producing sound. It would have contained a bagpipe, with pipes for conducting the air and transforming it into sounds and the vessel serving as the air bag. She considers this function to be the original one. For all the reasons noted earlier and when compared with the Lucca rooster-falcon, a sound-making function fits extraordinarily well within the Pisan context. Given the Griffin's position on top of the Duomo, the wind could blow straight into the hollow body and inside the vessel, which would work as sound boxes, creating two different echoing sounds. The body would emit a low-pitched sound and the vessel a high-pitched one. Concrete examples in written sources of such sound-making bronze objects seem to be more numerous in the Latin West than in the Islamic world. In addition, there was a greater familiarity in the West with the resonant aspect of bronze, as exemplified by its use in bells and organs. Can we assume that the vessel was added by the Pisans? After all, the metallurgical evidence corroborates this hypothesis: according to Peter Northover, the zinc brass used to make the vessel is "entirely dissimilar to the gunmetal of the body."[30]

That the Griffin was physically manipulated in Pisa remains a very speculative scenario. However, we can still enumerate some of the characteristics with which it was likely associated. When we seek the meaning in its use, particularly in the specific context of the Duomo, and examine the political struggles of Pisa against Lucca and Genoa, it appears that the Griffin might not have been perceived as Saracen. In addition, it likely possessed numerous resonances for the Pisan viewer, including its birdlike shape, sound-making potential, political meaning (similar to the Genoa griffin), and Christian and apotropaic values (similar to the Lucca rooster-falcon). This anthropological approach could be confirmed by an epistemological one that still requires an expanded study. The display of the Griffin belongs to a period when the knowledge about Islam had not yet started to develop, that is, to a period when its Islamicity could not be known. And indeed, as shown by the written sources from the Renaissance onward, this Islamicity is a recent discovery, if not a recent construction.

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NOTES

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1 Sources about the Pisan campaigns against the Saracens are numerous. The inscriptions on the walls of the *Duomo* record victories in 1005 in Reggio, 1010 in Sardinia, 1034 in Bona, and 1063 in Palermo; Marco Tangheroni, ed., *Pisa e il mediterraneo* (Pisa: Skira, 2003), p. 407. The epic poem titled *Carmen in victoriam Pisanorum* gives an account of the storming of Mahdiyya and Zawila in 1087; *Carmen in Victoriam Pisanorum* (Pisa: Giardini, 1969), and the *Liber Maiolichinus* records the journey to the Balearic islands in 1113–115; Carlo Calisse, ed., *Liber Maiolichinu, de gestis Pisanorum illustribus* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1966). Although there is no documentary record of this event, the Griffin is said to have been taken to Pisa after one of these campaigns; see for example Marilyn Jenkins, "New Evidence for the Possible Provenance and Fate of the So-Called Pisa Griffin," *Islamic Archaeological Studies* 1 (1982), pp. 79–85. For a discussion of Jenkins's hypothesis of a provenance from Ifriqiya, see Anna Contadini et al., "Beasts that Roared: The Pisa Griffin and the New York Lion," in *Cairo to Kabul: Afghan and Islamic studies presented to Ralph Pinder-Wilson*, ed. Warwick Ball and Leonard Harrow (London: Melisende, 2002), pp. 67–68. For the display of the Griffin as war booty, see Ottavio Banti, "Pisa e l'Islam," in *Arte islamica. Presenze di cultura islamica nella Toscana costiera* (Pisa: Museo di San Matteo, 1995), pp. 31–33; and among historians of Islamic art, see Eva R. Hoffman, "Pathways of Portability : Islamic and Christian interchange from the 10th to the 12th cent.," *Art History*, 1st ser., vol. 24 (February 2001), pp. 17–50.

2 This was particularly the case in recent exhibitions about these relationships in Italy and Europe. See, for example, Giovanni Curatola, ed., *Eredità dell'Islam: arte islamica in Italia* (Milan: Silvana, 1993), pp. 126–31; and Gereon Sievernich et al., *Europa und der Orient 800–1900* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1989), p. 592.

3 The question of its attribution as well as the description of its intrinsic qualities are beyond the scope of this paper. They are discussed by Contadini et al. in "Beasts that roared," pp. 65–68. As a reminder, it is a little more than one meter high and was cast with the lost-wax technique.

4 The capital might be the same one that now supports the cement copy. In the document dated from 1552, in the State Archives of Pisa, the Griffin is called a "hippogriph." For a reproduction and useful comments, see Giovanna Tedeschi Grisanti, "Note sul grifone del duomo di Pisa," *Bollettino storico pisano* 65 (1996), pp. 189–93.

5 Raffaello Roncioni, *Delle Istorie Pisane*, Parte I, Libro III, Anno 1063, in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, vol. 6, ed. Francesco Bonaini (Florence: Gio. Pietro Vieusseux, 1844), p. 114.

6 Paolo Tronci, *Descrizione delle Chiese, Monasteri et Oratori della Citta di Pisa*, Archivio dell'Opera del Duomo, Archivio Capitolare, C152/153 (Pisa, 1643).

7 Giuseppe Martini, *Theatrum Basilicae Pisanae* (Rome: A. de Rubeis, 1705), p. 13.

8 Alessandro da Morrona, *Pisa illustrata nelle arti del disegno* (Pisa: F. Pieraccini, 1787–93), pp. 190–95.
9 Sebastiano Ciampi, *Osservazioni sopra l'opera del sig. Alessandro Da Morrona che ha per titolo Pisa Illustrata nelle Arti del Disegno* (Pisa: Presso Ranieri Prosperi, 1812), pp. 58–68.
10 For the concerns that arose in the nineteenth century about the conservation of the Pisa Griffin and its subsequent transfer to the museum, see Antonio Milone, "Grifone," in *I Marmi di Lasinio: la collezione di sculture medievali e moderne nel Camposanto di Pisa*, ed. Clara Baracchini (Florence: Studio Per Edizioni Scelte, 1993), pp. 143–44.
11 Michelangelo Lanci, *Trattato delle simboliche rappresentanze arabiche e della varia generazione dei musulmani caratteri sopra differenti materie operati*, vol. 2 (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1845–46), pp. 54–58.
12 A number of iconographic and photographic documents showing these changes can be found on http://piazza.opapisa.it (accessed February 22, 2011).
13 Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 64–91.
14 The *bacini* are the Islamic ceramic dishes that were embedded into the façades and towers of Italian churches and also used in a domestic context. See the studies of Graziella Berti, for example, *Le ceramiche medievali e post-medievali* (Florence: All'Insegna del Giglio, 1997).
15 See n. 1.
16 We should not forget that portable objects from Islamic lands had a special prestige in the Latin West. See the often-quoted text of Theophilus Presbyter, a twelfth-century Benedictine monk, who praised the skillful artisans of Arabia, saying that it was very useful to study diligently "whatever Arabia adorns with repoussé or cast work or engravings in relief "; Theophilus Presbyter, *De diversis artibus*, trans. C. R Dodwell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 4.
17 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 19–50. For the original French text, see Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), pp. 32–59.
18 Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2006), esp. pp. 19–53; and John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). See also Richard W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).
19 An eloquent example of literature about Pisa as *Roma altera* is Flaminio Dal Borgo, *Raccolta di scelti diplomi pisani: per appendice dell'istoria dell'origine della decadenza, e per uso delle sue dissertazioni sull'istoria della repubblica pisana* (Pisa: Giuseppe Pasque, 1765), esp. the introduction.
20 Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized: Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West* (Frankfurt, Peter Lang, 1998), p. 297. The fact that it was set on a column probably since the beginning (the column is represented in the marquetry panel in the Chorus) has not been commented on by scholars yet. It reminds us of the iconography of the rooster on the column that is part of the denial of Saint Peter. For a general study of this iconography, see S. A. Callisen, "The Iconography of the Cock on the Column," *The Art Bulletin* 21 (June 1939), pp. 160–78.
21 Antonio Milone was the first to describe this disposition; see "Arabitas pisana e medioevo mediterraneo: relazioni artistiche tra XI e XIII secolo," in *Fibonacci tra arte e scienza*, ed. Luigi Radicati di Bronzolo (Milan: Silvana, 2003), pp. 101–31.
22 A good introduction to these rivalries is Yves Renouard, *Les Villes d'Italie de la fin du Xe siècle au début du XIVe siècle* (Paris: Société d'édition d'enseignement supérieur, 1969).
23 Enrico Castelnuovo, *Niveo de marmore: l'uso artistico del marmo di Carrara dall'XI al XV secolo* (Genova: Colombo, 1992), cat. no. 75.
24 The bronze falcon, certainly of an Islamic origin, has been dated to the ninth or tenth century but still needs further analysis. For a bibliography and a recent study of this object, see Clara Baracchini et al., *Lucca e l'Europa : un'idea di Medioevo, V–XI secolo* (Lucca: Fondazione Ragghianti, 2010), pp. 196–200.
25 Simona Gavinelli, "Il gallo di Ramperto: potere, simboli e scrittura a Brescia nel secolo IX," in *Margarita amicorum: studi di cultura europea per Agostino Sottili*, ed. Fabio Forner et al. (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2005), pp. 401–27.
26 Carlo Bertelli and Gian Pietro Brogiolo, ed., *Il Futuro dei Longobardi : l'Italia e la costruzione dell'Europa di Carlo Magno* (Milan: Skira, 2000), p. 329.
27 It is sometimes known under the title *Comparatio Galli Cum Presbiteri*. It is conserved in a manuscript of the treasury of the Cathedral of Oehringen, no. 3, f. 143v; published in Edélestand du Méril, *Poésies populaires latines du Moyen Age* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1847), pp. 12–16. The translation is mine.
28 Supra ecclesiam positus gallus contra ventum
Caput diligentius erigit extentum
Sic sacerdos ubi scit daemonis adventum

Illuc se obiciat pro grege bidentum ...
Solet leo tremere de galli canore
et fugit diabolus solito de more

29 Contadini et al., "Beasts that roared," p. 69. Unfortunately she doesn't give a precise reference. The known sources that mention the sound aspect of the griffin date from the nineteenth century. See, for example, Jean-Joseph Marcel, "Notice sur un monument arabe conservé à Pise," *Journal asiatique*, 3rd ser., vol. 7 (1839), pp. 81–88.

30 Contadini et al., "Beasts that roared," p. 70.

BERNARD O'KANE

TEXT AND PAINTINGS IN THE AL-WĀSIṬĪ *MAQĀMĀT*

Abstract
The copy of al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt* in the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, arabe 5847, was made by Yaḥyā b. Maḥmūd b. Yaḥyā b. Abi'l-ḥasan b. Kūrrīhā al-Wāsiṭī, who tell us in its colophon that he was responsible for both the calligraphy and the illustrations, and gives us the date, AH 6 Ramadan 634/May 3, 1236 CE. This is a well-known manuscript, having been recognized as one of the masterpieces of Arab painting and Islamic art for more than a century.

The al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt* features three unprecedented pictorial features: first, at least sixteen double-page paintings, each of which represents a single episode in the text; second, one full-page painting with no text; and third, two paintings spread across two open pages with no text. This paper analyzes al-Wāsiṭī's use of text and image and shows that, based on previously unnoticed lacunae, the original manuscript could have had up to ten more paintings in addition to its current number of ninety-nine.

THE COPY OF AL-ḤARĪRĪ'S *MAQĀMĀT* in the Paris Bibliothèque nationale, arabe 5847, is frequently known as the Schefer *Maqāmāt* for the collection from which it was acquired. It seems more appropriate to name it the al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt*, after Yaḥyā b. Maḥmūd b. Yaḥyā b. Abi'l-ḥasan b. Kūrrīhā al-Wāsiṭī, who tell us in its colophon that he was responsible for both the calligraphy and the illustrations, and gives us the date, AH 6 Ramadan 634/May 3, 1236 CE. For more than a century, this well-known manuscript has been recognized as one of the masterpieces of Arab painting and Islamic art.

What is startling about the al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt* is its unprecedented employment of three pictorial features: first, the use of at least sixteen double-page paintings in which a single episode is represented with a few lines of text above and below (usually the same on each page); second, one full-page painting with no text; and third, two paintings spread across two open pages with no text.[1] This paper analyzes these features and others relating to al-Wāsiṭī's use of text and image and shows that the original manuscript could have had up to ten more paintings in addition to the extant ninety-nine.

Prior to the publication of the facsimile, the vast majority of scholars would have been familiar with manuscript only from reproductions in books and articles.[2] Grabar's illustrations,[3] and their reproductions in the other most widely consulted work on the subject, Richard Ettinghausen's *Arab Painting*,[4] usually show only the part of the page that contains the image, leaving the reader to guess how much of the whole page was covered by text and how much by painting. On occasion, a two-page spread was reproduced in other publications,[5] but again, we were left wonder-

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Al-Ḥārith and the crowd, *maqāmā* 2 (f. 6b) and Abu Zayd's arrival, *maqāmā* 3 (f. 7a). All the illustrations in this essay are from al-Ḥarīrī, *Maqāmāt*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *arabe* 5847; after facsimile, *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyya*.

ing how much text might have been omitted. Only in recent times has it become usual to publish full pages in reproductions of Islamic book illustrations.[6]

Where and for whom was the manuscript made? Grabar noted simply that its place of production was unknown.[7] In the preface to the facsimile, he stated that Baghdad was the most obvious choice, although he added, "Nothing in its images provides a clue."[8] This is being unduly coy, however, as the painting of a mosque on folio 164b includes an inscription in the name of al-Mustanṣir, the Abbasid caliph (reigned 1226–42) at the time the manuscript was calligraphed in 1237.[9] It is inconceivable that the manuscript could have been painted anywhere but in this caliph's dominions, and the largest urban center likely to have supported a market in expensive illustrated books was Baghdad.[10] This also raises the question of the potential client for the manuscript, and in particular, its double-page frontispiece, which was the subject of an intensive analysis by Robert Hillenbrand.[11] He plausibly concluded that the right-hand frontispiece was a portrait of a secular ruler, and the left-hand one an author portrait. But there are further implications of this to be considered. Since the clothing of the figure on the right is that of a Turkish official and the manuscript was almost certainly produced in Baghdad, either the Abbasid caliph was wearing then-fashionable Turkish garb (a most unlikely scenario), or al-Wāsiṭī never pinned his hopes on a caliphal sale.

It seems from the colophon that al-Wāsiṭī did not have a patron when he made the book, so he evidently thought that an Arabic-speaking Turkish patron was the most likely buyer. In theory, this could have been an emir at the Abbasid court or one of the atabegs who governed several of the neighboring principalities. The most obvious figure is Badr al-Din Lu'lu', who ruled over Mosul with the approval of the Abbasid caliph from 1234 to 1239, and whose keen interest in book painting was shown by his appearance in Turkish dress in the frontispieces of the *Kitāb al-aghānī* dated 1217–19. He had ruled over Mosul as the vizier of the last Zangids from 1210–11.[12] He was illiterate,[13] and so a highly illustrated copy of the *Maqāmāt* would have been of much greater interest to him than one without paintings.

The possibility that there were up to ten missing paintings derives from the many previously unnoticed lacunae in the text.[14] One complete unillustrated manuscript page has fifteen lines, equivalent to around nineteen lines of Steingass's printed edition of the text[15] (to which the written text in the manuscript conforms closely). Between folios 2 and 3, seventy-four lines of printed text are missing; because $74 \div 19 = 3.9$, one might have assumed that four text pages were missing. However, since there is a definite imprint of paint from a missing illustration on folio 3a—equivalent to at least ten lines, or two thirds of the written text space—then it is likely that six pages and as many as three illustrations are missing.[16] There is another gap of twenty printed lines between folios 29 and 30. This indicates that one unillustrated page is missing, but since the number of missing pages must be even, then two half-page paintings are probably missing. A third gap is between folios 79 and 80; it encompasses twenty-three printed lines, just over one page of manuscript text, indicating that either a nearly full-page painting or, more likely, two smaller ones are missing. The fourth is a gap of twenty-six lines between folios 96b and 97a, equivalent to a page and a half of written text, so another half-page painting must be missing here. A gap between folios 133 and 134 is of twenty lines of printed text, just over one manuscript page; so one full-page painting or, again more likely, two half-page paintings are missing. One was probably on the page facing 133b, since one figure in the group is turned away from the speaker and toward the opposite page. The final gap between folios 156 and 157 is harder to interpret; folio 156 ends eight lines before the end of the *maqāmā*, but folio 157 has seven lines of *tafsīr* (commentary) before the start of the next *maqāmā*. It was common for al-Wāsiṭī to place a painting at the end of a *maqāmā*,[17] but given the uncertain length of the *tafsīr*—several of considerable length (but never illustrated) are included elsewhere[18]—it is unclear how much is missing.[19] It is evident, however, that although there are currently ninety-nine paintings in the manuscript, there may have been as many as 109 originally.

The information in the colophon that al-Wāsiṭī was both calligrapher and painter is significant. All of the paintings seem to be by the same hand so, despite the very considerable labor involved, there is no reason to doubt al-Wāsiṭī's claim. This means that he would have been the one to plan out the number and spacing

2

2
Al-Ḥārith approaches Abu Zayd and his son, *maqāmā* 4, ff. 9b–10a.

of the paintings. In addition, unlike painters whose mistakes can be related to an imperfect understanding of the text or even, if they were illiterate, a poor memory of the story that was narrated to them, we can expect al-Wāsiṭī's choices at all stages to have been deliberate ones.

Given that at least fourteen pages and up to a tenth of the paintings are missing, we do not have complete information on the original manuscript layout, so the following is based on what remains. How did al-Wāsiṭī signal to the viewer that two paintings on a double page were to be read as one scene? It seems most likely that he wished this to be an automatic response. Perhaps we can take the single clear exception first, the two paintings executed on folios 6b–7a (fig. 1). There could be no possibility of confusion here, as the caption that announces the beginning of *maqāmā* 3 is clearly visible, in large gold letters, just three lines below the painting on folio 6b. The painting on folio 6b obviously belongs to *maqāmā* 2, and that on 7a to *maqāmā* 3. In fact, the remainder of the sixteen occasions in which double-page paintings were originally present with text should be interpreted as one scene split over the two pages, rather than as two illustrations of two separate incidences within the text. In thirteen of these,[20] the exact same number of lines of text appear above and below the painting on each side, a clear visual clue for simultaneity. The remaining three[21] are almost identical; we will examine the reasons for their different treatment.

In *maqāmā* 4, folios 9b–10a (fig. 2), after a caravan comes to rest, al-Ḥārith overhears a man and his son discussing the proper way to treat others. "Before the camels had risen," he searched for the speakers, finding Abu Zayd and his son. The paintings show the caravan asleep on the right, and al-Ḥārith encountering Abu Zayd and his son on the left. The break line[22] of the painting on the left is at the point where father and son are still talking; had al-Wāsiṭī wanted this painting to be interpreted as a separate scene he would more likely have placed it on the following page, beside the text that specified the meeting.[23]

Folios 18b–19a (fig. 3) are from *maqāmā* 7,[24] when al-Ḥārith visits a mosque to celebrate the feast at the end of Ramadan. There, an old woman leads a man whose

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3
The celebration of Eid al-Fitr, *maqāmā* 7, ff.18b–19a.

4
Abu Zayd and his son before pilgrims, *maqāmā* 14, ff. 37b–38a.

eyes are closed (he turns out to be Abu Zayd faking blindness). Surprisingly, in the painting his eyes are open, a strange lapse on the part of al-Wāsiṭī,[25] although he is shown convincingly leaning on the shoulder of the woman for guidance. The *ṭabl-khāna* orchestra, not mentioned in the text but appropriate for the occasion of the feast, takes up the left-hand page.[26]

Folios 37b–38a (fig. 4) have an unequal number of lines above and below the painting on each side: 37b has three above and two below, 38a has two above and one below. Yet a glance is sufficient to confirm that they illustrate one scene. The story is from *maqāmā* 14, a straightforward one in which Abu Zayd and his son appear before pilgrims at Mecca and are granted the camel and food they ask for. The space allotted to the painting is virtually the same on each side; the horizontal registers match exactly. On each page, the interactive glances of the figures toward

5

6

5
Abu Zayd recovers his bag, *maqāmā* 16, ff. 43b–44a.

6
Abu Zayd flees from a glass vase, *maqāmā* 18, ff. 47b–48a.

their counterparts on the other side reinforce the monoscenic aspect of the scene. The left-hand page corresponds to the end of the *maqāmā*, and so al-Wāsiṭī could afford to be more generous with the spacing: the larger script below the painting is the caption for the following *maqāmā* that begins on folio 38b. The finial at the top of the tent of folio 38a compensates for the use of one line less above the painting than on the page opposite.

In *maqāmā* 16, al-Wāsiṭī exploited the full dramatic possibilities of the double-page scheme (folios 43b–44a, fig. 5). Abu Zayd, after composing palindromes for a group in a mosque, promises to return to the company after he has delivered their gifts of food to his children. However, the boy sent with him relates that when Abu Zayd reached his home he took his bag and refused to return. The scene on the left shows him wrestling with the boy for possession of the bag, and the one on the

7

7
Abu Zayd rides away from the crowd, *maqāmā* 18, ff. 50b–51a.

right depicts people gesturing in surprise. The passage related to the taking of the bag is on the next page (folio 44b), but neither this nor the fact that the group in the mosque couldn't observe this scene mattered to al-Wāsiṭī. He decided that the most dramatic rendering of the *maqāmā* meant that both events had to be viewed simultaneously.

Folios 47b–48a (fig. 6) each have the same architectural framework, which serves to unify the scene. There has been some confusion regarding the scene's interpretation. The story (*maqāmā* 18) revolves around a feast at which Abu Zayd shies away from a glass vase, but is persuaded to stay once the vase is removed. Grabar suggested that the scene on the right represented the glass vase as well as Abu Zayd jumping up to complain about it, and possibly that the left page showed the dish being sent away and Abu Zayd being asked to return.[27] The difficulty with this, as Grabar remarked, is that a sequential approach is not typical of al-Wāsiṭī.[28] In fact, it would not just be atypical, it would be unprecedented. And although it is not unknown for al-Wāsiṭī to represent his protagonist with a black beard (as seen in folio 47b), he is much more often depicted with a white one, as on the left page. The story calls for the offending dish to be filled with sweetmeats (*naʿīm*), but the dish on folio 47b contains fowl such as chickens or quails. More likely we have a general depiction of the feast on folio 47b, with two servants distributing the food in the background, while on folio 48a Abu Zayd recoils from the green vase. To illustrate the text there was no need for the painting on folio 47b; al-Wāsiṭī included it simply to further our entertainment.

Later in *maqāmā* 18, Abu Zayd rides away from the crowd, having been given presents of silver dishes that were substituted for glass ones (folios 50b–51a, fig. 7). Al-Wāsiṭī's problem was how to accommodate human figures on one side with the much taller image of a figure on a camel on the other. Altering the number of lines above the painting on each side was the answer, a solution that could be accommodated easily as this was the very end of the story.

Folios 74b–75a (fig. 8) from *maqāmā* 25 present a different problem. The illustration is supposed to show Abu Zayd, dressed in nothing but a turban and a loin-

8

8
Abu Zayd begs for clothing, *maqāmā* 25, ff. 74b–75a.

cloth, addressing a crowd. Instead, the crowd, to the left and right, looks toward a tower whose interior is black, the presumed location of Abu Zayd.[29] It was hardly prudery that prevented al-Wāsiṭī from depicting the nearly naked man; in *maqāmā* 20 he is shown displaying his genitals.[30] The two figures on the right of the tower obviously have been mostly repainted, and a visible line of damage extends into the side of the tower. The person responsible for repainting, presumably not understanding the iconography of the scene, evidently decided that it was simpler to blacken out the entire interior than to repaint Abu Zayd.

The third example in which a double-page painting has lines above and below it that differ on each side occurs in *maqāmā* 32 (folios 100b–101a, fig. 9). The left-hand scene is the familiar one[31] of a woman (actually a singing girl who has been presented to Abu Zayd) with a herd of camels; the right-hand one shows Abu Zayd pointing out his presents to his friend al-Ḥārith. It almost seems as if al-Wāsiṭī miscalculated here. With one text line missing, there is a slightly bigger space on the left than on the right, which is not surprising, as one would expect the camel herd to take up more space than the figures. But in the paintings the opposite has happened. Al-Wāsiṭī extends the tree between the figures on the right to fill up the gap that would have otherwise have resulted between the text above. There is an even bigger gap on the opposite side. Al-Wāsiṭī probably originally envisioned drawing fewer camels, which would have enabled him to make them taller. But his memorable composition of ten animals, rhythmically arranged on a single horizon, must have been more satisfying to him, even if it meant he had to leave a gap by proportionally reducing the camels' height.

In *maqāmā* 39 (folios 120b–121a, fig. 10) al-Ḥārith and Abu Zayd, on board a ship, take refuge on an island and explore it to find provisions, eventually arriving at the ruler's palace. Ostensibly, here the order is reversed (reading right to left), as the boat should have docked on the island (which is depicted on the left) before the encounter at the palace took place (which is on the right). But al-Wāsiṭī is not interested in a sequential interpretation. When the figures arrive at the palace the boat is simultaneously visible (on the left of the page) at the place where it had previously

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9
Abu Zayd points out his presents to al-Ḥārith, *maqāmā* 32, ff. 100b–101a.

10
Al-Ḥārith and Abu Zayd arrive at the ruler's palace, *maqāmā* 39, ff. 120b–121a.

docked, providing an appropriate complement to the architectural scene. Al-Wāsiṭī also shows his independence from the text by adding creatures that inhabit the island—monkeys, birds, a sphinx, and a harpy—none of which is mentioned in the original text.[32]

This independence is shown in many other ways,[33] most importantly by the two double-page paintings (folios 155b–156a, fig. 11) and the single-page painting, all without text. The latter was justly celebrated by Ettinghausen[34] for its portrayal of village life—a tableau, it may be emphasized, that is not occasioned by any detail in the text.

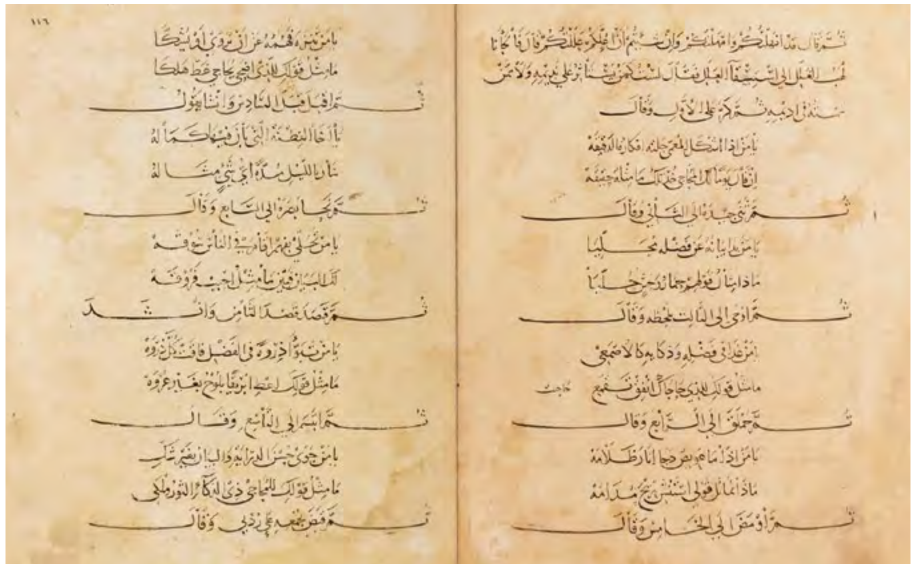
Where did al-Wāsiṭī get the idea for the double-page paintings? This was investigated in depth by David James, who pointed to an earlier example of what he calls "lateral expansion," where text surrounds the paintings on both sides: the

11

11
Abu Zayd addresses the crowd, *maqāmā* 47, ff. 155b–156a.

Kitāb al-Baytara, dated to AH 606/1210 CE.[35] James also speculated that two other *Maqāmāt* manuscripts with examples of "lateral expansion," although dated later than the al-Wāsiṭī example, could reflect earlier models.[36] Whether or not they do, we are not concerned with crediting al-Wāsiṭī with the invention of the double-page painting surrounded by text. What he did was to employ it systematically in a totally unprecedented manner, in at least sixteen instances. In addition, the single-page painting without text and the two double-page paintings without text are also unprecedented for their time. It is surprising that this had no effect on the subsequent development of Arab painting; al-Wāsiṭī's innovations evidently were too radical for their time. Persian painting developed on independent lines, with a gradual expansion of the picture into and beyond the text space in the fourteenth century; only at the beginning of the fifteenth century, in works produced under the patronage of Iskandar Sultan in Shiraz, did double full-page paintings appear.

Al-Wāsiṭī's paintings demonstrate varied and complex responses to the text; but what inspired him and others to illustrate it in the first place? This vexed question was recently revisited by David Roxburgh,[37] who noted that Rice, Ettinghausen, James, and Grabar all commented on the text's meager illustrative potential. Roxburgh counters by suggesting that the visuality of the written text, such as al-Ḥariri's palindromic sentences and sentences written entirely without diacritical marks, "was a sufficiently adequate visual manifestation to obviate pictorial attempts at literal translation of al-Ḥariri's ingenious and arcane literary meanings."[38] It is certainly true that al-Wāsiṭī, the calligrapher, was alive to the visual possibilities of



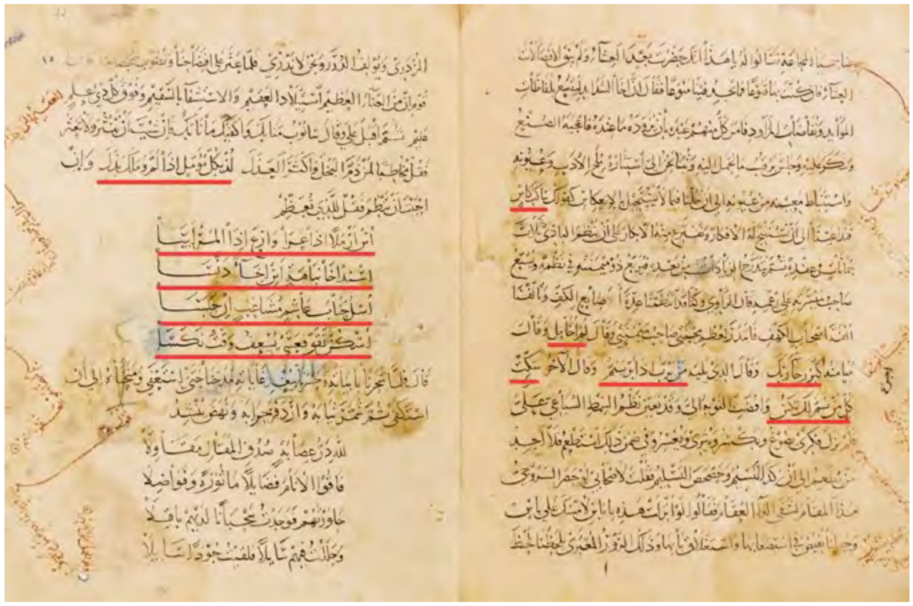
12

12
Maqāmā 36, ff. 111b–112a.

patterning the poems that are sprinkled among the prose (folios 111b–112a, fig. 12), and his sensitivity to the visuality of the text is emphasized by the extraordinary zigzag patterning in red ink in the margins that he frequently employed for the commentary (figs. 5, 6). But his response to palindromes, as in figure 13, for instance, was to treat them as normal prose where they occurred (even to the extent of breaking one short palindrome at the end of one line and continuing it on the next). Had any such visual patterning of the text been paramount, one would have thought it unlikely for the text to have been provided with paintings, and even less likely that al-Wāsiṭī's *Maqāmāt* would become the most popular illustrated medieval Arabic text. Roxburgh claims that what he refers to as the red herring of the word/image conundrum has persisted through the modern critical reception of the text: "Though early literary historians favoured its verbal acrobatics and learned language, recent approaches to the fifty *maqamas* have restored the importance of narrative and also suggested a thematic coherence across the assemblies."[39]

In his preface, al-Ḥariri himself tells us that he purposefully structured the assemblies as if they were from the tongue of Abu Zayd, as related by al-Ḥārith, and that "whenever I change the pasture[40] I have no purpose but to inspirit the reader, and to increase the number of those who shall seek my book."[41] He was obviously well aware of the value of this narrative artifice; later on in the preface he wishes that the intelligent "will rank these Assemblies in the order of useful writings, and class them with the fables that relate to brutes and lifeless objects."[42] This is a clear reference to *Kalila and Dimna*, another very popular illustrated early Arabic storybook.[43]

But we really don't need the musings of literary theorists to tell us why this text or any other was illustrated so often. Al-Ḥarīrī's opinion is one matter, but more important for our purposes is the view of those responsible for deciding which manuscripts would be illustrated. Given the lack of court-sponsored ateliers in the Arab world, we have to ask whether commercial ateliers, or calligraphers and painters like al-Wāsiṭī, sat around pondering which contemporary texts had the narrative qualities best suited to advertise their pictorial storytelling skills.[44] Obviously a certain minimum narrativity is necessary; there are no illustrated gram-



13

13
Maqāmā 16, , ff. 42b–43a. Underlining in red added to palindromes.

mar books. But historical texts, such as al-Ṭabarī for instance, are full of discrete incidents that could easily have been illustrated.[45] So what made ateliers or artists pick the *Maqāmāt* so frequently? The simple answer is that it was the best seller of its age, with more than seven hundred copies of the text authorized by al-Ḥariri during his lifetime.[46] A calligrapher, taking the risk of copying a work on his own initiative, knew that he was more likely to make a sale of this manuscript. A skilled painter, on his own or in a workshop, was aware of what his skills contributed to a manuscript, adding value that would be more than compensated for in the profit from the increased selling price. Not only was the chance of a sale of an illustrated manuscript greatly increased by the demand for the text, it was the demand in the first place that determined the likelihood of its being illustrated.

To summarize, al-Wāsiṭī's place in art history and his pictorial skills have been justly celebrated. His paintings, often contained within striking compositions, combine mastery of observation—from the squirming unease of the judge in the presence of the bee-stung lips and plump cheeks of his would-be adolescent conquest (folio 26a)[47] to the wrinkled necks of camels (fig. 9)—and details of daily life that have been mined for contemporary social history.[48] But his status as a pioneer in the mise-en-page of text and image should be equally feted, as he was the first to incorporate a single-page painting devoid of text within a manuscript and to make extensive use of double-page paintings, with and without text. That these innovations were evidently too radical for his time, only becoming common much later in Persian painting, does not make his achievement any less exciting.

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NOTES

1 Frontispieces with these characteristics are common, but not paintings within manuscripts. A considerable part of what I discuss in this paper is not new, or at least is not new to some specialists of Arab painting, but it can be argued that it has not had the emphasis that it deserves. David James, "Space-Forms in the Work of the Baghdād 'Maqāmāt' Illustrators, 1225–58," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37 (1974), pp. 305–20, commented on many features on which I will elaborate, but his article has been strangely neglected. It was omitted from the bibliography of Oleg Grabar's magnum opus, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat* (Chicago and London, 1984), although it is referred to in the text; it does feature in the much shorter bibliography attached to Grabar's introduction to the facsimile of the al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt* published in 2003: *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyya,* 2 vols., introduction by Oleg Grabar (London, 2003). I am grateful to Jere Bacharach for his comments on an earlier version of my paper.

2 Few have turned the pages of the original; if my experience is anything to go by, it was normally suggested that even scholars familiar to the manuscript department of the Bibliothèque nationale should make do with a color microfilm of the manuscript, an acute barrier to appreciation of the simultaneity of its double-page paintings.

3 In *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, he published all of its paintings, albeit in the difficult-to-use microfilm format.

4 Richard Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (New York, 1977).

5 For example, Gaston Migeon, *Manuel d'art musulman*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1927), p. 125, fig. 11.

6 See, for example, the double-page spread, reproducing the complete two pages, of ff. 18b–19a of the al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt* in *L'Art du livre arabe: du manuscript au livre d'artiste*, exh. cat., Bibliothèque nationale de France, ed. Marie-Geneviève Guesdon and Annie Vernay-Nouri (Paris, 2001), pp. 134–35.

7 Grabar, *Illustrations*, p. 10: "… it is safer at this stage simply to assume that we do not know where Paris 5847 was made."

8 *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyya*, p. 17.

9 This was first noted by Bishr Farès, as Grabar pointed out in *Illustrations*, p. 169, n. 12.

10 The only other option would be Mosul, but in this *Maqāmāt* the absence of the red background characteristic of Mosul painting is just one of the stylistic reasons for preferring Baghdad.

11 "The Schefer Ḥarīrī: A Study in Islamic Frontispiece Design," in *Arab Painting: Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts*, ed. Anna Contadini (Leiden and Boston, 2007), pp. 117–34.

12 E. Honigmann and C. E. Bosworth, "al-Mawṣil," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, accessed September 10, 2011, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/.

13 Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, trans. C. E. J. Whitting as *Al Fakhri on the Systems of Government and the Moslem Dynasties, Composed by Muhammad Son of 'Ali Son of Tabataba, Known as the Rapid Talker, May God Have Mercy on Him* (London, 1947), p. 15. I owe this reference to the kindness of Teresa Fitzherbert.

14 One must also note that an apparent open page with two paintings on ff. 117b–118a is misleading, as f. 117 is bound out of order; it should follow what is now f. 118. Similarly, f. 125 (with one painting) belongs before the unillustrated f. 124.

15 F. Steingass, *The Assemblies of Harîrî: Student's Edition of the Arabic Text with English Notes, Grammatical, Critical and Historical* (London, 1897).

16 Before it entered the Bibliothèque nationale, Arabic numerals in heavy black ink denoted the foliation; but they must be relatively late, since they also note lacunae. The Arabic f. 1 starts on the BN f. 2; on the Arabic f. 2 is written: 2, 3, 4, 5, and on the next page f. 6, indicating that whoever foliated it had also determined that three folios are missing. The Arabic foliation similarly writes the missing folios in addition to the current one at the parts where folios are missing, except in the case of the gap between ff. 133–34; in the Arabic, f. 137 is followed by f. 139. This tells us that it lost a further page after the Arabic foliation took place, but unfortunately there is no evidence as to when this might have been.

17 *Maqāmās* 2, 4, 5, 14, 17, 20, 25, 26, 28, 29, 42, and 49.

18 That is, ff. 54a–55b, 70b–74b, 81a–84b, 113a–114b, 126b–130a, 143b–145b.

19 The person responsible for the Arabic foliation, referred to above, wrote 161, 162 at the top of the BN f. 157a, indicating that he thought only one page was missing.

20 Folios 9b–10a, 18b–19a, 30b–31a, 43b–44a, 47b–48a, 52b–53a, 55b–56a, 63b–64a, 74b–75a, 91b–92a, 94b–95a, 120b–121a, 139b–140a.

21 Folios 37b–38a, 50b–51a, 100b–101a.

22 The concept of the break line—which comes immediately before a painting in a manuscript and in Persian manuscripts usually corresponds very closely to the subject of the painting—is discussed in Farhad Mehran, "The Break-line Verse: The Link between Text and Image in the 'First Small' *Shahnama*," *Shahnama Studies* 1, ed. Charles Melville (Cambridge 2006), pp. 151–70.

23 The painting takes up about nine lines of text; even if the painting on f. 10a had been replaced by text, the point in the text that mentions the meeting of al-Ḥārith and Abu Zayd would still have been on f. 10b.

24 The left-hand side at least is well known, having been published separately by Ettinghausen in *Arab Painting*, p. 118.

25 As noted by Grabar, *Illustrations*, p. 37.

26 James, "Space-Forms," p. 309.

27 Ibid., p. 59.

28 Ibid.

29 Grabar, *Illustrations*, p. 71, claims that Abu Zayd is shown in the tower, but omits to mention that he is invisible in this instance.

30 Folio 57a.

31 Reproduced in Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, p. 117.

32 Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, p. 123, also noted that the scene is largely the creation of the painter's imagination.

33 D. S. Rice pointed out how al-Wāsiṭī's painting of the entombment in *maqāmā* 11 should come at the beginning of the story, but appears at the end of Abu Zayd's recital, much later in the text: "The Oldest Illustrated Arabic Manuscript?," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 22 (1959), p. 217. James, "Space-Forms," p. 314, notes several similar examples where al-Wāsiṭī placed the painting independently of the associated text.

34 *Arab Painting*, pp. 115–17.

35 "Space-Forms," p. 309.

36 These are the British Library, London, ms Or. 1200, and the John Rylands Library, Manchester, ms Ar. 680. The former is dated AH 654/1256 CE; despite the poor quality of its paintings, it has been recognized as copying an earlier tradition (Grabar, *Illustrations*, pp. 12–13). James notes ("Space-forms," p. 311, n. 15) that on paleographic grounds the Rylands copy has been assigned to the early thirteenth century; it contains two dates, both notes added to the text; one AH 1044/1634–35 CE, the other Rabiʿ I 26, for which AH 626/1228 CE has been suggested. The original illustrations have been repainted. Grabar, *Illustrations*, p. 16, considers that the thirteenth-century date must also be a later addition and that some of its paintings copied a work like the al-Wāsiṭī *Maqāmāt*.

37 David Roxburgh, "Books of Stars, Mechanical Devices, and Maqamat and Animal Fables: Image and Genre in Medieval Arabic Manuscripts," *Hadeeth ad-Dar* 30 (2009), pp. 2–7. This is a transcription of a talk given in Kuwait by the author, who did not have the chance to proofread it before its publication. It may therefore not quite accurately represent his views, but rather than be accused of ignoring it, I thought it preferable to respond to some of its provocative ideas.

38 Ibid., p. 5.

39 Ibid., p. 6.

40 In other words, specify a different setting.

41 Thomas Chenery, *The Assemblies of al Ḥarîri, Translated from the Arabic, with an Introduction and Notes, Historical and Grammatical* (London and Edinburgh, 1867), p. 106.

42 Ibid., p. 107.

43 Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London, 2003), pp. 27–32.

44 In planning the illustrations, al-Wāsiṭī obviously would have thought about which stories offered the most interesting narrative possibilities, tempered by a wish to have paintings spread more or less evenly throughout the text; there is unfortunately not space here to explore this further, and the missing pages and paintings make it somewhat speculative.

45 See Raya Shani, "A Pictorial Representation of the *Ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* in an Ilkhanid Copy of Balʿami's *Tarjuma-yi tarikh-i Tabari* in the Freer Gallery," in

The Iconography of Islamic Art: Studies in Honour of Robert Hillenbrand, ed. Bernard O'Kane (Edinburgh, 2005), pp. 285–308. However, the tradition of illustrating historical texts never emerged in the Arab world, despite its popularity in the Iranian (and later Mughal and Turkish) world from the early fourteenth century onward.

46 In Iranian painting, the *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī—with a much less action-packed text than the *Shahnama* (think of the repetitions of Bahrām Gūr in different colored pavilions in many manuscripts)—was almost as frequently illustrated, simply because of the quality and popularity of its poetry.

47 Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, p. 114.

48 Shirley Guthrie, *Arab Social Life in the Middle Ages: An Illustrated Study* (London, 1995).

وششماه زمستان واگر آفتاب مسامت راس شدی شش ماه نبات
وحیوان بکلی تلف شدی از غایت حرارت وهمچنین اگر از سمت
راس ششماه دور شدی از غایت برودت هلاک شدی وثخن فلک
آفتاب وآن مسافت مابین سطح اعلی وسطح اسفل باشد سیصد هزار
وپنجاه وپنج هزار ونهصد وشصت میل است واین صورت فلک اوست

فصل فی خاصیت الشمس بدانکه آفتاب را نیز اعظم خوانند
ومنجمان گویند که او ملک کواکبست وقمر وزیر وعطارد کاتب
او ومریخ صاحب جیش ومشتری قاضی وزحل خزانه دار وزهره
خنیاگر وخدمتکار افلاک اقالیم وبروج شهرها ودرجات دیهها
ودقایق محلتها وثوابت منزلها واین تشبیه خوبست وازعجایب

KARIN RÜHRDANZ

BETWEEN ASTROLOGY AND ANATOMY

Updating Qazwīnī's ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt *in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Iran*

1
Orbit of the sun, fol. 26b.

All works are Zakariyāʾ b. Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī, *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt*, 1545. Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ms Per. 212. ©The Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.

Abstract
Zakariyāʾ b. Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī's *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt,* written by Murshid *al-kātib* al-Shīrāzī and dated AH 952/1545 CE (now in the Chester Beatty Library as Ms Per. 212), attracted attention early on because of the quality of its calligraphy and its rich illustration and illumination. The effort invested in its artistic value was part of a broader attempt to create a copy that could fulfill its function as a compendium of natural history better than previous Shiraz manuscripts had done. Information lost in the streamlining process of commercial production at the end of the fifteenth century was regained and additional knowledge provided. The reworking adds another facet to the treatment of such unstable texts as Qazwīnī's compendium. Its ambiguous character exhibits some parallels with developments that can be observed in the compilation of knowledge on nature in sixteenth-century Europe.

MANUSCRIPT PER. 212 IN THE CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY in Dublin, which contains Zakariyāʾ b. Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī's *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt* in the second Persian adaptation,[1] has been known to scholars since its presentation at the famous Burlington House Exhibition of Persian Art in 1931.[2] The subsequent catalogue by Binyon, Wilkinson, and Gray included a short description of the manuscript, reproduced eight of its illustrations,[3] and commented, "This manuscript … would be hard to parallel for variety, sustained fertility of invention, and the delightful ease and humour of the animal-drawing."[4] In the chapter on sixteenth-century provincial schools in his book on *Persian Painting,* Basil Gray later singled it out as one of only two manuscripts to represent Shiraz painting.[5] About the same time, the second volume of the catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library was published, providing a thorough description of the manuscript accompanied by seventeen of its illustrations.[6] This created a solid base for further research. Basil Robinson took care to incorporate it into the 1967 exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum.[7] Then, with the taxonomic work largely completed, interest in the manuscript withered away.

A thorough analysis of the manuscript presents some intriguing questions. What was the place of compendia of natural history within manuscript production in early Safavid Iran? What were desirable updates of its content in the eyes of a mid-sixteenth-century reader? How, in practice, did Shiraz workshops approach the task of delivering an authentic and updated book on natural history? And more general, what does the manuscript tell us about the treatment of unstable texts?[8]

The Chester Beatty manuscript dated AH 952/1545 CE is the only copy of Qazwīnī's *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* signed in the colophon by Murshid *al-kātib*

2

2
Figure of planet Mars, fol. 34a.

al-Shīrāzī, called ʿAṭṭār.[9] Whatever one may assume about how many people are hidden behind this label, the fact remains that among the about sixty-five manuscripts[10] connected to the name, only this one contains Qazwīnī's work. Furthermore, Per. 212 is one of not more than four illustrated *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* manuscripts extant from the first half of the sixteenth century.[11] This stands in sharp contrast to the Turkman manuscripts of the late fifteenth century, which number at least eleven copies.[12] Although the output of illustrated manuscripts from Shiraz dropped in the first quarter of the sixteenth century—only about half the number of such manuscripts were produced compared to the last quarter of the fifteenth century[13]—the reduction is more pronounced with respect to the *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt*: eleven illustrated copies in the last quarter of the fifteenth century compared to two copies in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

The four Safavid manuscripts produced over the first half of the sixteenth century are distinct from each other to an extent that cannot be observed when comparing the many Turkman copies. There, the number of illustrations obviously grew or shrank in accordance with the aim to offer decorated books at different levels of artistic effort and price, whereas preferences for particular chapters or topics remained stable within the group. The more pronounced differences among the few early Safavid *ʿAjāʾib* manuscripts point to a shift from supplying an anonymous market to relying on commission, most probably for all four copies and surely for Per. 212. Shedding the habits of the late-fifteenth-century Shiraz workshop production, however, was a slow process.

Through the changes introduced into the text, the second Persian adaptation had been closer tied to *adab* literature.[14] This may, in part, account for the work's success with the commercial workshops in Shiraz. At the same time, it would diminish its appeal to customers who were primarily interested in information on natural history phenomena. In addition, the artists' training in epic illustration favored narrative images shaped by the decorative and associative character of Shiraz painting of that period. This transformed the cycle of illustrations in the Turkman manuscripts. In the first *maqāla* on the heavens, through replacement of astronomical figures by astrological symbols[15] and omission of explanatory diagrams, the illustrations no longer conformed to Qazwīnī's descriptions. In the second *maqāla* on sublunar phenomena, selective illustration resulted in the disruption of the originally regular relation between keyword and image in the chapters on plants and animals. If one adds to this the poor copying of blatantly deteriorated models and disarranged chapters, mixed-up entries, and misspelled names,[16] one must suspect that the upheavals following the Safavid conquest of Shiraz (1503) were not the only reason for the drop in demand of illustrated *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* manuscripts. To a certain degree, the workshops themselves may have spoiled the market with their careless execution of copies.

The first signs of change can already be spotted in the St. Petersburg *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt*. It was copied by Naʿīm al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Munʿim ad-Dīn al-Auḥadī al-Ḥusaynī[17] in AH 920/1514–15 CE and has 491 illustrations in a "proto-Safavid" style.[18] Still, the manuscript followed the Turkman models in all (even the copying of a disarranged text) but one point: it shows how the link between entry and image was largely restored. Alas, this did not result in improved visual information in the plant chapter, because the tiny illustrations repeat the same kind of stylized plants again and again. Simultaneously, following the lead of the Turkman cycle and paying more attention to story illustration, new narrative subjects were explored.

With the Dublin manuscript of 1545, a thorough reworking of the illustrated *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* was achieved. Its most visible aspect is the return of some elements belonging to the original illustrative cycle of the second Arabic redaction,[19] but without producing stylistic archaisms. As far as its artistic appearance is concerned, the manuscript well fits the period of time indicated by the date in the colophon. Stylistically, it has most in common with manuscripts such as the *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī of AH 955/1548 CE in the Freer Gallery and the *Majālis al-ʿushshāq* of AH 959/1552 CE in the Bodleian Library.[20] Many of the paintings make use of the full width of the written surface (18.5 by 9.1 cm [figs. 2 and 6]), and a considerable number of pictures extends into the margins (figs. 3 and 4). Together with the written surface, they are usually enclosed in a broad multicolored frame that became fashionable about the middle of the sixteenth century in Shiraz.[21]

Whereas no attempt was made to lend an antiquarian appearance to the manuscript, some effort was spent on recreating authenticity and adding information. In the first *maqāla*, the diagrams visualizing the orbits of the planets, the phases of the moon, eclipses, and so on, surface again (fig. 1). Several constellations regain their astronomical shape and some information on their individual stars. The transformation back to astronomical images remains incomplete, however, falling short of a clear break with astrological representation. The stations of the moon, which had been visually neglected in the Persian manuscripts, are again represented by arrangements of stars, as was the case in the Munich manuscript of 1280.[22] This in particular indicates that a manuscript of the second Arabic redaction was most probably on hand to check and correct the illustrative cycle of the Persian copy.

If this was so, the Arabic text was not taken into account: no attempt at reintegrating textual information lost in the second Persian adaptation has been detected. The Persian text, in contrast, was checked during the process of copying, as an example shows. Qazwīnī's chapter on the Sun contains a sentence reading, "and now in our time, that is the year.…" Here, the first Arabic redaction has AH 661/1262–63 CE, the second AH 678/1280 CE, while the second Persian adaptation for some reason (most probably an early mistake) usually relates AH 658. This unreliable date is kept in the Dublin manuscript, but it is mentioned as a moment of the past.

The second *maqāla* also testifies to the effort to regain the didactic-informative character of Qazwīnī's work. Nearly every plant and animal is depicted, and the quality of the illustrations mostly provides for a true contribution to knowledge on the described object (fig. 6). Chapters on the oceans, with their islands and strange inhabitants of land and sea, and on Earth, with entries on marvelous mountains, rivers, fountains, and wells, are frequently and originally illustrated (fig. 4). Whereas Turkman illustrations of the chapter favored subjects for which the compositional models could be directly transferred from epics, the Dublin manuscript abounds in pictures particular to the Qazwīnī text that display the rich artistic imagination and the humor earlier noticed by Gray. These illustrations testify to the capability of the artists as well as to the attention they paid to nearly all of the 529 subjects depicted.

Of special interest are two interpolations. One appears on folios 228b–229a in the section on the parts of the human body, where two anatomical diagrams are found.[23] The skeleton (fol. 228b [fig. 5]) appropriately falls at the end of the description of bones.[24] The second diagram on folio 229a depicting a pregnant woman would have been better located in the short preceding passage on conception, pregnancy, and delivery (fols. 225a–226b). The diagrams are obviously based upon the series of five or six diagrams in the *Tashrīḥ al-insān* of Manṣūr b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yūsuf b. Ilyās.[25] The absence of text in these folios also follows the *Tashrīḥ al-insān,* where they always fill the entire page and are kept together at the end of the manuscripts. The fact that the interpolation just comprises the first and the last

3

4

3
The leaders of seven kinds of angels, fol. 71b.

4
The fabulous creatures on the island of Zābij, fol. 108b.

diagram of the series allows speculation as to whether two folios containing the four other diagrams may have been lost between folios 228 and 229.

This is the first time that the physical description of the human being in the *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* is accompanied by anatomical diagrams.[26] It must have happened on special request by the patron, who missed the visual information in this chapter of Qazwīnī's text. Interpolation of the *Tashrīḥ al-insān* images was the most convenient way to remedy the shortcoming. Since part of the text on folio 228a is written diagonally and correctly continues on folio 229b, and the writing does not appear to change, it seems likely the diagrams were part of the original manuscript.

The other instance of incorporation of illustrated text, this time in the first *maqāla*, left traces of an adjustment. In the chapters on the heavenly spheres, where the diagrams of the planets' orbits had returned to their proper places, the planet figures had instead been omitted.[27] In the Dublin manuscript, emphasis on the orbits is underlined by creating diagrams even for those three planets that were not provided with them in the second Arabic redaction. Unexpectedly, however, after a last orbit diagram belonging to a passage on the regressive and progressive movement of the planets (at the end of folio 30b), an interpolation starts that again discusses the planets, this time beginning with Saturn. It is illustrated by symbolic figures of the planets (fig. 2).[28] The entries focus on the "nature" (*ṭabīʿat*) of the planets and their sympathetic relationship with particular days of the week, parts of the human body, regions, cities, and peoples, social and professional groups, minerals, plants and animals, types of behavior, etc., tracing the full range of influences (*āthār*) of the heavenly bodies on the sublunar world.[29]

That the heading (*ṣuwar-i kawākib-i sabʿa sayyāra*) appears at the end of folio 30b and was written over a layer of gold that obviously covered the original line of text reveals the interpolation to be an afterthought. On folio 36b, however, with the entry on the Moon completed, the text continues in a regular way with Qazwīnī's chapter on fixed stars. Hence, it looks more like a correction made during the production process due to the wish of the original patron rather than a significantly

5

5
Diagram of the human skeleton, fol. 228b.

later addition. That the figures of the planets share stylistic characteristics with constellation pictures and other miniatures also proves the unity of the manuscript.[30]

If the interpolation was mainly triggered by the patron's discontent over the initial omission of the planet figures in the copy, the text might have been added to accommodate the pictures. Taking into account the care invested in making the manuscript, it seems more likely that the interpolation on the occult qualities of the heavenly bodies was selected on purpose. At first glance this appears to contradict the tendency reflected in the general "overhaul" of the *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* in Per. 212, and in the anatomical interpolation in particular. In fact, the strange combination likely points to the ambiguity that characterizes the development of natural history in early modern times when interest in occult qualities was still prevalent. This is well recorded and thoroughly discussed for Renaissance and post-Renaissance Europe,[31] but it may have been not so different in the Middle East.[32]

The attempt to correct and update the most popular compendium on natural history positions the Dublin manuscript at the crossroads. Looking forward, its lead admittedly was not followed by later sixteenth-century *ʿAjāʾib* manuscripts. On the other hand, the attention paid to the constellation images, a thoroughly illustrated chapter on plants, and the addition of anatomical illustrations all foreshadow seventeenth-century developments reflected in the preservation of numerous illustrated manuscripts of *Ṣuwar al-kawākib*,[33] *Kitāb al-hashāʾish*,[34] and *Tashrīḥ al-insān*.[35] Those who looked for more detailed and precise information finally turned to those specialized texts, while the *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* became increasingly appreciated because of its entertaining qualities strengthened by narrative illustrations.

Like the recently published research on *Kitāb al-hashāʾish* manuscripts,[36] tracing the changes in Qazwīnī's text assists in understanding the treatment of unstable

6

6
Rhinoceros, fol. 460b.

texts and the extent to which they could be adapted to the needs of an individual or a group of patrons. The Dublin *ʿAjāʾib* shows that a commercial workshop obliging a demanding patron might go to some length in order to produce a customized manuscript by procuring the needed sources beyond the model manuscript they copied.

This, surely, does not conform to the description of the Shiraz ateliers left by the sixteenth-century historian Budāq Qazwīnī, who characterized the production of illustrated manuscripts by Shiraz workshops as a family business of fast but thoughtless imitation.[37] It has recently been demonstrated that the quality of many Shiraz copies of poetical works, at least those produced since the middle of the sixteenth century, contradicts the biased viewpoints of writers based at court.[38] The Dublin *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt* proves that such a workshop was also able to deal successfully with a specialized commission which asked for a very different kind of compilatory and artistic effort.

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NOTES

1 The Persian version, called here the second Persian adaptation, has existed since at least the middle of the fifteenth century. Its most noteworthy modification consists of two interpolated chapters dealing with different peoples and a number of trades and arts. This adds a social component to a text originally intended by its author to be limited to natural history; see Karin Rührdanz, "Illustrated Persian *Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt* Manuscripts and Their Function in Early Modern Times," in *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East*, ed. Andrew J. Newman (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 33–47. For the text of the second adaptation, see *Zakariyā' b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Makmūnī al-Qazwīnī, Kitāb 'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt*, ed. Naṣr-Allāh al-Subbūḥī (Tehran: Markazi, 1341/1962).

2 One painting (fol. 110a) had been published by Arnold in 1928 but was not commented upon; see Thomas W. Arnold, *Painting in Islam* (1928; repr., New York: Dover, 1965), pl. XXXVIIa. The author would like to thank the Chester Beatty Library, and in particular Elaine Wright, for providing images and permission to study the manuscript and to publish some of its illustrations.

3 Laurence Binyon, James V. S. Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (1931; repr., New York: Dover, 1971), pp. 139–40, no. 176, pls. XCVI–XCVII.

4 Binyon, Wilkinson, and Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting*, p. 116.

5 Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Geneva: Skira, 1961), p. 150 (fol. 109b), p. 152.

6 *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, vol. 2, ed. Arthur J. Arberry (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1960), pp. 75–77, pls. 34–40. In the meantime, Guest and Stchoukine had mentioned the manuscript; see Grace Guest, *Shiraz Painting in the Sixteenth Century* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1949), p. 60; Ivan Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits safavis de 1502 à 1587* (Paris: Geuthner, 1959), p. 104; and Ettinghausen had referred to it in his iconographic study; see Richard Ettinghausen, *The Unicorn* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1950), pls. 14, 41f.

7 Basil W. Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from the British Isles* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967), p. 102, no. 144.

8 While the concept of "unstable" texts (translating the German *unfeste Texte*) is a very broad one, it is used here with respect to the transformation that a medieval prose text undergoes with each subsequent copy. Analysis of the discrete shape of each text helps to clarify its specific function, for a particular public audience, at a certain moment. See Georg Steer, "Gebrauchsfunktionale Text- und Überlieferungsanalyse," in *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Prosaforschung*, ed. Kurt Ruh (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985), pp. 5–15.

9 Mahdī Bayānī, *Aḥwāl wa āthār-i khūshnawīsān* (Tehran, 1363/1985), pp. 899–901, no. 1348.

10 These numbers are based upon a comparative survey (unpublished) of extant illustrated Persian manuscripts from the last quarter of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and biographical material compiled by the author.

11 The other three manuscripts are: National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, PNS 265, copied by Na'īm al-Dīn Aḥmad, AH 920/1514–15 CE; see G. I. Kostygova, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi Gosudarstvennoi Publichnoi Biblioteki im. M. E. Saltykova-Shchedrina*, vol. 2 (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennaia

Publichnaia Biblioteka, 1989), p. 49, no. 849; National Museum, Tehran, no. 20342, copied by Munʿim al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Auḥadī al-Ḥusaynī, AH 924/1518 CE; see Bayānī, *Aḥwāl*, pp. 921–22, no. 1396; and New York Public Library, Spencer, Pers. Ms. 49, 1540s; see Barbara Schmitz et al., *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, and New York: New York Public Library, 1992), pp. 79–93, no. II.5.

12 For two well-documented manuscripts of the Turkman group, see Dorothea Duda, *Die illuminierten Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Islamische Handschriften, I: Persische Handschriften*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1983), pp. 76–82; vol. 2, Abb. 71–106 (N.F. 155, dated 1492); Basil W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1998), pp. 15–23 (ms. 178).

13 See n. 10. The reasons for this phenomenon still remain to be researched. One was most probably the disruption of the market by the Safavid conquest of southern Iran and the resulting deaths of patrons and artists.

14 Although Qazwīnī's work has long been considered a part of *adab* literature, see Geert J. v. Gelder, "Compleat Men, Women and Books: On Medieval Arabic Encyclopaedism," in *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts*, ed. Peter Binkley (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 241–59. The large interpolation and smaller adjustments to the text strengthened the literary element and thus put it on a more equal footing with other components of *adab*; see Rührdanz, "Illustrated Persian *Ajāʾib al-Makhlūqāt* Manuscripts," pp. 37–39.

15 For the concept of astrological versus astronomical representations of the zodiac, see Anna Caiozzo, *Images du ciel d'Orient au Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003), in particular vol. 3, pt. 3, pp. 271–316.

16 The disarray is still reflected in the edition (see n. 1).

17 Based upon information in colophons where he mentions his father's name, six manuscripts can be firmly connected to this calligrapher within the period of 1514–15 to 1532–33.

18 For examples of the proto-Safavid style dominating Shiraz production in the first two decades of the sixteenth century, see Lale Uluç, *Turkman governors, Shiraz artisans, and Ottoman collectors: Sixteenth century Shiraz manuscripts* (Istanbul: Türkiye Iş Bankası, 2006), pp. 85–99.

19 As exemplified by the earliest copy (AH 678/1280 CE) in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München (cod. Arab. 464), see Hans-Caspar Graf v. Bothmer, *Die Illustrationen des "Münchener Qazwini" von 1280* (Munich: Universität München, 1971), pp. 160–66. For the differences between the two Arabic redactions (AH 661 and 678) dating back to the author's lifetime (he died in 1283), see Julius Ruska, "Ḳazwīnīstudien," *Der Islam* 4 (1913), pp. 14–66, 236–62.

20 Guest, *Shiraz Painting*, pls. 2–26; Basil W. Robinson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), pp. 97–102, pl. 14, and the color reproductions with Uluç, *Turkman governors*, p. 190, no. 134; p. 202, no. 144.

21 See Uluç, *Turkman governors*, p. 166ff.

22 Cod. Arab. 464, fols. 25b–30a.

23 In the list of illustrations published in the Chester Beatty Library catalogue (see n. 6), the diagrams appear in the plant chapter. This is due to a misplacement of leaves, which interrupts the chapter on plants between folios 219 and 239. The folios numbered 220 to 238 should follow folio 318.

24 Edition (n. 1), p. 294, line 4.

25 Copies circulated since the early fifteenth century; see Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: Manuscrits du XIIe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), p. 82, no. 48. For anatomical diagrams in general, see Emilie Savage-Smith, "Anatomical Illustration in Arabic Manuscripts," in *Arab Painting: Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts*, ed. Anna Contadini (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 147–60. On the author and his *Tashrīḥ al-insān*, see Charles A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey,* vol. 2, pt. 2, E. Medicine (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1971), pp. 226–27; Karl Sudhoff, "Eine anatomische Sechsbildserie in zwei persischen Handschriften," in Karl Sudhoff, *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Anatomie im Mittelalter* (repr., Hildesheim: Olms,1964), pp. 52–72.

26 It seems Turkman workshops started experimenting by incorporating a tiny diagram of a human skeleton into the chapter on human body parts. It appears in a very sketchy shape in the mutilated fragment of Landberg 406 (third quarter of the fifteenth century) belonging to the Berlin State Library, and it is a clearer drawing in the manuscript R. 1659, dated 1494–95, in the Topkapı Saray Museum Library; see Persis Berlekamp, *Wonder, Image, and Cosmos in Medieval Islam* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 157, fig. 78.

27 The omission became standard in the second half of the sixteenth century. The Dublin *ʿAjāʾib* and the undated manuscript in the New York Public Library (see n. 11) are the first to document the shift.

28 See folios 30a–36b, where leaves are missing between folios 35b and 36a, including the figures of Venus and Mercury. The

source of the interpolation is not known. Sequence and content resemble the chapter on planets in Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī's *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt*. The interpolation in the Dublin manuscript, however, is more elaborate on the subject and lists many more occult qualities for each planet.

29 Qazwīnī uses *khawāṣṣ* when referring to the occult/sympathetic qualities of objects; see Manfred Ullmann, "Khāṣṣa," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* vol. 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1990), pp. 1097–98.

30 The type of scrolled and knotted cloud bands surrounding the planet figures also appears, although less frequently, on some constellations and other illustrations (compare figs. 2 and 3). In Per. 212 both types of clouds were used: the scrolled knotted bands and the horizontal blurred, whitish stripes. (This was originally a Tabriz convention that arrived in Shiraz in the 1530s; see Uluç, *Turkman governors,* pp. 139–41.) They can be found in other Shiraz manuscripts of the period. In the case of a *Shahnama* in the India Office collection (Ms. 133/ Ethé 863), dated 1560, paintings with both types of clouds were attributed to the same artist; see Basil W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1976), nos. 271 and 275.

31 See, for instance, Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1986), pp. 177-88, 200-203; John Henry, "Magic and Science in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Companion to the History of Modern Science*, ed. Robert C. Olby et al. (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 583–96; Keith Hutchinson, "What Happened to Occult Qualities in the Scientific Revolution?" *Isis* 73 (1982), pp. 233–53; Christoph Meinel, "Okkulte und exakte Wissenschaften," in *Okkulte Wissenschaften in der Renaissance*, ed. August Buck (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), pp. 21–43; and Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (repr., Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963), pp. 549–602.

32 More research on the history of Safavid science is needed. For an approach to the elusive subject through reports of European scholars, see Sonja Brentjes, "Early Modern Western European Travellers in the Middle East and their reports about the sciences," in *Sciences, techniques et instruments dans le monde iranien (Xe – XIXe siècle),* eds. Nasr-Allah Pourjavadi and Živa Vesel (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran et Presses universitaires d'Iran, 2004), pp. 392–414.

33 Sonja Brentjes, "Safavid art, science, and courtly education in the seventeenth century" (this unpublished article was generously provided by the author); on patrons, see Sussan Babaie et al., *Slaves of the Shah* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), pp. 127–30; for reproductions, see *Images of Islamic Science,* vol. 1, ed. Živa Vesel et al. (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 2009), pp. 128–31.

34 Schmitz, *Islamic Manuscripts*, pp. 14, 60. For a copy in Dublin (Per. 273, dated 1645), see *The Chester Beatty Library. A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures,* vol. 3, ed. Arthur J. Arberry (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1962), pp. 44–45, and for another one in St. Petersburg (Oriental Institute, D-143), see Juri A. Petrosjan, *Von Bagdad bis Isfahan* (Lugano: ARCH Foundation, 1995), pp. 264–73; *Images of Islamic Science,* vol. 1, pp. 254–57 (there, too, for a Safavid illustrated copy of the *Materia medica* in Arabic, pp. 252–53).

35 See n. 25; for later material, see Schmitz, *Islamic Manuscripts*, pp. 134–35; Andrew J. Newman, "*Tašrīḥ-i Manṣūrī:* Human Anatomy between the Galenic and Prophetical Medical Traditions," in *La Science dans le monde iranien à l'époque islamique*, eds. Živa Vesel, H. Beikbaghban, and Bertrand Thierry de Crussol des Epesse (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1998), pp. 253–71; more reproductions are found in *Images of Islamic Science,* vol. 1, pp. 236–39.

36 George Saliba and Linda Komaroff, "Illustrated Books may be Hazardous to Your Health," *Ars Orientalis* 35 (2008), pp. 6–65.

37 For an English rendering of the passage, see Oleg F. Akimushkin and Anatol A. Ivanov, "The Art of Illumination," in *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, ed. Basil Gray (London: UNESCO, 1979), p. 50.

38 Uluç, *Turkman governors.*

RUBA KANA'AN

PATRON AND CRAFTSMAN OF THE FREER MOSUL EWER OF 1232

A Historical and Legal Interpretation of the Roles of Tilmīdh and Ghulām in Islamic Metalwork

Abstract

The main disciplinary aim of this article is to explore the rich surviving material evidence of inlaid metalwork from Syria and Jazira during the thirteenth century from a socio-legal perspective using legal literature contemporary to its production. Muslim jurists frequently referred to alloy-based metalwork in their discussions of the rules related to trade and commodity exchange. The juridical concern with the sale and transaction of commodities provides a behind-the-scenes look at how metalwork was produced, sold, and purchased and an insight into the otherwise silent world of the craftsman. More specifically, I use legal literature as a means for reexamining the Freer inlaid brass ewer, dated to 1232, within its historical and social context. I argue that the Freer ewer was produced in Mosul not Aleppo, and that it was commissioned as a prestigious gift for the atabeg of Aleppo, Shihab al-Din Tughrul, most probably by his ally Badr al-Din Lu'lu'. This analysis also explains the possible interpretations of the designations *tilmīdh* and *ghulām* (usually interpreted as apprentice) inscribed on the surviving corpus of the Mosul metalwork to which the Freer ewer belongs, and explores the capacity in which Qasim ibn ʿAli signed the Freer ewer as the *ghulām* of Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya.

IN HIS JURIDICAL COLLECTION *Minhaj al-Talibin*, written in 1270–71 in the Dar al-Hadith al-Ashrafiyya in Damascus, the famous jurist-scholar al-Nawawi (died 1278) followed a long-established tradition of Muslim legal scholars discussing various types of commercial transactions and their applicability to alloy-based metalwork. Al-Nawawi argued that a buyer or client can only purchase a metal-alloy object that is already available in the market where he can see it and accept its design and general conditions. Advance sales or commissions were not acceptable to al-Nawawi, specifically for metal-alloy objects composed of different parts such as a jug (*kuz*), cup or finger bowl (*tass*), flask (*qumqum*), or cooking pots (*tanajir*).[1] Al-Nawawi, and the Shafi'i school of Islamic jurisprudence more generally, displayed deep concern about alloy-based metal objects because they are made out of composite parts and materials and thus, unlike gold or silver, cannot be accurately measured or weighed.[2] In legal terms, even though one could weigh a brass vessel, one would not have an exact match of it. Hence, the sale or exchange of such metalwork, whether it is plain or decorated, could lead to unlawful gain (*riba*).

Muslim jurists frequently used metalwork as an example when providing detailed explanations of the rules related to trade and commodity exchange. Thus, unlike historians of Islamic art, who are concerned with style, authorship, and patronage, Muslim jurists questioned the contractual obligations associated with the production and sale of metal objects: Who provides raw materials? Who provides the design? Who performs the actual work? Who funds the process? Who conducts the sale? What type of sale eliminates uncertainty? And what is considered liability in any of these transactions? These questions, which are ultimately aimed at eliminating *riba*, unwittingly tell us about some of the practical issues associated with the sale of metalwork—issues about which conventional art historical methods cannot yet inform us.[3] As such, Muslim legal literature has the potential of providing a behind-the-scenes look at how metalwork was produced, sold, and purchased. It suggests a complex social context that allows us to rethink the histories of these objects. More specifically, the social context of Islamic metalwork as understood from Islamic legal texts provides us with new information about the composite network of individuals involved in the production and circulation of the objects. In this paper, I use legal literature to reexamine the Freer inlaid brass ewer, dated 1232 (F1955.22), within its historical and social context, including the work/production relationships implied by the two names inscribed on the ewer.

The Freer Inlaid Brass Ewer of 1232

In their 1985 catalogue *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art,* Esin Atil, W. T. Chase, and Paul Jett published technical studies of some of the Freer collection's metalwork objects. Their analysis highlighted the complex nature of the objects and "how the craftsmen made them."[4] The authors demonstrate that the Freer brass ewer was made of different parts that were manufactured and decorated in a variety of techniques (figs. 1, 2). The main body of the ewer was probably spun, with the upper part of the neck soldered just below the lower collar of the neck; the lid was made of sheet metal and (possibly) linked with cast hinges; the handle was cast and soldered to the body; the spout and the foot were also soldered. The ewer's composite nature and its various techniques and materials exemplify the physical complexity that legal scholars addressed in their treatises concerning the production and trade of metalwork in the commercial markets of their day.

Until now, art historical studies have not dealt with legal literature, because objects with inscriptions are thought to provide internal evidence of who produced them, for whom, and when. The inscription on the neck of the Freer ewer states that it was made for Shihab al-Din al-Azizi, identified by D. S. Rice as Shihab al-Din Tughrul, the atabeg of the Ayyubid ruler of Aleppo, al-Malik al-ʿAziz Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad.[5] Another inscription on the raised scallops decorating its shoulder states that the ewer was made by (ʿ*amal*) Qasim ibn ʿAli, the *ghulām* (discussed below) of Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya al-Mawsili during Ramadan of the year 1232.[6] The presence of signatures on Islamic metalwork has been repeatedly interpreted as a sign of the artist's intellectual property. According to Mayer, for example, a signature that includes the terms ʿ*amal* or *sanaʿahu* (or their variations) clearly indicates that the named craftsman was the sole person responsible for making the object in all its stages.[7] In addition, the name of a person of influence inscribed on an object is typically understood as that of the object's "patron" to the exclusion of a wider range of possibilities, including that the named might represent the recipient of a gift. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, this causal understanding of signatures can be misleading because it does not reflect the complex nature of the medieval Islamic market or the multiple networks of craft relationships and object-circulation systems that operated within it.[8] A closer examination of the Freer ewer's signatures, drawing on legal texts, reveals similar problems and suggests alternative readings of its production and patronage.

The ewer's inverted-pear body shape, the raised scallops at the base of the neck, and the long handle and spout that issue from its shoulder are comparable to around a dozen surviving Mosul ewers of the same period.[9] The similarity in the sizes and forms of these ewers (which I will discuss in "A Biography of the 13th-century Brass Ewer in the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha" in Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom's forthcoming volume, 2013) suggest that the discussion about the Freer object's production and signatures should focus only on the phase that starts after it was bought readymade on the market.[10] Furthermore, later evidence by the Damascene scholar al-Qasimi, who documented the various crafts in Damascus at the turn of the twentieth century, suggests that objects that were taken to a decorator (*naqqash*) were readymade objects purchased elsewhere in the market.[11]

While the Freer ewer's metal body is similar to that of other Mosul ewers, its decoration is remarkably different. The decoration on the bodies of most Mosul ewers is characterized by poly-lobed cartouches and horizontal fields with a rich variety of figural compositions, T-fret backgrounds, and inscriptions. The decoration of the Freer ewer, however, covers the whole body, thus rendering it as a single field. Its decoration consists of an overall floral composition filling an ogival latticework finely outlined in silver. In addition, the Freer object does not have a single figural image, which makes it unique among the Mosul group.[12] Thus the Freer ewer's decoration raises the following questions: Why is it so different? Can its unique decorative program be linked to the "craftsman/artist" who produced it? Or was it influenced by the "patron" who commissioned it?[13] These questions draw us back to the signatures on the ewer.

Qasim bin 'Ali, who signed his name as the maker of the Freer ewer, is known to us only from this single signature. We do not have other pieces of metalwork signed by him. Therefore, we cannot ascertain if the floral and split-leaf overall design is his artistic creation or trademark. However, there is a ewer with the same shape in the Louvre signed by Qasim bin 'Ali's master, Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya al-Mawsili (K3435). The decoration of Ibn Mawaliya's ewer is distinctively different from the

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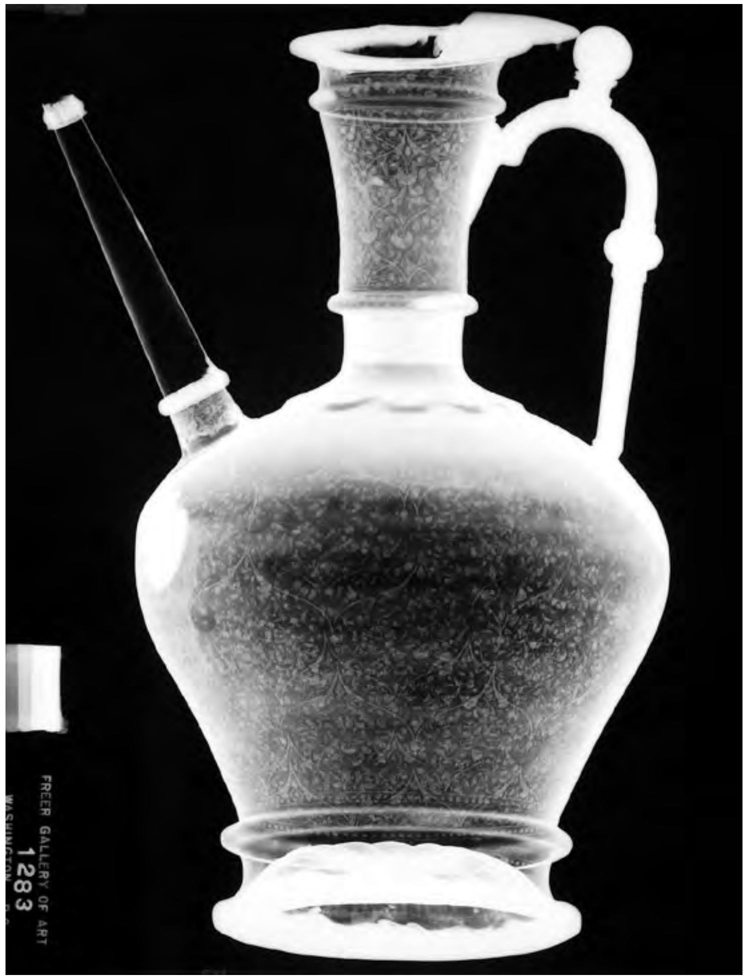
Brass ewer signed by Qasim ibn ʿAli and dated 1232. Purchase, Freer Gallery of Art, F1955.22.

Freer object, with bands of inscriptions and figural compositions separated by bronze inlaid braids.[14] We also know of another related inlaid object, that of Isma'il ibn Ward, who signed a box dated to 1220 and now in the Benaki Museum of Athens, as the *tilmīdh* (discussed below) of the same Ibn Mawaliya.[15] Not only are the three objects linked through the names of the artists and the *nisba* "Mawsili," the knotted arabesque passing through a loop in the shape of a half-moon that decorates the Freer ewer is also found in the interlace pattern on the base of the Benaki box.[16] My aim here is not to establish a stylistic family but to ask what examples would have been available for a person looking for a decorated ewer without any figures on it. In short, the stylistic details of the Freer ewer are not unique, but their use in an overall design and composition certainly is.

The other inscription on the Freer ewer tells us that it was made for Shihab al-Din Tughrul in AH 629/1232 CE, the same year that al-Malik al-ʿAziz assumed full control over his throne in Aleppo. Before his death in 1216, al-Malik al-Zahir named his two- or three-year-old son, Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad, as his successor, and appointed his mamluk, Shihab al-Din Tughrul, as the boy's atabeg. Shihab al-Din ruled Aleppo for fifteen years and then peacefully transferred the rule to the then-teenage al-Malik al-ʿAziz Ghiyath al-Din in 1232.[17] Chroniclers of the period are profuse in their eulogies of Shihab al-Din, particularly when they describe his piety and his just rule. They also list his numerous charitable building projects, such



2

2
Radiographic image of the Freer ewer of 1232 (F1952.22). Courtesy Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, Freer Gallery of Art.

as the completion of some of Aleppo's iconic Ayyubid buildings that were commenced by al-Zahir (died 1216), including work on the Aleppo citadel and the Sultaniyya madrasa in 1232. He is also known to have individually funded projects, including the Atabikiyya madrasa in 1223, and used his personal money to alleviate hardship in times of famine and drought.[18]

The inscription's mention of Shihab al-Din by name and the distinctive nonfigural decoration led Rice and then Atil to assert that he commissioned the ewer himself and, therefore, that the ewer was probably made in Aleppo.[19] Rice attributed the nonfigural decoration to Shihab al-Din's known piety or to the fact that the ewer would have been used in a religious context, such as a mosque or madrasa. Due to its uniqueness, the ewer's decoration was beyond doubt commissioned or custom-made rather than produced for the market. However, it is not clear whether Shihab al-Din commissioned the ewer for himself or whether it was ordered for him, and that certainly cannot be determined by a reading of the inscription. The dedicatory inscription, as read by Rice, gives general standard good wishes for Shihab al-Din but does not refer to any involvement by him or by others to the commissioning of the ewer. Let me review the possibilities.

Considering that, as discussed above, it has a similar profile and general dimensions as a number of other Mosul ewers, the body of the Freer ewer was probably mass produced and bought in a market before it was decorated. If Shihab al-Din was indeed the one who commissioned the Freer ewer, it is likely that he ordered only its decoration. As a pious man, he probably conformed to the predominant view of his day: commissioning alloy-based objects made of soldered parts or different substances was unacceptable because of the possibilities of *riba* that would result from dealing with unknown materials.[20] But he could have bought a ready-made ewer (of a determined value) and ordered its decoration. According to Hanafi and Shafi'i law, an advance contract for the decoration of the ewer would have been permissible, but only if the person who ordered the work identified the exact design he wanted and provided the amount of silver to be used in the inlay.[21] This also implies that he could choose from a set of design patterns provided by the artist, workshop, owner of the shop, or the employer of the person who signed his work as '*amal*. This seems to be the only possible way for Shihab al-Din to have been the "patron" of the Freer ewer.

A second possibility is that another party ordered the ewer as a present for Shihab al-Din. In his *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh,* Ibn al-Athir (died 1233) mentions the important role Shihab al-Din played in the turbulent politics of the Ayyubids and Zangids in North Syria and Jazira. He managed to maintain Aleppo's neutrality and independence in the face of the competition between Saladin's sons and brothers, as well as the various warring Zangid principalities. Chroniclers of the period like Ibn al-Athir or Ibn Wasil (died 1297–98) compare his role to that of his contemporary Badr al-Din Lu'lu', the atabeg of Mosul.[22] Both men were entrusted with serving as atabeg for a minor ruler: the Zangid al-Malik al-Qahir 'Izz al-Din Mas'ud was about ten years old when he became the ward of Badr al-din Lu'lu', and the Ayyubid al-Malik al-Aziz Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad of Aleppo was about two or three years old when he became the ward of Shihab al-Din Tughrul. Both men also maintained a close alliance with the Ayyubid ruler of Damascus, al-Afdal; formed alliances with each other; and patronized and employed the same men. In his biographical account of Ibn al-Athir, the famous biographer Ibn Khillikan (died 1282) mentions that he met the chronicler in Aleppo while he was a guest of Shihab al-Din Tughrul.[23] The presence of Mosul's most famous chronicler at the Aleppo court suggests that there was a friendly relationship between the two rulers. It also confirms that during that period men of letters served as ambassadors between the warring Abbasid, Zangid, and Ayyubid courts. The two men, however, patronized different cultural endeavors and institutions: Badr al-Din was an active patron of architecture, metalwork, and painted manuscripts, while Shihab al-Din seems to have focused on religious and military architecture. Shihab al-Din and Badr al-Din also had different reputations, different ambitions, and different ways of perceiving and acting upon their final duties as atabegs. Indeed, according to the chroniclers, the two atabegs had a parallel career with a single major difference. In 1232, Shihab al-Din surrendered the rule to his ward, al-Malik al-Aziz. Badr al-Din, on the other hand, requested and obtained the title of al-Malik al-Rahim from the Abbasid caliph al-Mustansir, thus usurping the role of his ward and bringing an end to Zangid rule in Mosul. In short, although the two men were equally important, the ambitious Badr al-Din greatly needed Shihab al-Din's support and is known to have sought it on various occasions.

Returning then to the main question, could the Freer ewer have been made as a present for Shihab al-Din by another party, and if so who? Let us consider the evidence: Mosul was the primary production center for inlaid metalwork during the first half of the thirteenth century; there is no evidence that inlaid brass was produced in Aleppo during the same period; Badr al-Din's patronage of metalwork objects has been established; there is a stylistic relationship between the floral design on the Freer ewer and on Mosul objects; there also is a close relationship between Shihab al-din and Badr al-din. The most important evidence, however, is the geographer Ibn Sa'id's famous account that brass objects were made in Mosul and sent as gifts to rulers in the region. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that the Freer ewer, with its common shape but distinguishable, nonfigural decorations, was most probably a present from Badr al-Din Lu'lu' to his pious friend Shihab al-Din. This may also explain the significance of the inscribed date of 1232, the same year that Shihab al-din retired from his role as atabeg and withdrew to the Atabikiyya madrasa.

Having situated the Freer ewer in Mosul, I would like now to return to one of the elusive terms mentioned in the inscription, *ghulām*, which indicates some type of relationship between Qasim ibn Ali and Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya al-Mawsili, and examine its meaning under the rubric of Islamic legal literature. The tendency to use the term "apprentice" to discuss signatures like *tilmīdh* or *ghulām* tacitly implies our acknowledgement that the world of medieval craftsmen and their relationship to the market is almost unknown to us. Rice concluded that *ghulām* can be either a slave ('*abd*) or a paid employee (*ajir*), and *tilmīdh* is just an apprentice.[24] Legal scholars also distinguish between the status and responsibilities of *tilmīdh* and *ghulām*. In discussing the liability of destroying a commissioned textile, the twelfth-century jurist al-Kasani (died 1191) gave an intriguing example of the *tilmīdh* working for a common textile laborer (*ajir mushtarak*).[25] Al-Kasani argued that the *tilmīdh* had to pay restitution to the *ajir mushtarak* if he damaged a piece of cloth due to a mistake that was not work related.[26] While the specifics of the example here are related to the textile industry, the jurist's use of the *ajir mushtarak/tilmīdh* combination in a discussion of financial liability highlights two important points for our purposes: 1) that a *tilmīdh* could work for a hired laborer who was himself working for various people at the same time, thus raising the question of workshops and complex work arrangements; 2) that the *tilmīdh* was liable for damages that he incurred outside of the immediate requirements of his job.

This last point is significant because it demonstrates unequivocally that from a *legal perspective* the *tilmīdh* was a free man. Legal literature discussing production materials and personal liabilities associated with trade transactions distinguished between slaves and free men. Slaves did not have material rights over the receipt of profit or payment for their work, and they also did not have financial liabilities.[27] Contrary to the *tilmīdh* in al-Kasani's example above, then, a slave could not be liable for damages. This confirms Rice's conclusion that the *tilmīdh* was a free apprentice, a student learning from a master, who in the case of the Freer object would have been a metalwork craftsman. Isma'il ibn Ward, who signed the Benaki box of 1220 and a manuscript on prophetic traditions (*Masabih al-Sunna*) in 1249, is one of the first clearly free, Mosul-based metalwork craftsmen known to us.[28] Using the name of his teacher Ibn Mawaliya in his signature on the box should not be seen as a sign of servitude, but rather, as Ibn Khaldun explains, a typical sign of pride and solidarity (*wala'*) reflecting a sense of interdependence with a person or group with whom one was affiliated through employment or training.[29] The fact that he did not use Ibn Mawaliya's name when he signed the manuscript suggests that by 1249 Ibn Mawaliya was probably dead. As a free man, Ibn Ward had no *wala'* relationship to Ibn Mawaliya's descendants (if there were any) and thus was not compelled to use the name.

The word *ghulām*, however, is much more complex. Ibn al-Athir uses it to mean different things, including servant, soldier, mamluk, and in one case, a Christian trade partner.[30] In one narrative the said *ghulām* is clearly a slave and is also referred to as mamluk.[31] In a different case, the *ghulām* had been appointed as a governor in Mosul after working as a servant of its atabeg in his youth.[32] The Christian trade-partner referred to as a *ghulām*, however, was clearly not a slave. This Christian *ghulām* who had a limited partnership with Ibn al-Athir's father was expecting to share in both the profit and the liability, an expectation that indicates his rights over the goods and his freedom.[33]

Were the craftsmen who signed their names as *ghulām* on Mosul metalwork slaves? Legal literature of the period is clear: a slave had no ownership or profit rights over objects made or traded on behalf of his or her master. How, then, do we explain signatures of *ghulāms* on luxury items? The first possible way was if the work of a certain slave was exceptional and had become desired enough to become a marketable brand. Another possibility comes from understanding the multiple legal implications of slave status in medieval Islam. A slave could be fully owned (*'abd*), owned with a promise of freedom when the owner died (*mudabbar*), or owned with a contract toward manumission (*mukatab*). Then there was the freed slave (*ma'tuq*). All these individuals had different legal rights. Could this nuanced understanding of the term *ghulām* explain the case of Qasim Ibn 'Ali, Ibn Mawaliya's *ghulām*, who signed the Freer ewer? I suggest that the relationship that Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya had with Qasim Ibn 'Ali and Isma'il ibn al-Ward was a waged employment or *ijara*. Both employees, however, may have been craftsmen of different legal statuses, with Isma'il ibn al-Ward a free employee and Qasim ibn 'Ali a manumitted or a *mukatab* slave. These employees would not be expected to sign their work unless, perhaps, they became famous in their own right or gained their independence from the master. Yet both would still be expected to have a *wala'* relationship with that master, possibly acknowledging him in their names and signatures even after manumission or the end of the apprenticeship period. Here again, the legal concept of *wala'* for a freed slave, which includes both emotional and financial interdependence with the ex-owner, can explain the perpetuation of the term *ghulām* in a brand or signature.

Seen through the lens of social and legal context then, the Mosul inlaid brasses represent an active period of production and patronage that served both local and external trade markets. In addition to the famous accounts by Ibn Sa'id and Ibn al-Jawzi, the relatively high number of surviving luxury brasses and the variety of their decorative programs and inscribed names attest to such commercial activity. Migrant craftsmen from Central Asia and Khurasan fleeing the Mongol invasion must have vastly influenced the inlay workers in Mosul. We know from the surviving forms that the incoming craftsmen worked on objects whose shapes and forms reflect a local tradition.[34] Craftsmen, whether migrant or itinerant, adapted their knowledge to local needs and market traditions. They also must have worked with local craftsmen in response to the high demand and perhaps trained a cohort of slave-craftsmen. Exploring these trade relationships provides an opportunity to understand the context in which objects like the Freer ewer were commissioned and produced. By the time that Badr al-Din Lu'lu' would have possibly commissioned the Freer ewer as a present for Shihab al-Din Tughrul in 1232, brass inlay production in Mosul was an established and well-known trade. The ewer was clearly an appropriate royal gift from one ruler to the other.

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NOTES

1 Muhyi al-Din Abu Zakariyya Yahya bin Sharaf al-Nawawi, *Minhaj al-Talibin* (Beirut: Dar al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyya, 2000), vol. 2, p. 79.

2 For a detailed discussion of the juristic concern with the exchange value of brass-alloy objects, see R. Kana'an, "The *de jure* 'Artist' of the Bobrinski Bucket: Production and Patronage in pre-Mongol Khurasan and Transoxiana," *Islamic Law and Society* 16 (2009), pp. 175–201.

3 The argument that juridical collections reflect real social and economic practices has been long demonstrated, especially for pecuniary transactions (*mu'amalat*) in the Hanafi school. For a fuller discussion see Abraham L. Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 4–12; and for a specific example, see Kana'an 2009, pp. 183–88.

4 Esin Atil, W. T. Chase, and Paul Jett, *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1985), p. 33.

5 D. S. Rice first identified Shihab al-Din in "Studies in Islamic Metalwork–II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1, no. 15 (1953), pp. 67–69. For Shibab al-Din's important role in Aleppo, see Kamal al-Din Abu al-Qasim 'Umar bin Ahmad bin Hibat Allah Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubdat al-Halab min Tarikh Halab*, ed. Sami al-Dahhan (Damascus: Institut Francais du Damas, 1968), vol. 3, pp. 921–57, and D. S. Richards, *Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-kamil fi al-tarikh* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pt. 3, pp. 169–70. For his architectural patronage, see Yasser Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 1997), pp. 38–39.

6 Rice 1953, pt. 1, p. 67, and Atil 1985, p. 118.

7 L. A. Mayer, *Islamic Metalworkers and Their Works* (Geneva: Albert Kundig, 1959), p. 12. See also Ahmad Ghabin, *Hisba, Arts and Crafts in Islam* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag) 2009, pp. 252–53.

8 Kana'an 2009, and J. W. Allan, "Muhammad ibn al-Zain: Craftsman in Cups, Thrones and Window Grills?" *Levant* 28 (1996), pp. 199–208, esp. 206–7.

9 Examples from the first half of the thirteenth century include: ewer signed by Ahmad Ibn 'Umar al-Dhaki, dated to 1223, Cleveland Museum of Art, no. 56.11; ewer signed by 'Umar ibn al-Hajj Jaldak, 1226, Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 91.1. 586; ewer signed by Iyas, the *ghulam* of Abd al-Karim ibn al-Turabi and dated 1229, Türk ve Islam Müzesi, no. 217; ewer signed by Ibrahim Ibn Mawaliya, Musée du Louvre, no. K3435; ewer with the name of Sultan Mahmud ibn Sanjar Shah, Doha Museum of Islamic Art (previously Nuhad Es-Said Collection, no. MW 466.2007); ewer at the Musée des Arts décoratifs, no. 4413; ewer signed by Ali ibn Abdallah al-Alawi, Museum fur Islamische Kunst, no. I-6580; ewer signed by Yunus Ibn Yusuf, dated to 1246, Walters Art Museum, no. 54.456; the faceted Blacas ewer signed by Shuja' ibn Manna,' dated to 1232, British Museum, no. OA 1866.12-29.61; the Homberg ewer signed by Ahmad al-dhaki and dated to 1242, Kier Collection, no. 131; and the ewer signed by Husayn b. Muhammad and dated to 1258, Musée du Louvre, no. 7428. For the Mosul provenance for the ewers, see Julian Raby, "The Principle of Parsimony and the Problem of 'the Mosul School of Metalwork,'" in *Metalwork and Material Culture in the Islamic World: Art, Craft, and Text.* Essays Presented to James W. Allan. Venetia Porter and Mariam Rosser-Owen, eds. (London, 2012,

forthcoming). For the use of a "brass ewer" for ablution in Mosul, see Ibn Al-Athir, Izz al-Din, *al-tarikh al-bahir fi al-dawlah al-atabikiyah*, ed. A. A. Tolaymat (Cairo: Dar al-kutub al-hadithah, 1963), p. 31.

10 We do not currently have definitive evidence for the mass production of standard, undecorated objects in the thirteenth century. In discussing the craft of the *nahhas* for the turn-of-the-twentieth century Damascus, however, Muhammad Sa'id Qasimi, Jamal al-Din Qasimi, and Khalil Azm, *Qamus al-Sina'at al-Shamiyah*, ed. Zafir Qasimi (Damascus: Dar Tlas li 'ldirasat wa 'l-tarjama wa 'l-nashr, 1988), pp. 479–80, explains that the *nahhas* bought sheet brass, some of which he made to order according to buyers' requests and specifications, and some he made into standard shapes and sold them ready-made in his shops. Similar arguments for the division of use and manufacturing of sheet brass were made by Hans E. Wulff, *The Traditional Crafts of Persia* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), p. 22.

11 Qasimi et al. 1988, pp. 486–87.

12 The ewer signed by Iyas, the *ghulām* of Abd al-Karim ibn al-Turabi and dated 1229 (Türk ve Islam Müzesi, no. 217), is also devoid of any figural images. See D. S. Rice "Studies in Islamic Metalwork–III," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 15, no. 2 (1953), pp. 229–32. In "The inscription on the astrolabe by 'Abd al-Karim in the British Museum," *Muqarnas* 21 (2004), pp. 345–57, Rachel Ward proposes a new possible provenance for the workshop of Abd al-Karim ibn al-Turabi in Mayyafariqin.

13 L. Komaroff, *The Golden Disk of Heaven: Metalwork in Timurid Iran* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1992), pp. 139–42 raises a similar question about Timurid metalworkers and their relationship with patrons.

14 Rice 1953, pt. 1, pp. 69–79.

15 Ibid., pp. 61–65.

16 The half-palmette scroll passing through a half-moon loop or knob motif (with slight stylistic variations) is often found on inlaid metalwork from thirteenth-century Jazira, including objects attributed to Mosul, like the tray made for Badr al-Din Lu'lu' now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

17 Ghrighuryus ibn Harun al-Malti Ibn al-'Ibri, *Tarikh Mukhtasar al-Duwal* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1958), p. 231, uses the terms *al-khadim* (the servant) and *mamluk* to refer to Shihab al-Din. In his translation of the Syriac chronicle of the world by Ibn al-'Ibri (also known as Bar Hebraeus), Ernest Budge refers to Shihab al-Din as a "just and merciful eunuch" who introduced prosperity and peace to Aleppo. See Ernest Wallis Budge, ed., *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj, the son of Aaron the Hebrew physician, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus*, vol. 1 (Oxford London: University Press, 1932), p. 369.

18 Izz al-Din ibn Shaddad, *Al-A'laq al-Khatira Fi Dhikr Umara' al-Sham wa 'l-Jazira: Tarikh Halab*, ed. D. Sourdel (Beirut: Institut Français de Damas, 1953), p. 114, and Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety*, pp. 38–39.

19 The only other inlaid metalwork object attributed to Aleppo is the Louvre Barbarini Vase, no. OA 4090, which bears the name of the last Ayyubid ruler of Aleppo, al-Malik al-Nasir Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn al-Malik al-Aziz, who ruled between 1237 and 1260. Here again the Barbarini vase's attribution to Aleppo and its inclusion as an example of Ayyubid metalwork is based only on the fact that it bears the name of the ruler of Aleppo.

20 Ala' al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Mas'ud al-Kasani, *Kitab Bada'i' al-Sana'i' fi tartib al-shara'i'* (Cairo: Matba'at al-Jammaliyya, 1910), vol. 6, pp. 84–85. Al-Kasani is important in this context because the first teacher in the Atabikiyya madrasa appointed by Shihab al-Din Tughrul was al-Kasani's student, Jamal al-Din al-Qurashi al-Hawrani.

21 Both the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of Islamic law were dominant in Syria and Jazira. Shihab al-Din himself established schools and arranged support for Hanafi scholars. In his capacity as the de facto successor of al-Malik al-Zahir, however, he also established Shafi'i schools and endowments to support Shafi'i scholars. I refer to both Hanafi and Shafi'i jurists throughout this article. Al-Kasani's teacher (and father-in-law) Ala' al-Din al-Samarqandi, *Tuhfat al-Fuqaha'* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al'Ilmiyah, n.d.), vol. 2, pp. 11–14, also argued that one could order an object in advance only if all its characteristics were fully known. For a similar Shafi'i view, see Al-Nawawi, *al-minhaj*, p. 79.

22 For a comprehensive chronicle of the Ayyubids and Zangids for the period, see Izz al-Din Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-tarikh*, ed. 'Umar abd al-salam al-tadmuri (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1997). For the atabegs of Mosul until the rule of Badr al-Din Lu'lu', see Izz al-Din Ibn Al-Athir, *Al-tarikh al-bahir fi al-dawlah al-atabikiyah*, ed. A. A. Tolaymat (Cairo, Dar al-kutub al-hadithah, 1963). For the reign of Badr al-Din, see Douglas Patton, *Badr al-Din Lu'lu': The Atabeg of Mosul, 1211–1259* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1991).

23 Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Abi Bakr Ibn Khillikan, *Wafayat al-A'yan wa anba' 'al-zaman* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1998), vol. 3, p. 305.

24 Rice 1953, pt. 1, p. 67.

25 R. Ward, *Islamic Metalwork* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1993), pp. 22–25, discusses the notion of the common employee who works for several people at the same time. The distinction between the private *ajir* and the common *ajir* is prevalent in legal literature. Al-Kasani 1910, vol. 4, p. 174 also refers to the private *ajir* as '*ajir al-wahd*.'

26 Al-Kasani 1910, vol. 4, p. 212, where he also uses *tilmīdh* and *ustadh*.

27 Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Habib Al-Mawardi, *Al-Hawi al-Kabir fi Fiqh al-Imam al-Shafi'i*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1999), pp. 368–74, and vol. 7, p. 40. Al-Nawawi 2000, vol. 2, p. 178.

28 Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, no. 3130. D. James, "An Early Mosul Metalworker: Some New Information," *Oriental Art* 26, no. 3 (1980), pp. 318–21.

29 Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad Ibn Khaldun, *Kitab al-'Ibar* (Beirut: Mu'asasat al-A'lami li'l-Matbu'at, 1971), vol. 1, p. 114, differentiates between a person affiliated through slavery (*mawla al-riq*) and a person affiliated through training, education, fostering, or employment (*mawla wala' or istina'*). Al-Kasani 1910, vol. 4, pp. 159, 170. See also Paul G. Forand, "The Relationship of the Slave and the Client to the Master or Patron in Medieval Islam," *IJMES*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1971), pp. 59–66.

30 Ibn al-Athir 1997, pp. 31, 49, 72, and 155.

31 Ibid., p. 21.

32 Ibid., p. 199.

33 Al-Nawawi uses *ghulām* to mean a free employee (*al-ajir al-hurr*) in the marginal commentary on Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin Ali bin Yousuf al-Fayruzabadi al-Shirazi, *Al-Tanbih fi al-fiqh al-Shafi'i*, ed. Ayman Salih Sha'ban (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1995), p. 143.

34 J. W. Allan, "Concave or Convex? The Sources of Jaziran and Syrian Metalwork in the 13th Century," in *The Art of Syria and Jazira 1100–1250* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 127–39.

HANA TARAGAN

AN ARTUQID CANDLESTICK FROM THE AL-AQSA MUSEUM

Object as Document

Abstract
This article discusses a particular candlestick that in its form, decoration, and inscriptions can be seen as a paradigmatic "document" that can help define and map an historical moment in southeastern Turkey. The candlestick is currently housed in the al-Aqsa Museum on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem. It is made of brass, inlaid with silver, and decorated all around with an arcade of pointed arches resting on columns. In the space between the arches appears an inscription identifying the patron as Artuq Arslan Ibn Ilghazi Ibn Artuq, who ruled the principality of Mardin in southeastern Turkey from 1201 to 1239 CE. To my mind, the arcade around the candlestick is greatly reminiscent of the hewn-stone blind arcade that decorated the façade of certain religious buildings in the principality of Mardin. The appearance of the ruler-patron's name on the candlestick might declare "Mardin—C'est moi," thus conveying a message of local identification. Viewed from this perspective, the candlestick could have been sent from Mardin to Jerusalem as a gift, a salute to the Muslim triumph over the Crusaders (perhaps upon the return of Jerusalem to Islam in 1244). The prolonged encounters between the Artuqid rulers and Jerusalem are well documented and imply the plausible participation of Mardin in such an event.

BY MAKING THE FORM, DECORATION, AND INSCRIPTION of a particular candlestick into a paradigmatic "document" (fig. 1), we can define and map an historical moment in southeastern Turkey in the mid-thirteenth century.[1] The candlestick is currently housed in the al-Aqsa Museum on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem. The broad, polygonal body of the brass candlestick has fourteen sides that gradually taper upward, giving it a bell-like shape.[2]

The base is decorated with two bands: the lower one is plaited and inlaid with silver and gold, while the upper one has a series of pointed arches, each composed of three lobes, of which the two lateral ones resemble *muqarnas* in shape. They are embossed and in high relief. The central part of the candlestick body is encircled by an arcade with pointed arches supported by pillars, capitals, and bases, all of which are embossed as well. Pointed arches also decorate the upper part of the body of the candlestick and are filled with an arabesque composed of two interlaced palmettes.

Within the arches an inscription in cursive script engraved and inlaid with silver identifies the patron as Artuq Arslan, son of Ilghazi Ibn Artuq, who ruled in Mardin and Mayyafariqin in southeastern Turkey from 594 to 634 AH (1201–39 CE). The inscription reads (fig. 2):

1

1
An Artuqid candlestick made in Mardin, Turkey, 1201–39. With the permission of al-Aqsa Museum, Jerusalem.

عز لمولانا الملك المالك العالم العادل المؤيد المظفر المنصور ناصر الدنيا والدين
قطب الاسلام والمسلمين ارتق ارسلان ابن ايلغازي ابن ارتق ظ[ا]هر امير
المؤمنين ادام الله ظله وعز نصره

Glory to our lord, the king, the ruler, the wise, the just, helped by God, the triumphant, the victorious, the protector of the world and faith, the leader of Islam and Muslims, Artuq Arslan Ibn Ilghazi Ibn Artuq, the supporter of the commander of the believers, may God make his patronage last forever and glorify his victory.

The cursive script is clearly legible, with its full use of diacritical and orthographic marks, although the cramped space between the arches forced the artist-calligrapher to overlap some of the characters. The letters are distinguished by their compactness, and the *alif* and *lam* have a tapered, angular appearance. From a stylistic viewpoint, the inscription resembles those appearing on buildings in Syria during the Ayyubid period, which "had become standard for all public inscriptions, not only in Syria but also in upper Mesopotamia, Anatolia, North Africa, and Spain."[3]

Above this inscription is another smaller graffito, which appears to be a later addition. It is clear from this that the candlestick was passed to Artuq Arslan's son and successor, Najm al-Din Ghazi I, presumably after Artuq Arslan's death in AH 637/1239 CE.[4] The inscription reads:

2

3

2
A view of the inscriptions on the Artuqid candlestick. With the permission of al-Aqsa Museum, Jerusalem.

3
Details of the inscriptions on the Artuqid candlestick. With the permission of al-Aqsa Museum, Jerusalem.

هذا البو ...ة االسلطان الملك المنصو[ر] نجم الدنيا والدين ابي الفتح غازي ابن ارتق
عز نصره [حادن باد ؟] اعاد الله من بركاته

This is … of the sultan the king, the victorious, najm al-dunya wa'l-din, father of victory, Ghazi ibn Artuq [may Allah] glorify his victory. Allah will restore his blessings.

It should be noted that the main inscription is divided among the spaces between the fourteen arches. The smaller inscription, the graffito, appears in the space of some, but not all, of the arches. However, in one instance only (fig. 3), in the space of one arch, there is a correlation between the words appearing in the two inscriptions: in the main inscription appears the word ظله وعز نصره and above this, in the very same space in the graffito inscription, are the words ارتق عز نصره. Both thus express a supplication for God's blessing on the ruler: *[May Allah] glorify his victory*. The main inscription relates to the father, Artuq Arslan; the graffito addresses the son, Ghazi Ibn Artuq.

Although these inscriptions present stereotypical formulae (*formula banale*)[5] typical of those appearing on medieval objects and buildings, it would seem that the "encounter" between these identical words in one space in the same arch creates a clear dynastic declaration. It grants ruling legitimacy, by the grace of God, not only to the father but also to the son, who apparently had the smaller inscription engraved after his father's death.

As with texts, objects can also convey both information and meaning. Such meaning is threefold. The initial meaning relates to the objects' functionality and materiality. The second meaning is encoded or inherent in them, and it is this that communicates and conveys messages; it is their symbolic meaning. Finally, objects bear past association, and this is their historical meaning.[6]

To analyze and interpret the meaning of this particular candlestick, I shall first examine the "solid data": its form, decoration, and inscriptions within the cultural context in which it was created during the period mentioned. I shall then attempt to

4

4
A frieze of blind arches on the northern façade of the Great Mosque (1152–57) at Mayyafariqin (Sylvan). With the permission of Sharon Talmor, Tel Aviv.

read the candlestick as a bearer of an historical "story" and to decipher the narrative of its "memories" while mapping its physical movement or portability along possible and relevant routes through the Jazira subzone and Bilad al-Sham.

The Mardin candlestick is bare of any figurative images. It serves, however, as a base for architectonic elements and decorations, such as arched arcades, individual arches, *muqarnas*-like ornaments, geometrical ribbonwork, arabesques, and inscriptions. As noted earlier, some of these decorations are embossed and present three-dimensional elements that endow the candlestick with a sculptural dimension. Others are engraved, flat, and merge with the surface. It can be stated that this unique object, apparently made in Mardin or its environs, is decorated with elements that recall the stone decorations on the façades of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Anatolian buildings, particularly in Mardin, Dunaysir (Kiziltepe), Diyarbakir (Amida), and Mayyafariqin (Sylvan).

Following the triumph of Islam over the Byzantine Empire at the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 and the penetration of Turkoman groups into Asia Minor, the process of conversion to Islam in southeastern Anatolia reached its peak in the twelfth century.[7] In the early thirteenth century the region flourished both economically and culturally. The numerous caravanserais, mosques, madrasas, and mausolea that were built along the trade routes in Anatolia present some striking façade decoration using cut-stone masonry.[8] Notable among these are two groups of decoration types. One of them presents carved stone reliefs of stalactites, half-domes, colon-

5

5
The mihrab of the Great Mosque of Dunaysir (Kiziltepe) (1184–1204). After A. Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques dans la Turquie Orientale/avec un recueil d'inscriptions arabes par Jean Sauvaget* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1940), pl. XXXI.

naded arcades, and various types of arches—pointed, polylobed, and cusped—a kind of arcuated system that contributes a dynamic element to the architecture. The second group presents flat decorations spread over the walls as a sort of web or textile in geometrical forms and arabesques.

Examples from Mardin and its environs are numerous. A double arcade of columns and arches can be seen on the northern façade in the Great Mosque of Mayyafariqin (Sylvan) that was built from 1152 to 1157.[9] Although this façade underwent changes in 1913, it can still be recreated from photographs. The characteristic element is a lateral strip above a row of windows, a sort of frieze of pointed blind arches set upon low, broad, ribbed columns (fig. 4). The arches resemble the teeth of a saw.

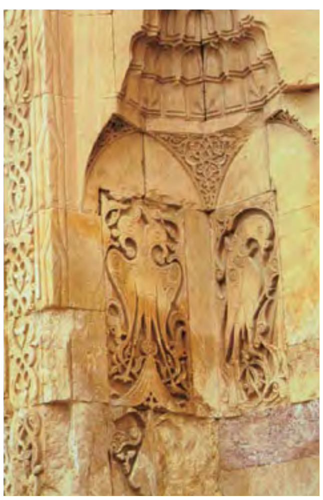
Variations of arch compositions and lobed moldings are also seen in the portals and mihrabs in Madrasa al-Zinciriyya (1195)[10] and in Madrasa Mas'udiyya (1193–94) in Diyarbakir,[11] as well as in Dunaysir (Kiziltepe), where according to the inscription on the lobed arch of the mihrab[12] (fig. 5), the building was begun by Yuluq Arslan (1184–1203) and completed in AH 601/1204 CE by his brother Artuq Arslan, whose name appears on our candlestick. A lobed arch also decorates the portal to the prayer hall in the same mosque (fig. 6). *Muqarnas*-shaped decoration similar to that on the candlestick can be found, for example, in the mosque and hospital in Divrigi (1228–29) (fig. 7), which is one of the first buildings in which three-dimensional stone decoration was used.[13]

This brief and partial comparison has revealed the close resemblance between the images on the candlestick and those that can be seen on certain buildings in the principality of Mardin, dating from the reign of Artuq Arslan (1201–39). Albeit reduced in scale, the brass object from Mardin nonetheless possesses all the characteristics of the Anatolian façades.

Similarities between contemporary buildings of that period and the candlestick also extend to the inscription within the arcade arches on the object. This is not an inscription invoking blessings and good wishes for the owner, such as those that usually appear on metal objects in Iran or northern Mesopotamia from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,[14] but one on which the *laqab* (honorific titles), *kunya*, the *ism*, the *nasab*, and at the end the *nisba* are of Artuq Arslan. This is reminiscent

6

6
The portal to the prayer hall of the Great Mosque at Dunaysir (Kiziltepe) (1184–1204). With the permission of Sharon Talmor, Tel Aviv.



7
Muqarnas-shaped decoration on the Divrigi Mosque and Hospital (1228–29). From Dogan Kuban, *The Miracle of Divrigi* (Istanbul: Yapi Kredi Kultur Merkezi, 1997), pp. 146–47.

of the public foundation inscriptions, with their stereotypical formulae that convey the political, dynastic, and religious messages, also found on the Seljuq of Rum buildings as well as on earlier Zengid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk buildings.[15]

Transferring the formula seen on the façades of buildings enlisted to religious Sunni ideology to the candlestick's "façade" was not a random occurrence. It perhaps indicates Artuq Arslan viewed the candlestick as an object for the dissemination of his name in his role as the defender of Sunni Islam and its ideology.

It is worthy of mention that dedications of this kind can be found on other objects created during the same period and in the same region, such as an Ayyubid basin now housed at the University of Michigan Kelsey Museum of Archaeology.[16] It was made in honor of the last Ayyubid prince, Najm al-Din Ayyub, who resided in Diyarbakir from 1232 to 1238 before moving to Damascus and then Egypt while he attempted to maintain his rule over the Jazira through his son, Turanshah. The wording of that inscription, *mutatis mutandis,* is identical to the one on our candlestick.

It is reasonable to assume that the Ayyubid basin, which was described and analyzed by Oleg Grabar in 1962, was created in the Diyarbakir region in the first half of the thirteenth century. It would therefore seem that certain objects from those regions, as well as the façades of various public buildings, were all enlisted to the same purpose: dynastic propaganda.[17]

Connections between the Artuqids and the Ayyubids in this area in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are well documented.[18] Artuq Arslan saw his loyalty fluctuating between the overlordship of the Rum Seljuqs and the Ayyubids of Syria.[19] Between 1226 and 1234, for instance, he switched his allegiance three times for political expediency, as is clearly manifested by the inscriptions on the coins he issued.[20]

That being so, by means of the architectonic features characteristic of the locality, the candlestick thus bears with it the memory of Mardin. In other words, it represents the principality of Mardin and its ruler, Artuq Arslan, whose name is inscribed upon it. The graffito inscription added by his son, Ghazi, brings him into the "story" by declaring the dynasty's continuation and power.

Is it possible to suggest a reason why this object was made? Could it have been created for a specific event at which Artuq Arslan sought to announce independence and freedom from the yoke of fealty to the Ayyubids? Such an event could have occurred in 1234, when the Ayyubids lost control of the Jazira to the Seljuq Kaiqubad, who temporarily conquered Edessa and Harran. Swiftly recovering their power, the Ayyubids sought to wreak vengeance on the Artuqids, who had supported the Seljuqs by taking Dunaysir from them. Fortunately for the Artuqids, the Mongol invasion prevented the Ayyubids from bringing their plans to fruition. We know Artuq Arslan minted a coin to commemorate the occasion.[21] By the same token he could have commissioned the candlestick bearing his name as an independent ruler who was not subject to the Ayyubids or the Seljuqs.

As we have seen so far, the candlestick has not only a patron for whom it was made but also an estimated date of when it was made. We cannot, however, determine with certainty the fate of the candlestick after Ghazi's death in AH 658/1260 CE or when it left Mardin, nor do we know when and how it reached Bilad al-Sham, or Jerusalem. If we adopt the "pluritopic" model proposed by Eva Hoffman,[22] however, we can, in the medieval geopolitical context of the Jazira and the Mediterranean region in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, suggest a number of alternative narratives in mapping the candlestick's route.

Mehmet Tütüncü's assumption—that it was brought to al-Aqsa as a *waqf* by the Khwarazmians, who controlled Jazira and Mardin at one time and who may have brought the candlestick with them to Jerusalem when they invaded the city in 1244—could be possible, albeit it cannot be proven.[23] According to Ibn al-Jawzi (died 1259), in 1237 the Khwarazmians looted the treasure of Badr al-Din Lu'lu', the *atabeg* of Mosul (reigned 1211–59), and took many precious metalwork items.[24] Could this also have been the fate of the Mardin candlestick?

As it happens, the Artuqids and Jerusalem indeed had a common historical memory, as an examination of the relations between Mardin and Jerusalem in the Middle Ages reveals.[25] In the summer of 1098, the Fatimid vizier al-Afdal invaded Bilad al-Sham and laid siege to Jerusalem.[26] The city was in the hands of Suqman and Il-Ghazi—the sons of Artuq, founder of the Artuqid dynasty, who died in 1091—and was under the aegis of the Seljuq emir of Damascus, Taj al-Dawla Tutush, until Jerusalem surrendered to the Fatimids.[27]

In 1099 Jerusalem was conquered by the Crusaders. In 1152 members of the Artuqid dynasty attempted a campaign against Jerusalem led by Yaruq Timurtash, the ruler of Mardin, but they were vanquished and massacred by the Crusaders. There is no room for doubt that, like the Zengids and Ayyubids, the Artuqids were supporters and promoters of Sunni Islam and jihad.[28] They were involved in establishing numerous madrasas in their realm, and religious studies flourished in Dunaysir in the thirteenth century.[29] Artuq Arslan was responsible for having the mihrab at Dunaysir decorated with numerous verses from the Koran. Furthermore, from Ibn al-ʿAdim (Aleppo, 1192–1262), we know that Sufis from Mardin went to live in Jerusalem in order to be buried there.[30]

In the 1229 peace treaty of Jaffa, Jerusalem was ceded to the Crusaders and the Holy Roman emperor Frederick II. It was liberated only fifteen years later, in 1244, by the Khwarazmians, whose homeland on the shores of the Caspian Sea had been lost, and they had been forced westward by the Mongols.

The shock suffered by the Muslim world with the handing over of Jerusalem to the Crusader infidels was severe, and it undoubtedly touched the very soul of the Artuqids. It is entirely possible that upon Jerusalem's restoration to Islam in 1244, Najm al-Din Ghazi sought to present the candlestick on behalf of himself and his father, Artuq Arslan, the deceased former ruler of Mardin. It is possible that his father had perhaps even intended to transfer it to Jerusalem, but he had not managed to do so before his death. It is also reasonable to assume that his son, Najm al-Din Ghazi, had wanted to be identified with the figure of Salah ad-Din, who had sent the Nur ad-Din *minbar* as a gift from Aleppo to al-Aqsa.[31]

This splendid candlestick may thus have been intended to commemorate faithfully the city of Mardin, whose metaphoric image is reflected in its architectonic elements. Its purpose may have been to represent the father-patron Artuq Arslan and his son-patron Najm al-Din Ghazi as one entity.

The candlestick's journey from Mardin to Jerusalem extended beyond a physical route. The memories, associations, and meanings it still bears make it a document of its times.

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NOTES

This paper is dedicated to Professor Oleg Grabar—mentor, friend, and colleague—who accompanied me throughout this work with his inspiring and generous advice until his death. I shall sorely miss him.

I also thank all those whose generosity and friendship made this article possible to write: Dr. Khader Salameh, director of the Islamic Museum and al-Aqsa Library; Dr. Fatma Meliha Şen of the University of Istanbul; Professor Mehmet Tütüncü, SOTA, Haarlem (Netherlands); Dr. Yehoshua Frenkel of the Haifa University; Dr. Deniz Beyazit, Department of Islamic Art, Metropolitan Museum; Dr. Nitzan Amitai-Preiss; Dr. Amir Lerner and Dr. Arie Lev Kapitaikin of Tel Aviv University; and my Tel Aviv university students Sharon Talmor and Nadia al-Haj.

1 Several scholars have addressed this object. See Marwan Abu Khalaf, "Three Candlesticks from the Islamic Museum of al-Haram al-Sharif, Jerusalem," *Levant* 20 (1988), pp. 238–40; Mehmet Tütüncü, "About a Candlestick of Artuk Arslan in Jerusalem," in *1st. International Symposium of Artuqy Papers*, vol. 2, ed. Ibrahim Ozcosar (Mardin: Artukluar Mardin Valiligi Kultur Yayini, 2007), pp. 111–18 (in Turkish).

2 Its body is approximately 31 cm in diameter; its overall height is 39 cm; the neck is 20 cm high and clearly is not the original but a later replacement.

3 Yasser Tabbaa, "The Transformation of Arabic Writing: Part 2, the Public Texts," *Ars Orientalis* 24 (1994), p. 132. According to Tabbaa, inscriptions in this style originated in the period of Nur al-Din and are related to the stylistic variations that characterize the "Sunni Revival." Tabbaa demonstrates this style of writing in the inscriptions of the Aleppo citadel from the early thirteenth century. The inscription on the candlestick presents a style of writing close to that of Aleppo.

4 Graffiti on medieval metal objects offer an interesting subject in themselves. Numerous Ayyubid-period objects bear engraved inscriptions in a careless, cursive script, which usually indicates the object was designated for a location in a specific room (generally a vestiary is mentioned), and it belonged to one ruling personality or another. Sometimes the graffiti appear on the edge of or inside the object, while the "canonical" inscription is displayed centrally in meticulous script. Frequently, as in the present case, the graffito marks a change of ownership and reveals who "inherited" or received the object after its owner's death. See D. S. Rice, "Inlaid Brasses from the Workshop of Ahmad al-Dhaki al-Mawsili," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957), pp. 319–20; D. S. Rice, "The Oldest Dated 'Mosul' Candlestick A.D. 1225," *The Burlington Magazine* 91 (December 1949), pp. 334–41. Our candlestick does not indicate a place of storage, but it does show who "inherited" it: Najm al-Din Ghazi, the son of Artuq Arslan. In this sense the content of the graffito on the candlestick differs from those found on Ayyubid objects.

5 Sheila S. Blair, *Islamic Inscriptions* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

6 See Ian Hodder, "The Contextual Analysis of Symbolic Meanings," in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan M. Pearce (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 12.

7 V. L. Menage, "The Islamization of Anatolia," in *Conversion to Islam*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1979), pp. 52–67.

8 Oleg Grabar, "Trade with the East and the Influence of Islamic Art on the 'Luxury Arts' in the West," in *Islamic Visual Culture, 1100–1800* (Hampshire: Ashgate

Publishing, 2006), p. 45, first published in *Il Medio Oriente e l'Occidente nell'arte del xiii secolo*, ed. H. Belting (Bologna: CLUEB, 1982), pp. 27–32.

9 A. Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques dans la Turquie Orientale/avec un recueil d'inscriptions arabes par Jean Sauvaget* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1940), p. 225. See also T. A. Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey: An Architectural and Archaeological Survey,* vol. 3 (London: Pindar Press, 1987), p. 289.

10 Yasser Tabbaa, *The Transformation of Islamic Art during the Sunni Revival* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), pp. 144–45.

11 Tabbaa, *Transformation of Islamic Art,* figs. 153–54.

12 See Jean Sauvaget in Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques*, p. 302.

13 Dogan Kuban, *The Miracle of Divrigi* (Istanbul: Yapi Kredi Kultur Merkezi, 1997), pp. 146–47.

14 See, for instance, A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1982), pp. 55–158.

15 See Yasser Tabbaa, "Monuments with a Message: Propagation of Jihad under Nur Al-Din (1146–1174)," in *The Meaning of Two Worlds*, ed. Vladimir P. Goss (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), pp. 223–39.

16 Oleg Grabar, "Two Pieces of Metalwork at the University of Michigan," *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961), pp. 360–68. See, for instance, an Ayyubid basin in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, in Wafiyyah 'Izzi, "An Ayyubid basin of al-Salih Najm al-Din," in *Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honour of Professor K.A.C. Creswell* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1965), pp. 253–59.

17 On inscriptions appearing on façades and which constitute, *inter alia,* "The Authentic Voice of Contemporary Propaganda," see Carole Hillenbrand, "Jihad Propaganda in Syria from the Time of the First Crusade Until the Death of Zengi: The Evidence of Monumental Inscription," in *Jerusalem*, eds. Halil Athamina and Roger Heacock (Birzeit: Birzeit University's International Academic Conference, 1992), pp. 60–69; Tabbaa, "Monuments with a Message," pp. 223–39.

18 See R. Stephen Humphreys*, From Saladin to the Mongols, The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977).

19 On occasion, the Zengid dynasty, which ruled the Jazira (1127–1222), also entered the political fray and troubled the Artuqids. See Carole Hillenbrand, "The History of the Jazira, 1100–1250: A Short Introduction," in Julian Raby, ed., *The Art of Syria and the Jazira, 1100–1250* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 10.

20 William F. Spengler and Wayne G. Sayles, *Turkoman Figural Bronze Coins and Their Iconography* (Lodi, Wis.: Clio's Cabinet, 1992), pp. 119–54, especially pp. 119, 143, and 151. The coins of Artuq Arslan, like those of his brother Yuluq Arslan before him, manifest considerable political significance.

21 Spengler and Sayles, *Turkoman Figural Bronze Coins,* pp. 150–51.

22 Eva Hoffman, "Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian interchange from the tenth to twelfth century," *Art History* 24, no. 1 (2001), pp. 17–50.

23 Tütüncü, "About a Candlestick," pp. 111–18.

24 Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, *Mir`at al-Zaman*, facsimile reproduction of manuscript no. 136 of the Landberg collection of Arabic manuscripts belonging to Yale University, ed. J. R. Jewett (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1907), p. 466, quoted in Rice, "Inlaid Brasses," p. 284.

25 Yehoshua Frenkel, "Mardin and Jerusalem during the Ayyubid Age," in *1st International Symposium of Mardin History Papers*, eds. Ibrahim Ozcosar and Huseyin H. Gunes (Istanbul: Artukluar Mardin Valiligi Kultur Yayini, 2006), pp. 549–51.

26 Emanuel Sivan, "The Sanctity of Jerusalem in Islam during the Crusader Period," in *The History of Jerusalem Crusaders and Ayyubids (1099–1250)*, eds. J. Prawer and Haggai Ben-Shammai (Jerusalem: Yad Ben–Zvi Publications, 1991), pp. 287–303 (in Hebrew).

27 Joshua Prawer, "Political History of Crusader and Ayyubid Jerusalem," in Prawer and Ben-Shammai, eds., *History of Jerusalem Crusaders,* pp. 1–58.

28 Hillenbrand, "History of the Jazira," pp. 12–15.

29 C. Edmund Bosworth, "Studies on the Jazira II: Dunaysir and its History," *Acta Orientalia Academiae scientiarum Hung.* 59, no. 1 (2006), pp. 1–10.

30 Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughyat al-Talab fi Ta'rikh Halab*, vol. 8, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus: Mutabi' Dar al-Ba'ath, 1408/1988), pp. 3601–602. See also Frenkel, "Mardin and Jerusalem," p. 550; David Morray, *The Ayyubid Notable and his World, Ibn al-'Adim and Aleppo as Portrayed in his Biographical Dictionary of People Associated with the City* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 100.

31 Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 151–61.

BAHATTIN YAMAN

FIT FOR THE COURT

Ottoman Royal Costumes and Their Tailors, from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century

Abstract
The collection at the Topkapı Palace Museum includes some three thousand items of royal clothing. Most of these belonged to the sultans and their immediate male relatives. According to a tradition that was established after the demise of Mehmed II (reigned 1451–81), clothes were packed and stored in the treasury after an individual's death. While some children's clothing has also survived, very few garments belonging to the women of the royal household were preserved. All royal costumes were made at the palace workshop, which at its height at the end of the sixteenth century employed close to seven hundred tailors. By drawing on extant palace record books and other rich archival materials dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, this paper discusses the structure and organization of the royal tailors' workshop as well as the training of individuals who aspired to join it.

ACCORDING TO OTTOMAN STATE TRADITION, it was customary to keep the clothes of a deceased sultan. This provides the opportunity to track the styles of dress of the Ottoman sultans from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century. The collection of approximately three thousand items in the Topkapı Palace Museum largely consists of the clothes of Ottoman sultans, which were considered to be incredibly valuable and hence were kept in the treasury rooms of the palace after a sultan's death. In addition to those of the sultan, the clothes and belongings of members of the dynasty or of high-ranking state officials or religious men were entombed according to tradition. Later, the clothes collected from these tombs were moved to the collection in the Palace Museum.[1] The fact that there are almost seventy kaftans belonging to Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent alone[2] is a good example of the care and protection afforded to the clothes of sultans. This tradition, however, did not extend to the clothes of the women in the palace or of the wives of the sultans.[3] Nevertheless, a women's clothing collection (albeit with examples mainly from the nineteenth century) does exist in the Topkapı Palace Museum.

Publications about the clothes of the Ottoman sultans usually relate to the introduction of some samples to the Topkapı Palace and the techniques used in their creation. Thanks to archival records, which were kept in notebook form, once a particular period is identified it is possible to estimate, at the very least, which individual team made a particular sultan's clothes. The names of the tailors or the artists that made the outfits were not woven into the clothes, but a record may occasionally be visible. A kaftan that belonged to Prince Korkud, for example, was marked by a tag as having been made by Iskender the Tailor.[4] Records on royal tailors revealed that Iskender the Tailor was an important master tailor during the mid-sixteenth century.[5] In this respect, thanks to the records about the royal clothes-making departments and the comparison of information, it is possible to identify the names of the people who were working in the royal departments as apprentices or as master tailors, as well as to keep track of their salaries and promotions over a period of several years.

The Ottoman state was one of the leading civilizations of its time with regard to record keeping. The state recorded every important occurrence, and these documents were stored and maintained. Thanks to them, the details of the tailoring departments can be followed for three centuries. The records are in the *siyakat* style of writing and provide the name and dates of the department, the names of individual teams, the people working in the teams, and their wages.

The royal departments of clothes making for the Ottoman Empire are divided into three groups. The first is the royal artists' team known as *ehl-i hiref*; the second is the royal tailors' team called *hayyatîn-i hassa*; and the last is the team of *hil'at* tailors.

Records are mostly kept in separate notebooks in the Istanbul Topkapı Museum Archive (TSMA), the Istanbul Basbakanlik Ottoman Archive (BOA), and the Sofia Bulgaria State Archive (BULGAR).[6] Hundreds of notebooks and documents belonged to royal craftsmen, royal tailors, and *hil'at* tailors. A smaller number of notebooks was used to indicate the assigned numbers of the groups in this work. Although each of these "salary notebooks" documents a period of three months, graphs help present data for the span of a year. Notebooks related to royal craftsmen (*ehl-i hiref*) indicate the dates when the craftsmen met. The archives in which they were found are as follows.

THE DATE WRITTEN IN THE GRAPHS IN THE PLATES	THE ACTUAL DATES IN THE DOCUMENTS	ARCHIVE NUMBERS	ARCHIVE LOCATION
1526	15 January–12 February 1526	D. 9612	TSMA
1545	15 March–11 June 1545	D. 9706/4	TSMA
1557	24 October 1557–12 November 1558	D. 9612	TSMA
1593	5 January–2 April 1593	MAD. 7238	BOA
1595	6 September–3 December 1595	MAD. 7357	BOA
1598	4 August–31 October 1598	MAD. 7362	BOA
1606	6 August–1 October 1606	D. 9613/3	TSMA
1613	21 February–20 May 1613	MAD. 07181	BOA
1619	18 March–13 June 1619	MAD. 6270	BOA
1626	29 March–25 June 1626	MAD. 7444	BOA
1630	10 August–6 November 1630	MAD. 6137	BOA
1647	6 February–5 May 1647	MAD. 05723	BOA

1652	2 December 1652–28 February 1653	MAD. 06300	BOA
1658	6 January–3 April 1658	MAD. 06300	BOA
1662	16 August–12 November 1662	MAD. 7166	BOA
1670	21 May–17 August 1670	MAD. 2308	BOA
1677	7 December 1676–4 March 1677	MAD. 7014	BOA
1686	17 November 1686–9 August 1687	MAD. 6292	BOA
1690	12 January–9 April 1690	MAD. 6292	BOA
1701	8 June 1701–27 May 1702	D. 179	BULGAR
1710	26 August 1710–18 February 1711	D. 200	BULGAR
1732	18 December 1732–7 December 1733	MAD. 204	BOA
1742	29 November 1742–17 November 1743	D. 249	BULGAR
1760	18 February 1760–5 May 1761	Kepeci 7225	BOA
1775	4 March 1775–20 February 1776	Kepeci 7229	BOA
1790	10 September 1790–27 November 1791	Kepeci 7235	BOA
1796	4 October–30 December 1796	D. 9613/13	TSMA

The graph below displays data from notebooks documenting the royal tailors (*hayyatîn-i hassa*) and the *hil'at* tailors (*hayyatîn-i hil'at*). It indicates the dates when the tailors met and the archives in which the notebooks were found.

THE DATE WRITTEN IN THE GRAPHS IN THE PLATES	THE ACTUAL DATES IN THE DOCUMENTS	ARCHIVE NUMBERS	ARCHIVE LOCATION
1526	15 January–12 February 1526	D. 733	TSMA
1566	1 March–28 September 1566	MAD. 6196	BOA
1592	8 October 1592–4 January 1593	MAD. 7238	BOA
1595	6 September–3 December 1595	MAD. 7357	BOA
1596	1 March–28 September 1596	MAD. 7357	BOA
1599	28 January–26 April 1599	MAD. 7362	BOA
1604	30 May–26 August 1604	MAD. 7312	BOA
1613	21 May–16 August 1613	MAD. 7182	BOA
1618	19 December 1618–17 March 1619	MAD. 6270	BOA
1626	22 September–19 December 1626	MAD. 6299	BOA
1630	10 August–6 November 1630	MAD. 6137	BOA
1647	6 February–5 May 1647	MAD. 5723	BOA
1657	9 October 1657–5 January 1658	MAD. 6300	BOA
1663	9 February–8 May 1663	MAD. 7166	BOA
1670	21 May–17 August 1670	MAD. 2308	BOA

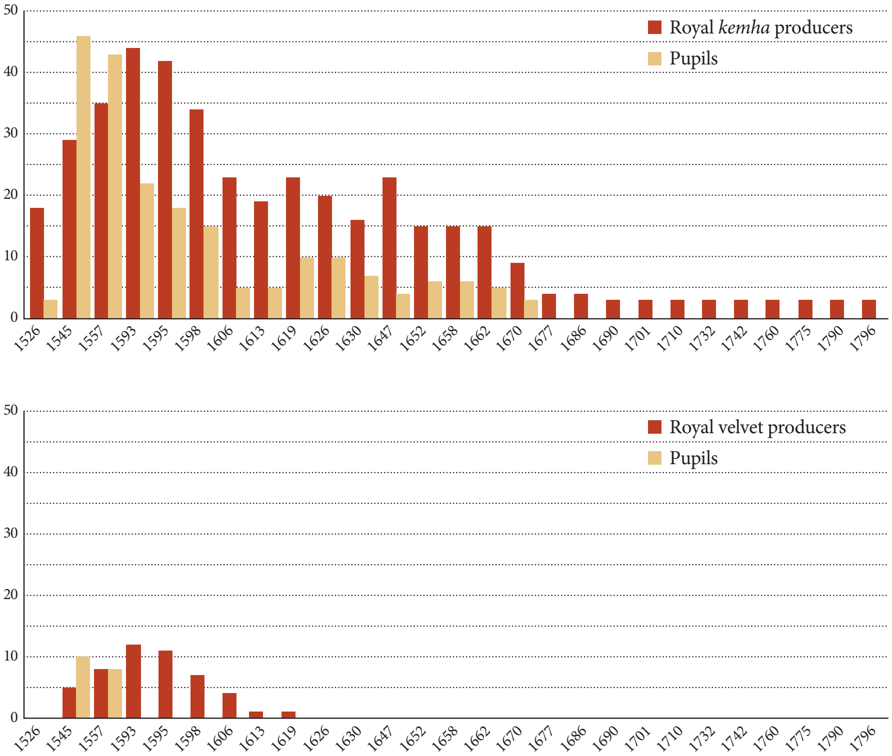
1671	11 February–9 May 1671	MAD. 2308	BOA
1673	18 April–15 July 1673	MAD. 6928	BOA
1675	28 March–18 December 1675	MAD. 7014	BOA
1688	30 July–25 October 1688	MAD. 6292	BOA
1699	29 June 1699–17 June 1700	MAD. 3733	BOA
1700	18 June–14 September 1700	MAD. 3733	BOA
1729	27 July–23 November 1729	MAD. 3735	BOA
1732	18 December 1732–16 March 1733	MAD. 204	BOA
1735	17 November 1735–13 February 1736	MAD. 7479	BOA
1756	26 September–23 December 1756	Kepeci 7224	BOA
1757	15 September–12 December 1757	Kepeci 7225	BOA
1760	13 August–9 November 1760	Kepeci 7226	BOA
1764	1 July–27 September 1764	Kepeci 7227	BOA
1768	18 May–14 August 1768	Kepeci 7228	BOA
1776	21 February–19 May 1776	Kepeci 7230	BOA
1777	9 February–8 May 1777	Kepeci 7231	BOA

Royal Departments for Producing Clothes

The Ottoman government founded official departments for their clothes as well as departments to produce the materials that were needed by the palace. In some sense, a different department was established for each step of royal costume production.

Two important types of raw material—silk and thread—were needed particularly in the production of clothes for the sultans. The Ottoman government founded official departments under the palace administrator for obtaining raw materials to be used in the royal workshops. The first of these was a group called *gazzaz,* which processed silk for use in the royal workshops. Its members belonged to both the royal craftsmen team and the royal tailors team. Clothes shimmering with silver or gold thread attracted the attention of the sultans, and consequently these threads were considered to be an indispensable element in clothes and materials. To meet the need for thread, the team of gilded thread makers was positioned within the *ehl-i hiref* group. The gilded thread makers processed the gold or silver used to construct clothes, while the *kemha* or *zerduz* groups used these threads to decorate clothes.

Clothes and materials were initially woven in the royal workshops according to the patterns designed by the illustrators group in the *ehl-i hiref* team. When those workshops could not meet the demands made on them, clothes were ordered from other workshops in Istanbul and Bursa. Silk clothes in particular were kept under the control of the state and were checked in detail, from the number of threads to the dye.[7]



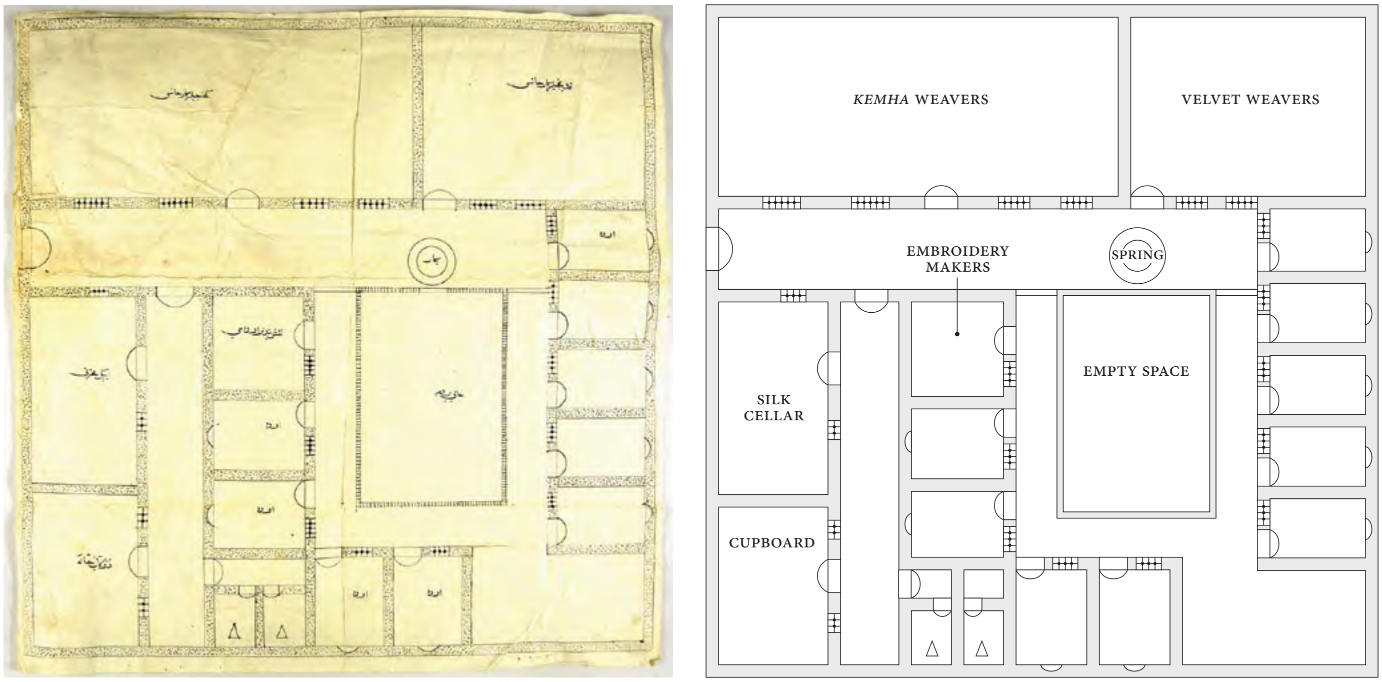
1

1
The number of royal *kemha* and velvet producers by year.

Other departments produced clothes under the direction of royal craftsmen and tailors. *Kemha*[8] and velvet producers are the most important of these groups. The *kemha* producers existed from the beginning to the end of the royal craftsmen organization known as *ehl-i hiref*. This group was one of the largest in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the total number of masters, apprentices, and pupils exceeding seventy. By the eighteenth century, however, the number of people working in this group had fallen to three. The other group that produced velvet was neither as crowded nor as enduring as the *kemha* producers, and it did not hire workers after 1622 (fig. 1).

A plan dated 1808 indicates the workplace of both the *kemha* and the velvet producers. The workshop of the *kemha* producers was located in the largest room on the upper right corner of the plan, while that of the velvet producers was on the left. The structure had an open courtyard at the center, a number of small rooms (one of which belonged to the silk processors), and a larger room for storing silk. Additionally, located near the *kemha* and the velvet producers' workshops was a water system that probably included a pool. This workshop building, considered to have belonged to the palace, is thought to have been built in Tavukpazari in Istanbul in the sixteenth century (fig. 2),[9] but we could not identify any building or ruin around Tavukpazari that fit this plan.

As is known from records dated 1545, a group of embroidery makers worked with the *kemha*. This group, which numbered eleven workers towards the end of the sixteenth century, did not hire anyone after 1635. In addition to the *kemha* and the velvet producers were those who created a kind of coarse woolen cloth called *aba*. Another group, known as *basmaciyân*, produced printed cotton, but it was very short term and employed only a few people.



2

2
Plan indicating the workplace of the *kemha* and velvet weavers in 1808 according to the document registered TSM E. 6342

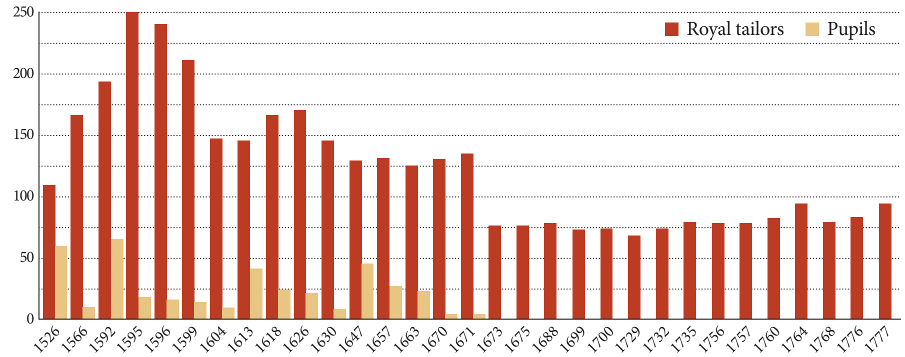
Royal Tailor Units

Royal Tailors

The royal tailors oversaw the sewing needs, along with the clothes, in the palace. It was compulsory for this group to travel with the sultan during wartime.[10] Led by the head tailor, its many integral activities, such as hiring, appointments, and the wages of the staff, were conducted with the approval of the *hazinedarbasi*,[11] who was a royal officer responsible for finances.

The number of employees in the royal tailors unit varied over time. Some information about the places where royal tailors used to work is given in various documents, including Evliya Celebi's *Seyahatname*. An Ottoman traveler, Evliya Celebi (1611–1682) mentions two major workshops: one built by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror, and the other started by Suleyman the Magnificent. He states that the first workshop was located in Sultanahmet, near Arslanhane; the second was close to where the Gulhane Park lies today, over the outer wall of the Topkapı Palace and opposite the Alay Mansion from where the sultan watched the army march. Celebi also states five hundred people were employed in each workshop.[12] Archival documents dated 1792[13] and 1840[14] relate the assignment of royal tailors to the mosque foundation, and a document dated 1795 records the assignment of an *İmam* to the mosque in front of the workshop of tailors built by Selim I (reigned 1512–20).[15] That Hassa tailors used to work opposite the Alay Mansion also confirms Evliya Celebi's statement. In that location today are a number of buildings that were constructed later.

The royal tailors' salary notebooks are four to five pages long and list the head tailor, the chamberlain (*kethüda*), the imam, and the muezzin, along with the date and their wages. After this comes a list of administrative staff and four or five departments with staff listed by name. During the seventeenth century, each department contained twenty to thirty workers. These departments were



3

3
The kaftan of Suleyman the Magnificent (13/37) in the Topkapı Palace Museum; the number of royal tailors by year.

allegedly separated according to their fields of expertise, such as kaftan, shirt, or *shalwar* tailors.

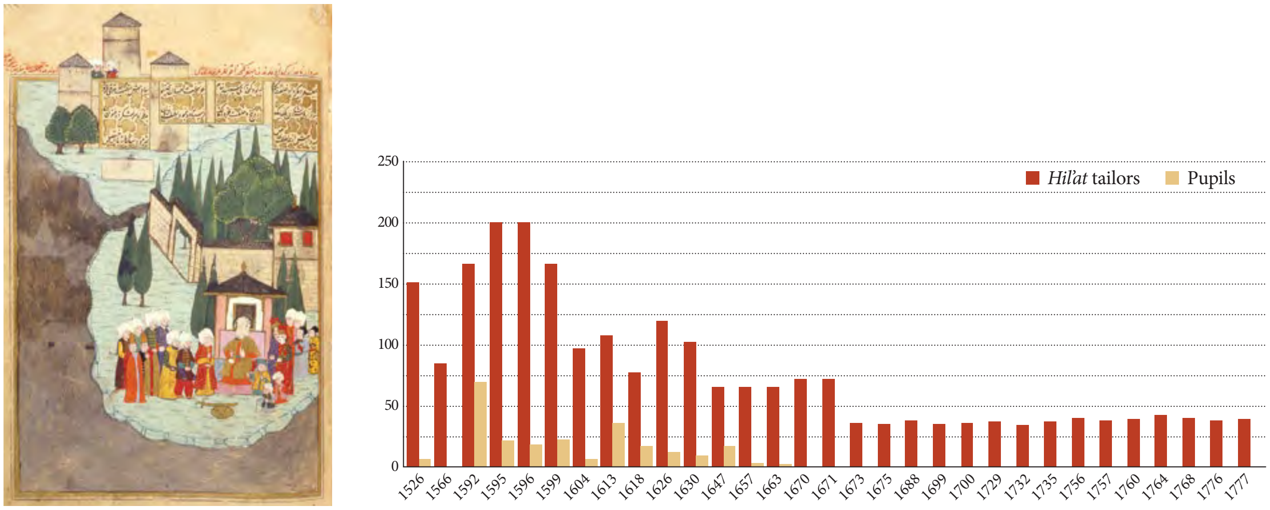
Following this section comes information concerning silk processors (*gazzaz*), cotton fluffers, printed cloth makers, and *edikyan* units, each with one to five workers. The printers added decorations onto clothes, whereas the *edikyan* dealt with the bottom leather parts of the *shalwars*. After these units is information about the *müteferrika* group, made up of about ten people. *Müteferrika* employees appear in other departments as well. A few others were hired, but not necessarily in a unit, to handle detailed works.

Despite the numerous groups and subgroups within the royal tailor unit in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, their numbers decreased in the eighteenth century (fig. 3). For instance, the *shakirdan* group, which is listed as being made up of apprentices or pupils in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century documents, did not appear in the eighteenth-century records. The same is true of the *gazzaz* group, which is mentioned in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century documents as silk processors, but it had no workers in the eighteenth century.

Hil'at *Tailors*

The definition of *hil'at*—to take off one's clothes or to give the clothes that one takes off to someone else—could also refer to the valuable clothes that sultans presented to statesmen and other important men to bless and honor them. In Islamic communities, sultans offered belts, swords, furs of squirrels or weasels, and money along with the *hil'at* in accordance with the importance or responsibilities of the statesman.

The *hil'at* tradition dates back to when the Prophet Muhammad gave his robe to Ka'b b. Zuheyr, a famous poet, after he recited an ode.[16] In the Ottoman state, the *hil'at* tradition was attributed great significance, for it symbolized the legitimacy of the dynasty and the subjects' commitment to it. Consequently, the practice was continued even during difficult times. A *hil'at* was also given to a person who received a state mission or who expressed his commitment to the sultan as a way of blessing, encouraging, and honoring him. Such *hil'at* rewards were sometimes included as an allowance from the sultan. The *hil'at* tradition was gradually abolished, beginning in the reign of Sultan Mahmud II (reigned 1808–39).[17]



4

4
Hil'at to be given by Murad III to Ja'far Kethuda (from *Şehinşehname*, 1592; TSM B. 200, fol. 112a); the number of *hil'at* tailors by year.

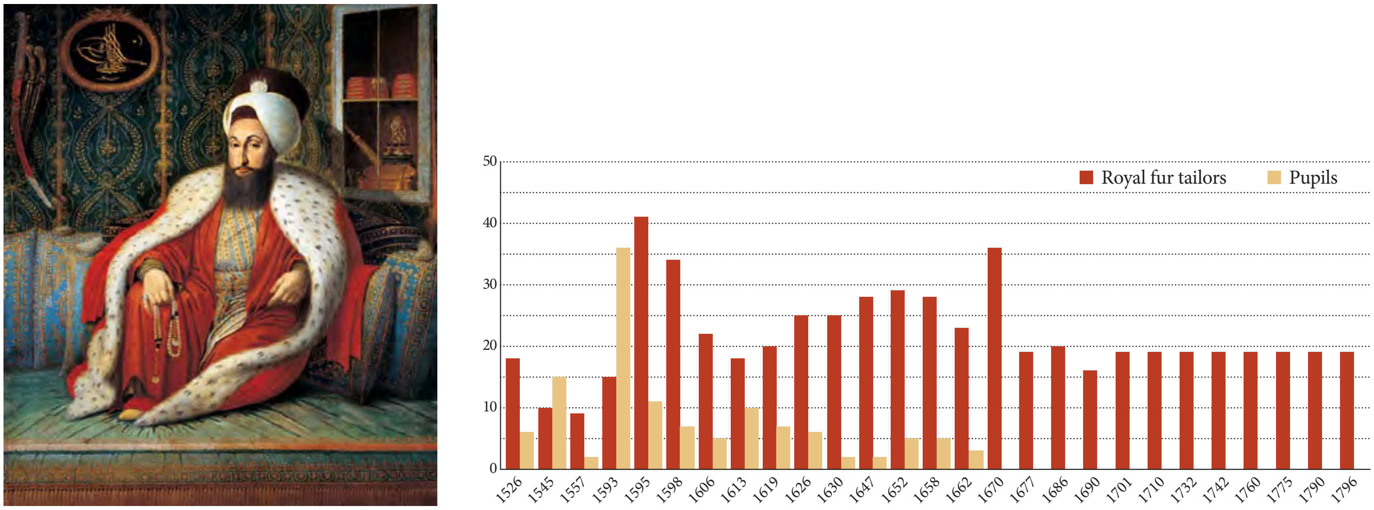
Even though the *hil'at* tailors unit was founded with the royal tailors, the records of this smaller unit follow those of the royal tailors. In *hil'at* notebooks, the name and the salary of the head tailors and the chamberlain were written after the dates that the notebook covered. After these come the *müteferrika* group, which dealt with a variety of activities. About two hundred men were employed in the *hil'at* group in the sixteenth century, but this number diminished gradually to forty in the seventeenth century. The unit that educated apprentices was abolished after 1670 (fig. 4).

Royal Fur Tailors

Fur was an important costume element for Ottoman sultans and elderly Turkish men. Even before Mahmud II introduced a costume revolution in 1828, fur overcoats were regarded as a symbol of Ottoman wealth. Every member of the ruling class wore fur befitting his position.[18] This group of tailors was included in *ehl-i hiref*. The fact that the workers in this unit gave presents of fur headdresses and coats lined with fur to the sultan[19] suggests they prepared various clothes decorated with fur. When related samples in Ottoman art are studied, the importance of fur in clothing becomes apparent: some sultans preferred sable while others liked lynx or squirrel. Sometimes fur was imported. A document written to the ruler of Moscow in 1588 mentions three merchants who were sent to Russia for the fur trade.[20] *Hassa* fur tailors were one of the groups that produced clothes for the palace, but again, despite the various numbers of workers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they numbered only nineteen in the eighteenth century (fig. 5).

Royal Headdress Makers

Another unit that served the palace for three centuries was that of headdress makers. In Ottoman culture, headdresses were given names, such as *mücevveze, selîmî, kallâvi, perîşânî, kubâdî, kâtibî,* and *âzâmî,* according to their shape. Even though workers in the unit were called *külahdüz* (conical hat makers), it is understood they were able to make any style of headdress, because among the gifts presented to the sultan were various kinds of hats, including *mücevvize*, night caps, and



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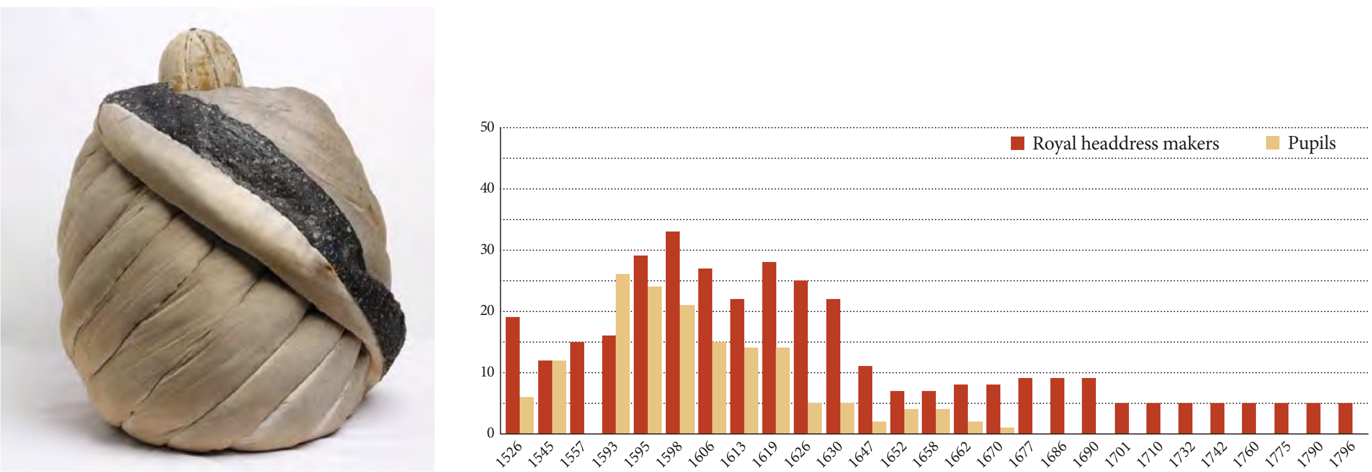


6

5
Portrait of Selim III (r. 1789–1807) with his fur, from the Topkapı Palace Museum (17/30); the number of royal fur tailors by year.

6
A turban from the Topkapı Palace Museum (13/2116); the number of royal headdress makers by year.

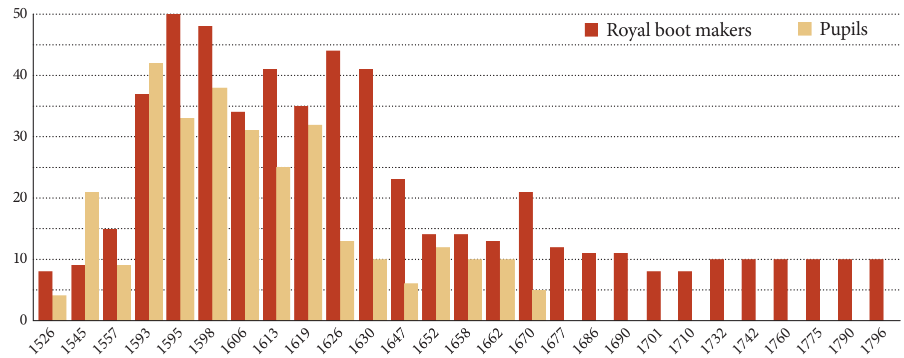
arakiye.[21] Again, the number of headdress makers diminished from about fifty to only five people by the eighteenth century (fig. 6).

One of the indispensable elements of a sultan's turban is a *sorguc*, a decoration made of black or white feathers, tern feathers, and precious jewels that was worn at the front of the turban and similar headdresses. The Ottomans reserved another unit to make these decorations, and this group lasted for three centuries.

Royal Boot Makers

This unit made any kind of footwear for the sultan in the sixteenth century, including shoes, slippers, thick boots, and light thin-soled boots.[22] Since the most important raw material for footwear is leather, a tannery was founded to serve the palace and royal leather workers employed there. Leathers used to make shoes and boots were primarily produced in the royal tannery. Similar to the other groups of tailors, the number of workers in this unit was large during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it decreased significantly in the eighteenth century (fig. 7).

Leather wears out quickly when it is used for the soles of shoes or boots. To prevent this wear, a metal material called *nalca* was inserted under the leather layer.



7

7
Boots from the Topkapı Palace Museum (2/4447); the number of royal boot makers by year.

Making *nalca*, which was an integral part of shoe production, constituted another branch of crafts in the Ottoman Empire. A royal *nalca*-making unit was founded in the seventeenth century and employed two workers.

Conclusion

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, units of tailors paid more attention to hiring young people than they did to employing masters of trades. In each unit, tailors were trained according to a sort of master-apprentice relationship, and with only a few exceptions, almost all of the units had a subgroup of pupils or apprentices. The group of apprentices called *shakirdan* is the best example of this. In the eighteenth century, after the practice of training pupils or apprentices had been abolished in 1671, workers remained in their units for forty to fifty years. One example of retaining staff from a young age is Halil veled-i Süleyman, who started working at the royal fur tailors unit in 1732 with a wage of two *akce*s (silver coins) per day. Decades later he became the head fur tailor in 1773 with a wage of eight *akce*s per day. Later his wage rose to eleven *akce*s per day, and he finally left the unit in 1785. The fact that Halil veled-i Süleyman spent fifty-two years of his life working in the unit indicates he must have been quite young when he was first hired.

Hazinedarbaşı, the head of treasure in the palace, was responsible for all the units. According to documents, the approval of the *Hazinedarbaşı* was required for any appointments or promotions as well as for all processes regarding the workers. It was also the responsibility of the *Hazinedarbaşı* to keep track of the *hil'at* that were kept as part of the Bîrûn Treasure located near Kubbealtı.

Judging from documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, workers evidently came from different locations, such as the Balkans. (Record keepers at that time noted each worker's city of origin and not his father's name.) This suggests some young men were recruited to certain units for their significant artistic ability. In the eighteenth century, almost all the workers' paternal names were Muslim, an indication that after this point few if any artists were engaged from distant lands.

When the clothes of the Ottoman sultans from the beginning of the nineteenth century are examined, a style that became classic appears. Sultans wore turbans with *sorguç* decorations; *shalwar* were worn underneath a kaftan. Some aspects of the style changed over the decades, with variations in the form or decoration of *sorguç*, turbans, kaftans, and *shalwar*, but in general sultans enjoyed this way of dressing, and it became a symbol of imperial authority. The pace of stylistic change increased significantly in the early nineteenth century during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II, when clothing began to look more European in fashion. Perhaps coincidentally, records about the royal tailor units ceased about this same time. Traditional ways of dressing that had lasted for three centuries came to an end. This transition in costume was a complex and extended process that is outside the bounds of this paper.

The costumes of sultans, which are in the Topkapı Palace today, demonstrate the remarkable quality of clothing, design, embroidery, and decoration that was afforded to garments in centuries past. Teamwork must have been indispensable in creating such high-quality clothing. The fact that records remain which continually track the tailor units over three centuries indicates the importance that the imperial family and the palace staff attributed to tailoring and to clothing. Through archival documents, we can follow those who made clothes and worked in various departments, and we can track their salaries and promotions throughout the years. Yet, despite the hundreds of notebooks in the archives, little information remains about the quantity of clothing produced in each workshop, and we do not know who, beyond the sultan and his sons, wore the clothes created by the royal tailors. Through the Topkapı Museum collection, however, we are able to determine the tailoring and style of clothing produced in each era.

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NOTES

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1 The best examples are kaftans found during the cleaning of the Prince Tombs in the Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya) Museum in May 2010. When other clothes were removed from chests, some historical kaftans that had been hitherto undiscovered were found with other valuable items.

2 Fikret Altay, *Kaftanlar* (Istanbul: Yapı ve Kredi Bankası Yayınları, 1979), pp. 4–6; Macide Gönül, "Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi'nde Bulunan Padişah. Kaftanları," *Türk Etnografya Dergisi* 10 (1968), pp. 59–66.

3 Altay, *Kaftanlar*, p. 6.

4 Hülya Tezcan, *Sarayın Terzisi: M. Palma-D. Lena-P. Parma* (Istanbul, 2008), p. 25.

5 TSMA, D. 733; BOA, MAD 6196.

6 Some sections of the documents written in Istanbul concerning the Ottoman Empire were sold to Bulgaria in 1931. Recently, microfilms or copies of these documents in Bulgaria were brought to Istanbul by the Ottoman Archives of Primeministership. Necati Aktaş et al., *Basbakanlik Osmanli Arşivi Rehberi* (Istanbul, 2000), p. 441.

7 Hülya Tezcan, "Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Erken Resim Programına Gore hazırlanmış Türk Kumaş ve İşlemeleri," *9. Milletlerarası Türk Sanatları Kongresi Bildiriler III* (Ankara, 1995), p. 322; Altay, *Kaftanlar,* pp. 3–4.

8 *Kemha* was a stiff material woven with a silk warp and using silver or gold thread to create patterns. It was usually used in making kaftans. The type of cloth with a silk warp and a gold collar with silver or gold thread was called *seraser*. *Kemha* clothes with a width of 65 cm had 6,700 to 8,150 warps. For detailed information about *kemha,* see Emre Dölen, *Tekstil Tarihi* (Istanbul, 1992), pp. 547, 549; Metin Sözen, *Geleneksel Türk El Sanatları* (Istanbul, 1998), p. 192; Nevber Gürsu, *Türk Dokumacılık Sanatı Çağlar Boyu Desenler* (Istanbul, 1988), p. 24.

9 Tahsin Öz, *Türk Kumaş ve Kadifeleri XIV–XVI. Yüzyıl* (Istanbul, 1946), pp. 45–46; Tezcan, "Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Erken Resim Programına Gore hazırlanmış Türk Kumaş ve İşlemeleri," p. 322.

10 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı* (Ankara, 1984), pp. 461–62.

11 BOA, AE, SMST. II, 21/2011.

12 Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi: 1. Kitap*, transcription by Yücel Dağlı-Seyit Ali Kahraman (Istanbul, 2006), p. 318.

13 BOA, Cevdet Evkaf, 414-20957.

14 BOA, Cevdet Evkaf, 50-2461.

15 BOA, Cevdet Evkaf, 634-31963.

16 Mehmet Şeker, "Hil'at," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi,* vol. 18 (Istanbul, 1998), p. 23; Ahmet Savran, "Ka'b b. Zuheyr," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi,* vol. 24 (Istanbul, 2001), p. 7.

17 For detailed information about *hil'at,* see Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiat Tahlil ve Metin (1066–1116/ 1656–1704)*, (Ankara, 1995); Filiz Karaca, "Osmanlılarda Hil'at," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 18 (Istanbul, 1998), pp. 25–27; Şeker, "Hil'at," pp. 22–25; M. Zeki Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, vol. 3 (Istanbul, 1983), pp. 833–34.

18 Reşad Ekrem Koçu, *Türk Giyim Kuşam ve Süslenme Sözlüğü* (Istanbul, 1969), p. 165.

19 Rıfkı Melül Meriç, "Bayramlarda Padişahlara Hediye Edilen Sanat Eserleri

ve Karşılıkları," *Türk Sanatı Tarihi Araştırma ve incelemeleri I* (Istanbul, 1963), pp. 766–71.

20 Ahmet Refik, *Onuncu Asr-ı Hicride Istanbul Hayatı* (Ankara, 1987), p. 21.

21 Meriç, "Bayramlarda Padişahlara Hediye," pp. 766–71.

22 Meriç, "Bayramlarda Padişahlara Hediye," pp. 766–71.

MAY FARHAT

A MEDITERRANEANIST'S COLLECTION

Henri Pharaon's "Treasure House of Arab Art"

1
View of the former Pharaon Mansion (today the private Mouawad Museum), Beirut, Lebanon. Photo by the author.

Abstract
Henri Pharaon's mansion in Beirut is a unique artifact among Lebanese urban elite establishments. Built in the late nineteenth century, it houses one of Lebanon's most significant collections of art objects displayed in an extraordinary setting of authentic Ottoman interiors dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Conceived by Henri Pharaon during the formative years of the Lebanese nation state (1929–63), the house amalgamates objects from the region's multilayered cultures and religions. This paper proceeds from the idea of a house as an extension of self and explores the personal drives, nationalist aspirations, and cultural constructs that may have shaped the making of the Pharaon mansion.

HENRI PHARAON'S LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY MANSION, located in a historic quarter of Beirut, houses one of the most significant collections of art objects in Lebanon (fig. 1).[1] Screened by high walls and tall cypress trees, the beautiful garden and house conceal a lifetime of connoisseurship and acquisition. The collection conveys the historical layering of the region, from the Phoenician to the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods. Most striking is the collection's extraordinary setting. The house holds the largest assemblage of authentic Ottoman interiors—lacquered and painted wood panels and ceilings, marble and stone carving—assembled from demolished Damascene and Aleppine houses dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. These interiors have been studied and published in a catalogue by Dorothea Duda,[2] whereas only a selection of the most outstanding pieces was recently featured in a catalogue commissioned by the new owner of the mansion, Robert Mouawad, a renowned jeweler who transformed the house into a private museum that carries his name.[3]

This study is a preliminary exploration into the making of the house and the drive, ideas, aspirations, and affectations that may have guided the selection of the objects and shaped their display setting. The collector Henri Pharaon (1898–1993) was a man of great wealth and political clout who contributed to the shaping of the Lebanese nation state during the French Mandate period (1920–43) and after Lebanon's independence in 1943 (fig. 2).[4] His wealth and hospitality were proverbial, and his opulent house, which acquired a wondrous reputation, became the embodiment of Lebanese refinement and high culture. Conceived in the crucible of Lebanese nation building, the house stands as a significant witness to Lebanon's modern history.

Henri Pharaon belonged to a prominent Greek Catholic family that traces its origin to the region of Hawran in Syria.[5] After moving to Damascus in the seventeenth century, many members of the family, along with other coreligionists,

2
Henri Pharaon in front of his mansion. Courtesy arabianEye.

relocated to several Ottoman and European cities, such as Haifa, Cairo, Alexandria, Venice, Trieste, and Paris.[6] In addition to being entrepreneurial and business-oriented, the family was cosmopolitan, speaking French and easily moving back and forth among Europe, Egypt, and Lebanon. It built its wealth in the silk and textile trade with Europe at the turn of the twentieth century.[7] This was further consolidated with the establishment of the first private bank in Beirut, in partnership with the Chiha family, with whom the Pharaons had close alliances through marriage.[8]

Born in 1898 in Alexandria in his grandfather's house, Pharaon moved with his parents to Beirut in 1900. He was educated in French missionary schools there before he left for Switzerland during World War I. He then joined the faculty of law at the University of Lyons, a choice determined by the strong commercial, financial, and cultural ties that existed between the weaving industry of Lyons and the bourgeois Christian milieu of Beirut and Mount Lebanon.[9] Upon the death of his father in 1922, Henri Pharaon returned to Beirut to assume the presidency of the family bank.

During the late Ottoman period, Beirut had emerged as a provincial capital, a major entrepôt on the Mediterranean and the gateway to the Syrian interior. Its port and a vast network of trans-Mediterranean exchanges with Europe were the main vectors of its transformation.[10] Beirut's highly effective and powerful mercantile class was connected to all the major centers of the Ottoman Empire and to other European cities. It prospered by means of its wide-ranging financial activities, its banks, and its credit and real-estate investments, which significantly distinguished it from the traditional class of notables.[11]

In 1920 the establishment of the French Mandate in the former Ottoman provinces created the new political entity of Greater Lebanon. It was composed of the Christian Mount Lebanon to which were annexed territories parceled out from the former provinces of Damascus and Beirut. The French created an entity that ensured the numerical supremacy and guaranteed the political privilege of one confessional group, namely, the Christian Maronites of Mount Lebanon. This was done to the detriment of local Muslims and Druzes, who felt coerced into joining this invented nation. A nationalist narrative, advocated by Christian intellectuals, traced the historical presence of Lebanon to ancient Phoenicia and underplayed the Arab and Islamic past, placing the nation's historical and geographical boundaries exclusively within a Mediterranean culture.[12] The dichotomy that resulted between Muslim and Christian, and conflicts over Lebanon's national identity, became sources of discord in the checkered history of that nation.

Upon his return to Beirut, Henri Pharaon immediately entered the political fray and remained an important power broker, and a behind-the-scenes influential presence, until the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975.[13] His extraordinary wealth, vested in banking, major real estate holdings, horse racing, and a monopoly over the management of the port of Beirut, gave him the freedom and autonomy to support the political causes that served his personal and business interests. It is the mansion and the exceptional collection of antique objects collected within its walls, however, that best defined his public image.

The house was built in 1901 by Philippe Pharaon, Henri Pharaon's father, a prominent banker and businessman, and was located in the neighborhood of Zuqaq al-Blat (the Paved Road) that developed outside the walls of Old Beirut.[14] There, many aristocratic families and members of the mercantile bourgeoisie built houses surrounded by gardens and overlooking the scenic bay of Beirut. It combined a central hall plan—a type common in the residential architecture of the region—along with an Italianate neo-Gothic exterior that agreed with the architectural eclecticism dominant in turn-of-the-century Beirut.[15] The style of the house replicated architectural fashion popular in coastal cities around the Mediterranean, and it profiled the Pharaon family's connections to a European and cosmopolitan world. Marble floors and unadorned walls painted in a light green color formed the original décor.[16] Pillaged during World War I—which the Pharaon family waited out in Alexandria—the house was briefly used as a residence for the French governor in 1924.[17] Five years later, in 1929, Henri Pharaon began to restore and refurbish his house.

Pharaon originally intended to incorporate one "Arab Salon" (*salon arabe*) into his mansion, following an established fashion in Lebanese elite houses. The vogue of the Arab Salon had originated in nineteenth-century European interiors, where they were designated as "smoking rooms." These were found in many aristocratic residences and summer homes not only in France, England, and the United States but also in Cairo, where they became integral to the bourgeois house.[18] The passion of many French and British collectors for Middle Eastern objects is well known.[19] In France, in particular, many collectors were engaged in assembling large holdings of such artifacts around the turn of the century. Some of the most elaborate reconstructions were done in Cairo, such as the Hôtel Saint-Maurice, which was built from an expert assemblage of authentic fragments and copies to recreate an imposing mansion.[20] In Beirut, General Henri Gouraud, who served as France's High Commissioner from 1919 to 1923, added an Arab Salon to the French official residence,[21] and there is no doubt that the Lebanese aristocratic classes adopted this fashion by way of French Orientalism.

By his own account, two factors spurred Pharaon's passion for collecting architectural interiors. His travels to Syria, in search of the purebred Arabian horses that he raised, took him into the homes of Damascene and Aleppine notables, where he

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3
View of the garden.

4
Anthropomorphic Phoenician sarcophagus from the fifth century BCE in front of the main entrance, with a view toward the Mediterranean.

was impressed by the intricacies of the decoration and the marble floors. Pharaon's visit to the Azem Palace in 1929 furthered his infatuation with Syrian interiors. Built by As'ad Pasha, governor of Damascus in the mid-eighteenth century, the Azem Palace was acquired by the French government in 1922, and it became the location of the French Institute of Archaeology and Islamic Art as well as the residence of the High Commissioner.[22] During an attack by rebels in the 1925 insurrection, part of the palace was burned down and its collection pillaged.

Restored by the French, the Azem Palace functioned as a catalyst for Pharaon's imaginative recasting of his father's European-inspired mansion in Zuqaq al-Blat, and it mediated his interest in Bilad al-Sham's historical visual culture. Although the Pharaon family originally came from Syria, Henri Pharaon's multiple displacements among Cairo, Beirut, Switzerland, and France established a physical as well as a cultural distance from what he knew to be part of his family history. The splendid and seductive Damascene and Aleppine interiors came as a revelation to Pharaon. If Aleppine and Damascene houses spurred the aesthetic appreciation and covetousness of Pharaon, the Azem Palace in Damascus provided the total vision. His goal became to surpass the Azem Palace in splendor and riches, and he often boasted later in life that he owned the best palace in the region.

Ironically, the order by the French to bomb Damascus in 1925 in an effort to quell the insurrection resulted in the destruction of a significant number of old houses, which infused the antiquity market with discarded interiors and architectural fragments. Helped by old craftsmen, Pharaon collected ceilings, wainscoting, crumbling walls, tile pavements, mural revetments, isolated cornices, fragments of fireplaces, and fountains, which were photographed in situ, numbered, and transported overland with great care to storage areas.[23] The architectural elements were restored in ateliers and incorporated into various rooms of the house. Old techniques were revived as a way to refurbish the painted woodwork, and disused marble quarries were rediscovered in order to complete the marble mosaics. The cost of

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Plan of the ground floor. From *The Future of the Past* (Beirut: Robert Mouawad Private Museum, 2004).

restoring and refitting the various elements in the mansion was far greater than all the previous costs incurred by their purchase and transportation.

Concomitantly, Pharaon collected objects from throughout the region. Many of them found their way to his doorstep by way of antiquarians who knew of his acquisitiveness. This resulted in the accumulation of large quantities of objects that belonged to the diverse material culture of the region: carved stone capitals, ceramics, metalwork, glass, carpets, vases, sarcophagi, statues, manuscripts, and icons. Archaeologists at the French Institute of Archaeology in Beirut provided the expertise and the scholarship that bolstered the drive to acquire works of art which Pharaon and other Lebanese collectors shared.[24] Pharaon displayed many of these objects—Phoenician and Byzantine statues as well as architectural fragments of Syrian provenance—in his walled garden, amidst fountains, lawns, and flower beds. Stone capitals lining the garden alleys present dizzying variations on the acanthus leaf motif, dating from the Roman to the early Islamic period (fig. 3). An enigmatic Phoenician anthropomorphic sarcophagus dating to the fifth century BCE and found in Sidon marks the axis of the main entrance door and signals the primacy of Phoenicia (fig. 4).

To renovate his house, Pharaon engaged Lucien Cavro (1905–1973), a French architect and a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts de Lille, who was participating in the restoration of the Azem Palace, the mosaics of the Umayyad mosque of Damascus, and other archaeological digs in Syria.[25] The house's main entrance leads to a central space around which are organized many reception rooms and a

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6
View of the salon facing the main entrance (G12 and G13 on the floor plan).

grand dining room (fig. 5). Between 1929 and 1963 fourteen reception rooms were recreated inside the mansion from fragments collected through assiduous searches in the old palaces of Damascus and Aleppo. Based on Cavro's account, which was published in the pamphlet *Portrait d'une Maison* that included essays written by friends of Pharaon, the major receptions rooms were refitted with wood ceilings, paneling, wall incrustation, and marble floors from 1929 to 1932 (fig. 6). Work proceeded slowly. The dining room was finished in 1957–58, and the rooms of the upper floor were not completed until 1963.[26] Pharaon was constantly working on his house, and the death of Lucien Cavro in 1973, a loss Pharaon felt deeply, probably put a halt to his restoration mania.

The eclectic yet harmonious combination of disparate decorative elements and the careful blending of styles can best be admired in the dining room, a stately and light-filled room that frames the elongated and simple dining table at its center (fig. 7). In the absence of a traditional Ottoman house to emulate, the dining room reveals a blending of styles and objects that was not present in the central salons, which had been restored earlier. The wooden ceiling with geometric patterns came from an Aleppo house, while the carved and painted marble panels that carry Arabic religious inscriptions and are offset by smaller Dutch tiles painted in shades of cobalt blue display the same motif of vases holding bouquets of flowers. Inside the tympanum of the entrance stone arch,[27] a desacralized iconostasis is framed on either side by marble panels with floral motifs and Arabic religious inscriptions (fig. 8). Furthermore, two bronze lion heads were inserted on either side of the arcades.

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View of the dining room (G10, G11, and G9 on the floor plan).

8
Dining room, with a view of the iconostasis above the door.

Unlike museums, which are constrained by specific organizing principles and taxonomies, private holdings are defined by the collector's imagination and are perceived as the extension of self. In her insightful book on collections and souvenirs, Susan Stewart highlights important aspects of the act of acquiring works: "Whereas the souvenir's role or purpose is the remembering or the invention of memory, the point of collecting is forgetting, or starting again, in such a way that a finite number of elements create, by virtue of their combination, an infinite reverie."[28] This evocation of an infinite reverie finds expression in the many essays included in the pamphlet *Portrait d'une Maison*.[29] For French archaeologist Maurice Dunand and others, Pharaon's house epitomizes the enchantment of a Palace of the Orient, with its opulence and splendor. It preserves past traditions that were being effaced by modernity. The mansion is an oasis of calm and beauty, a world of the imagination where the accumulation of the riches of the Orient provokes feelings of wonder and rapture. The juxtaposition of objects, the thick layering of Turkish and Persian carpets muffling the sound of footsteps, the Dutch tiles from Delft, and the delicate decoration of the wood panels create a sheltered world of harmony and order.

Much of this leads us to think Henri Pharaon was staging his own imaginary Orient while he was rejecting the noisy, messy, modern world that was developing right outside his garden enclosure. A more subtle reading is suggested, however, in a concluding paragraph by Camille Aboussouan, a bibliophile, collector, and like Henri Pharaon, an eminent member of the Lebanese Christian elite.

> A house is the reflection of the moral and intellectual order of a man. It is the country of his spontaneous creation, the motherland of his intelligence. When a seemingly austere aesthetic order enlivens with water jets and colors, with flowers and drawings, the interior frame of a daily life, when this order brings Arab and Lebanese art together with remembrances (souvenirs) of the magnificence of Phoenicia, of Greece, and of Byzantium, it

> testifies in an admirable way to Humanism, to this Civilization of Thought and Art that is every man's honor, and without which Lebanon cannot conceive itself.[30]

Pharaon did not wish to write his memoirs, nor did he leave much writing behind; an archive of his personal papers has yet to surface. He did, however, give many interviews late in his life. He spoke about his house and the desires and wishes he invested in it. In an interview given in 1985, he commented, "I wanted to make of this place a house for the brotherly co-existence among religious sects/confessions (*tawa'if*). Thus you see Quranic verses, crosses, icons and Islamic manuscripts all gathered together. I wanted to make this house—my first homeland—what we wanted to make of Lebanon."[31] This vision, he elaborated, was shaped by his experience as a student in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he witnessed peaceful coexistence among different nationalities (French, German, and Italian) and religious denominations. This idea of Lebanon as the Switzerland of the East, which had wide currency among Lebanese intellectuals, was often repeated but not thoroughly examined.

The house, conceived by Henri Pharaon as an amalgam of many cultures and religions, is the visual expression of a "Mediterraneanist ideology" expounded by Michel Chiha (1891–1954), Pharaon's brother-in-law and business associate, and the attitude was shared by many other Lebanese intellectuals in their circle. Chiha, a successful businessman as well as a political thinker, was instrumental in drafting the Lebanese Constitution of 1926 that was commissioned by the French Mandate authority.[32] He is held responsible for the confessional system of government that established a power-sharing arrangement among the different religious groups.[33] In a series of books and articles, Chiha articulated a nationalist ideology that advocated Lebanon's Mediterranean identity, which goes back to Phoenician times. He argued they were neither Phoenician nor Arab but simply Lebanese, a people of distinct characteristics comprising a mixture of ethnic and religious communities tied together by a common history and geographical location.[34] This approach embodied Henri Pharaon's strong belief that Lebanon is an entity with historical depth. It was not an artificial construct made possible by historical conjecture, mediated by French colonial power, and shaped by the Christian minority's interests in a predominantly Arab Muslim milieu.

Henri Pharaon's mansion was never set up as a private museum in his lifetime, but it was visited and admired by prominent foreign visitors, kings, rulers, and government officials who left enthusiastic comments in a golden book that Pharaon treasured. With the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975—and the fracturing of the nation—the house was caught in a no-man's-land between the two warring sides of the city. Miraculously, it survived looting and destruction, which was probably achieved at great expense by paying off the various warring factions. Following the tragic assassination of Pharaon in 1993, the house was sold by his only surviving son to Robert Mouawad, who transformed it into a private museum where the house's staggering riches could be seen by the public.

With its European exterior and Ottoman interiors, the house's hybridity defies categorization and often puzzles its visitors. Without Pharaon, whose consuming passion, single-mindedness, and imagination animated its spaces, the house stands as a relic of a not-so-distant past, in a country where questions of national identity and belonging remain unresolved, contested, and mercurial.

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NOTES

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2 Dorothea Duda, *Innerarchitecktur syrischer Stadthauser des 16. bis 18 Jahrhunderts: die Sammlung Henri Pharaon in Beirut* (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, 1971). Dorothea Duda, "Painted and Lacquered Woodwork in Arab Houses of Damascus and Aleppo," in *Lacquerwork in Asia and Beyond*, ed. William Watson (London: University of London, Percival Foundation of Chinese Art, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1982).

3 Robert Mouawad Private Museum, *The Future of the Past* (Beirut: Express International Printing Co., [2004]).

4 No biography of Henri Pharaon has been written. See Simon Awad, *henri fir'aun kama ruwiya. Shahadat minhu wa 'anhu* (Intelias, Lebanon: Dar 'Awwad, 1999).

5 For a history of the Pharaon family, see Père Constantin Pacha, *Les Pharaon. Monographie d'une grande famille et ses branches* (Araya, Lebanon: Imprimerie Catholique, 1995).

6 One member, Antoun Kassis Pharaon, was the customs master in Egypt during the middle of the eighteenth century. He settled in Europe after 1784.

7 Boutros Labaki*, Introduction a l'histoire économique du Liban. Soie et commerce extérieur en fin de période ottomane (1840–1914)* (Beirut: Université Libanaise, 1984). See also Michel Seurat, "Le rôle de Lyon dans l'installation du Mandat Français en Syrie. Intérêts économiques du Liban," in *L'Etat de Barbarie* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1989).

8 Michel Chiha, a business associate at the Bank Pharaon and Chiha (established in 1876) and an important political thinker and intellectual, married Henri Pharaon's only sister, Marguerite, in 1926.

9 The city's university, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, oversaw the establishment of the Ecole Française de Droit de Beyrouth in 1913. See Jacques Thobie, *Les Intérêts culturels français dans l'Empire ottoman finissant* (Paris: Louvain, 2008), chapter 6.

10 For the history of Beirut, see Samir Kassir, *Histoire de Beyrouth* (Fayard, 2003); Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); May Davie, *Beyrouth et ses faubourgs* (Beirut: CERMOC, 2006).

11 Davie, *Beyrouth et ses faubourgs,* pp. 39–56.

12 For a discussion of these issues, see Asher Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: In Search of Identity in Lebanon* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2004); see also Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, "Museums and the Construction of National History," in *The British and French Mandates in Comparative Study*, ed. Nadine Meouchy and Peter Sluggett (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 185–202.

13 Henri Pharaon's connection with Michel Chiha, his brother-in-law, and Bichara al-Khoury, the first president of the Lebanese Republic (who was married to Chiha's sister), placed him at the fulcrum of political and economic power. For a good introduction to the history of this period, see Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A History of Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2007).

14 Hans Gebhardt et al., *History, Space and Social Conflict in Beirut: The Quarter of Zokak al-Blat* (Beirut: Ergon Verlag in Kommission, 2005).

15 Robert Saliba, *Beyrouth. Architectures aux sources de la modernité 1920–1940* (Beirut: Editions Dar an-Nahar, 2009), pp. 43–44; Robert Saliba, "Looking East, Looking West: Provincial Eclecticism and Cultural Dualism in the Architecture of French Mandate Beirut," in Meouchy and

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16 Société Latine de Bienfaisance, *Portait d'une maison. Résidence de M. Henri Pharaon, Soirée du 18 Juin, 1963* (Beirut, 1963), foreword. An older nineteenth-century mansion, the Sursock Palace, exemplifies the cosmopolitan taste of a leading aristocratic family of Beirut. It judiciously blends European furniture and artworks with local and regional objects and carpets within an eclectic architecture. See Dominique Fernandez, *Palais Sursock. Beyrouth* (Paris: Philippe Rey, 2010).

17 General Vandenberg served as the third French governor from June 1924 to January 1925.

18 Mercedes Volait, *Fous du Caire. Excentriques, architectes, et amateurs d'art en Egypte* (Montpellier: Archange Minotaure, 2009), p. 216. See also Danielle O. Kishuk-Grosheide, "The Marquand House," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 29 (1994), pp. 164–68.

19 Christine Peltre, *Les arts de l'Islam, itinéraire d'une redécouverte* (Paris, 2006); David Roxburgh, "Au Bonheur des amateurs: Collecting and Exhibiting Islamic Art ca. 1880–1910," *Ars Orientalis* 30 (2000), pp. 9–38; Remi Labrousse, *Islamophilie. L'Europe moderne et les arts de l'Islam* (Paris, 2011). See also Marcus Milwright, "An Arabic Description of the Activities of Antique Dealers in Late Ottoman Damascus," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 143 (2011), pp. 8–18.

20 Mercedes Volait, "Passions françaises pour les arts mamelouks et ottomans du Caire (1867–1889)," in *Purs décors? Arts de l'Islam, regards du XIXe siècle,* ed. Rémi Labrousse (Paris: Les Arts Décoratifs, 2007), p. 99. Volait, *Fous du Caire*, pp. 209–17.

21 Denise Ammoun and Pierre Fournié, *La Résidence des Pins. Beyrouth* (Paris: ACR, 1999), pp. 32–33.

22 Renaud Avez, *L'institut français de Damas au Palais Azem (1922–1946) à travers les archives* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1993).

23 "La belle demeure de M. Henri Pharaon à Beyrouth," *Panorama du Monde* 9 (1965), pp. 52–55.

24 Basil Gray, *Art islamique dans les collections libanaises: exposition organisé par le Musé Nicolas Sursock, 31 Mai au 15 Juillet* (Beirut: Musée Nicolas Sursock, 1974).

25 Lucien Cavro left Damascus for Beirut in 1930 and opened his own office. In 1932 he was hired by the Lebanese government to restore historic palaces in Beit-ed-Dine and Deir al-Qamar. See A. Parot, "Lucien Cavro (1905–1973)," *Syria* (1973), pp. 477–78.

26 Lucien Cavro, "L'art arabe dans la demeure de M. Henri Pharaon a Beyrouth," in *Portrait d'une maison.* He provides a chronology for restoring the main reception rooms on the ground floor. A photographic survey of all these rooms is included in Duda, *Innerarchitecktur syrischer Stadthauser.*

27 The carved stone arch, the fireplace, and the marble panels came from the Qa'a of the house of Muhammad Basha al-Azam, dated to the late eighteenth century, and were purchased by Henri Pharaon. See Stefan Weber, *Damascus. Ottoman Modernity and Urban Transformation (1808–1918)* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2009), pp. 262–63.

28 Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narrative of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 151–66.

29 Société Latine de Bienfaisance, *Portrait d'une maison*.

30 *Portrait d'une maison,* last page.

31 Linda Njaym, "Henri Fir'aun. Umniati an yabqa manzili mathafan," *al-Sayad* 26, no. 2 (1985).

32 See Claude Doumet-Serhal, *Michel Chiha 1891–1954* (Beirut: Fondation Michel Chiha, 2001).

33 Kais Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), p. 34.

34 See Michelle Hartmann and Alessandro Olsaretti, "The First Boat and the First Oar: Inventions of Lebanon in the Writings of Michel Chiha," *Radical History Review* 86 (Spring 2003), pp. 37–65.

BARBARA KARL

ON THE CROSSROADS

Objects from the Islamic World in Habsburg Collections in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries

1
Ottoman crown of Stephan Bocskay; Turkey, Istanbul, ca. 1605; gold, precious stones, pearls, wood, silk; 23.2 cm x 18.8–22 cm; Inv. SK WS XIV 25. Wooden case lined with Safavid silk; Iran, late 16th century; wood, silk; Inv SK WS XIV 184, Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna.

Abstract
Vienna's public museums house about 40,000 objects from all over the Islamic world. Of a heterogeneous quality, the works range in date from early Islamic times up to the twentieth century. Contributing to this were the Habsburgs, who assembled art collections that were an essential part of their self-image. Objects from the Islamic world were part of their collections from a very early date. This study focuses on the Habsburg collecting policies of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It also demonstrates the role of Islamic art within their complex system of collection and display. The objects' reception and use are examined during a period that represents the crossroads between the Middle Ages and the early modern period.[1]

THE VAST MUSEUM COLLECTIONS of modern-day Vienna originated in the holdings of the Habsburgs, the former ruling dynasty, and date back to the Middle Ages, permeating all layers of the history of collecting. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries collecting by the imperial courts reached an apex. This period witnessed a process of reorganizing the traditional medieval treasury and integrating many novel items from all over the known world, which required the new arrivals to be adapted into traditional classification and organizational systems. Collections were not only refined over the following centuries, but they were also used to promote the development of research and science, ultimately resulting in the creation of Vienna's great museums during the nineteenth century.[2]

During the time period in question the Habsburg dynasty ruled over large parts of eastern and central Europe (Austrian Habsburgs), Spain (from 1516), and Portugal (from 1580), including their overseas possessions in Asia and the Americas (Spanish Habsburgs). Given the expansion of these dominions, a broader conception of the world developed. The Islamic world, for example, became more accessible to the Habsburgs. The Ottomans and the Habsburgs were neighbors in the Mediterranean and on the Balkans for about four hundred years, and during that time period they were both enemies and allies. Contacts with the Safavid and Mughal empires intensified, and the Austrian Habsburg court and the Spanish Habsburg court sent out or received embassies from Iran and India.[3]

In addition, the commercial routes by land and by sea never ceased to be busy. In the sixteenth century the most relevant cities of commercial exchange between Europe and Asia continued to be Istanbul, Alexandria, and Venice. Portugal opened a direct sea route to India in the late fifteenth century that enabled direct trade with the South Asian seas. Moreover, military encounters delivered booty, and diplomatic missions brought gifts.[4] Diplomats and specialized merchants were important agents of exchange who procured desired goods directly from Venice, Istanbul, or even Goa.[5] Karl V (1500–1558) ordered carpets from a Habsburg agent in Istanbul.[6] Ogier de Busbeck, the imperial ambassador at the Sublime Porte from 1554 to 1558, collected items for Maximilian II (1527–1576) in Istanbul and received gifts from the sultan.[7] Valuable Ottoman silk kaftans still existed in nineteenth-century Vienna in the military history museum (originally the imperial armory) and initially may have been diplomatic gifts.[8] Unfortunately they did not survive the hazards of the World Wars. Gifts were presented to Emperor Maximilian II not only by the sultan but also by the pasha of Buda. For instance, in 1567 the pasha sent him "six beautiful horses [surely sumptuously harnessed], some sabres, bows and arrows and an offer of friendship."[9] Through the Habsburg network of inter-family gift giving, many documented items from the East Indies (then still perceived as a vast area geographically) arrived via Lisbon and Madrid.[10]

Historic circumstances are mirrored by the many objects originating from the Islamic world that were part of the Habsburg collections. The following study illustrates the varied nature of works from the Islamic world present in the imperial collections during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It also sheds light on the multilayered system and strategies of collecting into which the objects were integrated. In addition, it explores the different spaces of collecting and shows that works from the Islamic world were an integral part of the conceptual programs that particular members of the Habsburg family sought to create for their own collections. Sometimes within a few square meters traditional and novel concepts met within the collections of the extended family, and objects from the Islamic world were placed on the boundary between inexplicable wonder and rational science, that is, between the secular and the sacred.

The medieval Habsburg treasury formed the basis of collecting and continued to house the most important objects of the dynasty, such as valuable regalia, vestments, and relics that justified the emperor's right to earthly rule.[11] This traditional nucleus was maintained and enlarged during the sixteenth century. One highly political item from the Islamic world was added to the treasury in the early seventeenth century and is closely related to the conflict with the Ottomans: the Bocskay crown and its case (fig. 1). The golden crown, which recalls European models, is of Ottoman production and was made in Istanbul's court workshops shortly before 1605. Its wooden case is covered on the outside and inside with a valuable, signed Safavid silk from the time of Shah ʿAbbas. Its history reflects that of Hungary and the Balkan principalities in their oscillation between Catholicism and Protestantism and between the Habsburg and the Ottoman sphere of influence.

Revolting against the contemporary Counter-Reformation–oriented Habsburgs, Stephan Bocskay (1557–1606), the reformed grand prince of Transylvania, turned to Sultan Ahmed I for allegiance. In 1605 the sultan sent him this crown as a confirmation of his Ottoman fiefs in Hungary and Transylvania. This meaningful gift was a sign of recognition of his power and at the same time a sign of his association with the Ottoman Empire. Bosckay refused the crown as regalia, knowing that the holy crown of Hungary was in the hands of the Habsburgs. Nonetheless, it represented the sultan's power over these dominions, which he intended to bestow upon one of his subjects. The peace treaty of 1606 clarified the situation when Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612) granted religious freedom to Hungary.[12] Bocskay died soon thereafter, and in 1610 his crown was incorporated into the treasury as a sign justifying the Habsburg's dominance over Hungary. Nonetheless, large parts of Hungary remained Ottoman. Due to its complex historical context, the crown endures within the treasury as a document of *realpolitik* that endowed the Habsburgs, at least virtually, with additional power during a politically tense time.

In addition to crowns, textiles were part of the regalia that continued to be used in courtly celebrations. The famous Sicilian vestments of the Holy Roman emperors (then still kept in Nuremberg) originated in the court workshops of Roger II (1095–1154). They include Arabic inscriptions and are made of Near Eastern silks that were used in imperial coronations to elevate men into emperors. Silk textiles from the east played a vital role in luxury trade throughout the Middle Ages. Even though the importance of this trade decreased by the early seventeenth century, silks continued to be appreciated and used in prominent courtly contexts. A portrait of Emperor Mathias (1557–1619) as king of Bohemia shows him wearing a sixteenth-century Ottoman silk textile, probably a kaftan. According to Otto Kurz, the garment was presented to him by the pasha of Buda in 1609. (During the Thirty Years' War it was captured by the Swedish army, and today it remains in the Church of Mariefred in Sweden, where it was tailored into an *antependium* for an altar.)[13] Wearing an Ottoman textile in a coronation portrait conveyed political power and could imply a claim of territories that were considered to be Habsburg heritage since the death of King Louis II of Hungary in 1526 but were at the time occupied by the Ottomans, such as large parts of Hungary. One can imagine that if he had seen the portrait, the Ottoman sultan who distributed textiles of this kind to his most illustrious subjects and tributaries or vassals, which in his view included the emperor, might have interpreted it differently.

Textiles from Islamic regions not only adorned emperors and kings, but they also decorated their palaces. The earliest carpets can be found in Habsburg inventories from the early fifteenth century, and Alois Riegl demonstrated that carpets abound in the Habsburg inventories of the second half of the sixteenth century.[14] The living quarters of Ferdinand of Tyrol in Ambras Castle housed fifteen to twenty carpets in 1596. Their description in the inventories is not very detailed, but it is clear they were often used to cover tables and benches.[15]

Besides palaces, sacred places, such as chapels and monasteries, continued to be important collecting spaces in the sixteenth century. These spaces in particular shed light on the collecting preferences of the women of the imperial family. Objects from the Islamic world were often used to hold relics, and they themselves were regarded as relics in the Middle Ages in Europe.[16] Among many other articles of value, Empress Anna (1585–1618), the daughter of Ferdinand of Tyrol and the wife of Emperor Mathias, donated to the *Kapuzinerkirche* in Vienna, a church she had founded, a sixteenth-century mother-of-pearl chest from the Indian region of Gujarat that was filled with relics (fig. 2). Today the chest is in the ecclesiastical treasury of the *Schatzkammer*, the imperial treasury.[17]

Two textiles from the Islamic world associated with two aristocratic female saints were considered relics. The textiles were antique at the time they were collected by the Habsburg women: the first is the cope of Saint Elizabeth in the convent of the *Elisabethinen* in Klagenfurt (Carinthia), which includes an Abbasid silk lampas probably from early thirteenth-century Baghdad. The cope, formerly in Vienna, was likely presented by Archduke Maximilian III (1558–1618), the *Hochmeister* of the Teutonic Order, to his sister.[18] The second textile, the chasuble of Saint Hedwig von Schlesien, is a striped Ilkhanid gold brocade. In 1618 Archduke Karl (1590–1624), archbishop of Breslau, brought it to Hall in Tyrol, where his two sisters were in the chapter of nuns. In Hall the large romanesque-style chasuble was cut into post-Tridentine violin shapes by the archduchesses themselves, and the piece remains there today.[19] It is telling that the splendor of Islamic textile craft served not only to heighten the prestige of emperors and saints but also to decorate palaces and churches. Such textiles were used in both sacred and profane contexts, and these spaces were not always strictly divided.

Objects from the Islamic world that were considered relics were also present in the innovative collecting concept of the renowned *Kunst- und Wunderkammern* (chambers of art and wonders). The most famous of these was the *Kunstkammer* of Rudolf II (1552–1612) in Prague.[20] It was a complex imitation of a world order that centered on the emperor, who was himself anointed and thus was a semisacred entity within a universal program of display. His collection included an Alhambra vase from the second half of the fourteenth century, which was thought to have been one of the jars from the biblical marriage of Canaan.[21] It was originally kept in a church on Cyprus from where it was captured by the Ottomans. An imperial ambassador in Istanbul acquired it and took it to Prague, where it eventually entered the collection of Rudolf II, who probably still considered it to be an important biblical relic.[22] The vase corresponds with an entry in Rudolf's 1607–11 inventory, which is accompanied by a drawing showing the vessel with a missing handle: "1 large lithic (*steinern*) antique vase or jar, 2 ells 3 inches, seems to be of burnt earth."[23]

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Reliquary box; India, Gujarat, second half of 16th century; wood, mother-of-pearl, silver; 22.5 x 32 x 19.5 cm; SK GS Kap. 5, Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna.

As so often happened, the compiler of the inventory—knowingly or not—left out details concerning the vase. It was already antique by the time it was collected. The textiles and the vase demonstrate that, while relics continued to be venerated, they were also placed into different contexts of collecting—the traditional ecclesiastical treasury and the encyclopaedic *Kunst- und Wunderkammern*.

The *Kunst- und Wunderkammern* of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague and his uncle Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529–1595) in Ambras Castle near Innsbruck counted among the most important European collections. They were more than mere assemblages of art objects. With their encyclopedic concept, they were also representative collections encompassing a *theatrum mundi* and a laboratory for alchemical and nature studies. On one hand, they housed relics such as the Alhambra vase; on the other hand, they contained scientific instruments and books as well. Specialized naturalists, craftsmen, and artists labored in workshops that were linked to the courts and their collections.[24] Among countless valuable, rare, and exotic items, such as stuffed crocodiles and birds, antique statues, seeds of unknown plants, and what would today be considered ethnographic material, objects from the Islamic world held a special place within the collections. They were displayed in cupboards, chests, and on tables alongside European handicraft and natural wonders. Through these microcosmic collections the owners presented themselves to a select public audience as virtual masters of the known world.

Surviving inventories make it possible to reconstruct the original collections and to identify some of the objects that are today in the Kunsthistorische Museum of Vienna.[25] Many items were lost, and the vague descriptions that remain do not often permit exact identification. It is certain that Ferdinand's *Kunstkammer* in Ambras held numerous items from the Islamic world from different time periods, such as valuable Ottoman and Indian daggers and other arms, various textiles in the form of clothes or bags, ivory olifants, Ottoman *terra sigillata* vessels (fine unglazed ceramics),[26] Gujarati objects of mother-of-pearl such as game boards, at least two manuscripts in Arabic script, Ottoman coins, and shoes. They were exhib-

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Jar; Central Asia, Timurid Empire, second half of 15th century; nephrite; 12.1 cm x 9.4 cm; KK 1890, Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna.

ited in cupboards alongside corals, stuffed animals, and the rope with which Judas supposedly hanged himself.

Rudolf's slightly later *Kunstkammer* was much larger in size and housed many more items from the Islamic world than that of Ferdinand. Not much is known about the actual order of things within the *Kunstkammer,* but at least the inventory was organized not only according to materials (as was most of the Ambras collection) but also according to types of objects and geographic regions. Items from the sea are listed together, as are objects from distant places and similar types of curiosities. Only a fraction of the items survives. In addition to the Alhambra vase, Rudolf's collection included more than 120 Ottoman, Iranian, and Indian daggers and swords of different qualities, some of them ornamented with precious stones. Such splendidly decorated daggers and swords often served as diplomatic gifts.[27] Given the frequency of embassy exchanges between Vienna and Istanbul, it is possible that more of the valuable weapons arrived as imperial gifts. Moreover, in the collection were tableware and cutlery of wood, leather, and mother-of-pearl objects, boxes, and textiles in the form of handkerchiefs, bags, and dresses, all roughly identifiable as being from the Islamic world. Valuably decorated shields, quivers, and bows and arrows, horse accessories, precious writing utensils, at least eight manuscripts (one with miniatures), and loose sheets and rolls of paper (likely marbled paper), Ottoman *terra sigillata* vessels, and Iranian metalwork, such as two basins with inscriptions, were also noted. Several pages describe stone objects and porcelain without mentioning their origin. Some of them possibly originated in the Islamic world as well. The gifts of the Iranian embassy in 1609 were listed separately in the inventory and mention two pieces of jewelry, two knives set with precious stones, individual large precious stones, and tableware made of stone. A miniature painting showing the shah of Iran with gazelles seems to have been a personal gift from one of the members of the embassy.[28]

Rudolf's inventory lists several stone vessels that he greatly appreciated. Some of the finest ones came from the Islamic world. Two fifteenth-century Timurid nephrite cups and a jar (fig. 3) remain in the Kunsthistorische Museum after the *Kunstkammer* was integrated into it.[29] Apart from the 1609 Iranian embassy gift, a set of then already antique Iranian stone carved tableware was presented by the Ottoman ambassador to Emperor Ferdinand I as early as 1562.[30] These large jewels or semi-precious stones, appreciated for their beauty and excellent craftsmanship, inspired the Rudolfine stone carvings that the emperor promoted, such as the works of the famous Milanese stonecutter Ottavio Miseroni.[31]

There was no clear division between the secular and the sacred within the *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammern*. Objects from the Islamic world, like the emperor himself, participated in both spheres. While the Alhambra vase was considered a relic, stone items were kept for their high value and rarity and likely served as models for Rudolfine artists.[32] Both pleased the emperor's aesthetic taste as well as his spiritual and scientific/alchemic mind. Both supported the universal encyclopedic system at the center of which stood the emperor himself.

Yet another innovative space for Habsburg collecting was the armory of Ferdinand of Tyrol. Within several halls next to his *Kunstkammer* in Ambras Castle, Ferdinand organized one of Europe's most famous *Rüstkammern,* or armories, from the late 1570s onwards.[33] Armories have a long history as storerooms of weapons created for both cities and rulers. Initially they were largely utilitarian spaces, but they developed into presentation areas designed to impress visitors during the sixteenth century. Two other famous armories were reorganized and installed during roughly the same period. In Madrid, Philip II completed an armory in 1566, and from 1588 onwards in Florence, Grand Duke Ferdinand de' Medici developed an armory in the Uffizi.[34] The Ambras armory seems to have been modeled on the Spanish armory. The Medici version represented a rather random collection of arms and armor, and its program was not as concise as that of the Habsburg armories. As in Ambras, the arms and armors of Charles V and Philip II in Madrid were assigned to cupboards. In addition, some space was allotted to the Ottoman trophies captured by Don Juan of Austria at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. In Ambras, Ferdinand celebrated his own triumphs against the Ottomans. One major difference between the two Habsburg armories is the fact that Philip II installed his collection to commemorate his father and himself.[35] Ferdinand of Tyrol's *Rüstkammer* featured a more original program and additionally stands out from these others due to its partial publication in Schrenck von Notzing's *Armamentarium Heroicum* (Armory of heroes) in 1601 and 1603.[36] Both its display and its publication were innovations attributed to Ferdinand and his counselors. He used his network of family members and agents to acquire relevant objects for his armory; many arms were gifts from envoys. In the printed version of his armory of heroes, contemporary and past model rulers, princes, and generals were depicted and described. In the actual exhibition space, the heroes were represented as sculptural figures bearing their armor. Among the noblest kings from the Islamic world was Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (circa 1495–1566), who was depicted with his sabre. The vambrace attributed to him (fig. 4) is not shown in the printed illustration in the *Armamentarium Heroicum,* or *Heldenrüstkammer*, even though it is mentioned in the Ambras inventory of 1595.[37]

In creating his *Heldenrüstkammer,* Ferdinand was surely inspired by the *armeria* in Madrid as well as by the works and sophisticated collection of portraits of famous people assembled by the humanist bishop and historian Paolo Giovio (1483–1552) in Como, Italy. As a supplement to his collection of portraits, Giovio published in Florence in 1551 *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium…* (Eulogy of famous men of arms…), seven volumes that he dedicated to Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, the father of Ferdinand's brother-in-law.[38] Giovio describes the lives of heroes, including Ottoman sultans, from antiquity to the sixteenth century. Ferdinand, who had traveled to Italy and owned a portrait collection himself, must have known this work and went a step further: not only did he display the portraits of the famous men, but he also showcased sculptures of the heroes in their armor.[39] In their midst Ferdinand presented himself as an ideal prince. The criteria for celebration within this display were the deeds of the men, not their religion. Sultan Suleyman and his grand vizier Mehmet Sokolli Pasha (1505–1579) were represented as equals to the European emperors, princes, and generals. Armor was seen as a historic document that preserved the memory of lives and deeds.

Next to the *Rüstkammer* Ferdinand arranged a more propagandistic room, called the *Türkenkammerl,* that was decorated predominantly with Ottoman arms from the mid-sixteenth century. Some of them represented booty Ferdinand and another imperial general had captured. In the center of the room, Ferdinand's armor was displayed on a mannequin mounted on horseback. Among the extant objects are Ottoman armor (some originally mounted on horseback) and weapons, such as bows and arrows, wicker shields, daggers, sabres, full harnesses, and a saddle. They were displayed to commemorate Ferdinand's victory over the mighty Ottomans. Habsburg successes against the Ottomans were rare during the sixteenth century.[40]

Apart from accompanying the ideal men depicted in the armory, from being considered pieces of jewelry in the *Kunstkammer,* and from being used to heighten the profile of Ferdinand himself in the *Türkenkammerl*, Ottoman weapons were used in tournaments staged by princes as amusement for the court and as a means of propaganda. Popular propaganda against the Ottomans, especially in the form of printed illustration, was generally inflammatory, but so too were images of other enemies of the Habsburg dominions, such as the German Protestants and the

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Ottoman vambrace attributed to Sultan Suleyman I; Turkey, Istanbul, ca. 1560; iron, silk, gold; 60 cm; C 52, Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna.

French.[41] The different conceptions of objects from the Islamic world within the intimate sphere of collecting indicate the more nuanced attitude of the Habsburgs.

In addition to showing the development of conceptions of and contexts for collecting, examining early modern Habsburg holdings of objects from the Islamic world reveals the complex cross-cultural relations and multilayered receptions that characterized the dynasty's multifaceted attitudes towards these regions. Interestingly, many objects, especially those from religious contexts, were antiquities by the time they entered the collections. Their antiquity enhanced their spiritual value. The objects were appreciated for more than their beauty, quality, and rarity. For instance, the Bosckay crown was viewed as a sign of political claims. Textiles and other objects transformed men into emperors and decorated palaces. Relics and reliquaries mediated between heaven and earth. Weapons in the armory highlighted the martial glories of the dynasty and were used for propaganda. Finally, as is characteristic for the intellectual development of the early modern period, a heterogeneous selection of rare and curious items from the Islamic world was embedded in the encyclopedic concept of the *Kunst- und Wunderkammern*.

Objects from the Islamic world reveal the ambiguous attitude of the Habsburgs towards the Ottomans as well as their admiration for the art and history of the Islamic world. This study of the collection of Islamic objects defines the Habsburgs as patrons of the arts and sciences in addition to being religious believers and cunning politicians. Politics, medieval tradition, and the awakening of early modern science met within increasingly complex collecting practices that served to heighten the spiritual, political, and intellectual prestige of the Habsburgs.

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NOTES

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2 Alfons Lhotsky, *Die Geschichte der Sammlungen*, 3 vols., second part, first half (Vienna: Verl. F. Berger, 1941–45), pp. 1–108.

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4 For references to Habsburg-Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic contacts, see Giorgio Rota, "Das safawidische Persien und Europa, 1500–1722," in *Global Lab: Kunst als Botschaft, Asien und Europa,* ed. Peter Noever (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), pp. 206–207; Elisabeth Schmuttermeier, "Zum Schenken verpflichtet," in Noever, *Global Lab,* pp. 202–204; Komaroff, *Gifts of the Sultan*, p. 140 (for an Iranian embassy at Rudolf's court in 1605), p. 294 (for imperial ambassador Siegmund von Herberstein dressed in an Ottoman kaftan), and p. 296 (for Murad III receiving a clock from the Habsburg envoy). See Noever, *Global Lab,* p. 236, no. 174, for a present from Murad III to Rudolf II.

5 Alois Riegl, "Ältere orientalische Teppiche aus dem Besitze des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, vol. 13 (1892), pp. 330–31; Angela Völker, *Die orientalischen Knüpfteppiche im MAK* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), pp. 9–15; Barbara Karl, "Galanterie di cose rare: Filippo Sassetti's Shopping List for the Medici Brothers," *Itinerario* 22, no. 3 (2008), pp. 23–41.

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7 Ogier Ghiselin de Busbeck, *Vier Briefe aus der Türkei* (Erlangen: Verlag der Philosophischen Akademie, 1926).

8 *Katalog der Historischen Ausstellung der Stadt Wien* (Vienna: Verlag des Gemeinderathes, 1883), pp. 207, 214, nos. 651, 669.

9 Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Mediceo del Principato 21659, fol. 128. Quotation: Documentary sources for the Arts and Humanities (Medici Archive Database, Inc.). http://documents.medici.org/

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11 Hermann Fillitz, "Die islamischen Objekte in der Sammlung für Plastik und Kunstgewerbe des Kunsthistorischen Museums," *Bustan* (4/1963–1/1964), pp. 93–95; Rotraud Bauer, "Der Mantel Rogers II. und die siculo nomannischen Gewänder aus den Hofwerkstätten in Palermo," in *Nobiles Officinae,* ed. Wilfreid Seipel (Milan: Skira, 2004), pp. 115–23.

12 Wilfried Seipel, ed., *Hauptwerke der Weltlichen Schatzkammer* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2005), p. 182; Rotraud Bauer, *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer* (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1987), pp. 92–95; Ivan Szanto, *Safavid Art and Hungary—The Esterhazy Appliqué in Context* (Piliscaba: Avicenna Institute, 2010), pp. 60–61.

13 The portrait of Emperor Mathias by Hans von Aachen is in Prague, Sbirky Prazskeho hradu (Collections of the city of Prague); Kurz, "Künstlerische Beziehungen," p. 8.

14 Riegl, "Ältere orientalische Teppiche," pp. 326–30; Völker, *Die orientalischen Knüpfteppiche,* pp. 7–30.

15 The Ambras inventory of 1596 is published in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses,* vol. 7, pt. 2 (1888), Reg. 5556.

16 Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianised* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1996).

17 Inv. SK GS Kap. 5. Similar chests are listed in the inventories of Rudolf II and Ferdinand of Tyrol, which renders a clear identification of the object in the inventory difficult. A similar chest is in Ambras. Rotraud Bauer and Herbert Haupt, eds., "Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607–1611," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, vol. 72 (1976). Ambras inventory, *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen,* vol. 7, pt. 2 (1888), Reg. 5556.

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20 See, for example, Julius von Schlosser, *Die Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Spätrenaissance* (Leipzig: Klinkhart und Biermann, 1908); Elisabeth Scheicher, *Die Kunst und Wunderkammern der Habsburger* (Vienna: Molden, 1979); Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, eds., *The Origins of Museums* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1985); Beket Bukovinská, "Zum Exoticabestand der Kunstkammer Rudolfs II in Prag," in Trnek and Haag, *Exotica,* vol. 3, pp. 205–19; Eliska Fuciková, ed., *Rudolf II. und Prag* (Prague: Verwaltung Prager Burg, 1997); Lubomír Konečný and Beket Bukovinská, eds., *Rudolf II, Prague and the world–Papers from the international conference* (Prague: Artefactum, 1998); Eliska Fuciková et al., eds., *Rudolf II, Prague and the World* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997); Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann, *The Mastery of Nature: Aspects of Art, Science and Humanism in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Jürgen Schultze, ed., *Prag um 1600–Kunst und Kultur am Hofe Rudolfs II* (Vienna/Freren: Luca Verlag, 1988); Robert J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997); Wilfried Seipel, ed., *Exotica—Portugals Entdeckungen im Spiegel fürstlicher Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Renaissance* (Milan: Skira, 2000); Trnek and Haag, *Exotica,* vol. 3, pp. 247–61.

21 In 1648 the Swedish army captured the vase, which is today in the National Museum of Stockolm (NMK 47).

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23 Painted and described in the inventory of Rudolf II: see Bauer and Haupt, "Das Kunstkammerinventar," in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, vol. 72 (1976), p. XXII and p. 25.

24 Fuciková, *Rudolf II, Prague and the World;* Brian W. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

25 Bauer and Haupt, "Das Kunstkammerinventar," in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, vol. 72 (1976), and for Ambras inventory, *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen,* vol. 7, pt. 2 (1888), Reg. 5556.

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27 See Komaroff, *Gifts of the Sultan*, pp. 44, 45, 105, 129, 201, and 230.

28 Bauer and Haupt, "Das Kunstkammerinventar," in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, vol. 72 (1976). It includes the list of Iranian gifts on pp. 30, 504–10. The first half of the inventory in particular abounds with objects from the Islamic world. Niederkorn, "Zweifrontenkrieg gegen die Osmanen," pp. 310–23. David William Davies, *Elizabethans Errant: The Strange Fortunes of Sir Thomas Sherley and his three Sons* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967).

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30 Riegl, "Ältere orientalische Teppiche," p. 330.

31 Rudolf Distelberger, "Dionysio und Ferdinand Eusebio Miseroni," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien,* vol. 75 (1979), pp. 109–93.

32 See a Fatimid rock crystal vase, today in the Freer Gallery of Art, with a rim from Rudolfine Prague (F1949.14). Esin Atil, *Art of the Arab World* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1975).

33 Laurin Luchner, *Denkmal eines Renaissancefürsten* (Vienna: Schroll, 1958); Alfred Auer, ed., "Das Inventarium der Ambraser Sammlungen aus dem Jahr 1621–Die Rüstkammern," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien,* vol. 80 (1984): I–CXVIII.

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35 Alvaro Soler del Campo, *The Art of Power: Royal Armor and Portraits from Imperial Spain* (Madrid: Seacex, 2010), pp. 25–47.

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EMINE FETVACI

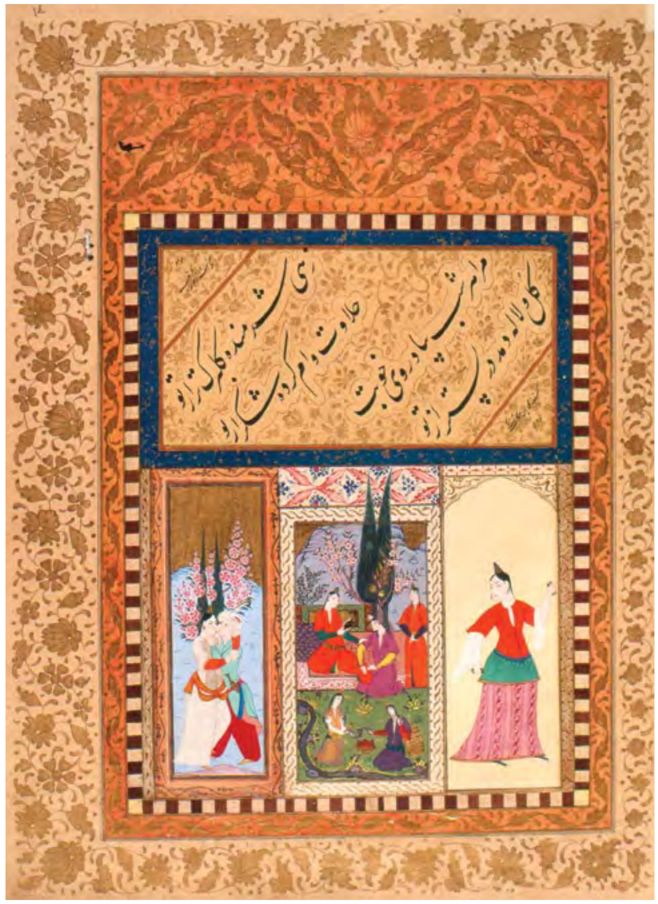
THE ALBUM OF AHMED I

Abstract

An album made for the Ottoman sultan Ahmed I (reigned 1603–17) in circa 1610 contains calligraphies, paintings, and drawings that reveal a great deal about artistic patronage and collecting in the Ottoman world. This study provides an analysis of the album, which is ms. no. B 408 in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library. It begins with the preface and its extraordinary discussion of the significance of the visual arts. The preface describes how and why the album was created, while the album's contents reveal a different facet of Ottoman collecting practices. It becomes evident through a close study of these materials that, although Persianate calligraphy, poetry, and even modes of depiction predominate here, the album is deliberately anchored in its Ottoman context. In fact, with its choice of materials and methods for arranging them, the album illuminates Ottoman opinions on the relationship between their own artistic traditions and those of the Persianate cultural sphere.

ONE OF THE MOST INTRIGUING ALBUMS in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library was compiled for the Ottoman sultan Ahmed I (reigned 1603–17). Identified as ms. no. B 408, it measures 47.5 by 33.5 cm and contains thirty-two folios of painting, calligraphy, and illumination (fig. 1).[1] With its preface, arrangement, and contents, the album of Ahmed I draws upon the Safavid album tradition, but it departs sufficiently to constitute a localized, Ottoman example of the genre. This complex work of art deserves detailed study to unlock its multitude of meanings, which I hope to do in a forthcoming monograph. This article is a preliminary glance at what the album reveals about artistic patronage and collecting in the Ottoman world. An analysis of the album preface's extraordinary discussion of the significance of the visual arts, via its description of how and why the album was created, precedes a discussion of the album's contents, which reveal a different facet of Ottoman collecting practices. It becomes evident through the close study of these materials that, although Persianate calligraphy, poetry, and even modes of depiction predominate here, the album is deliberately anchored in its Ottoman context. In fact, through the choice of materials and methods for arranging them, the album illuminates Ottoman opinions on the relationship between their own artistic traditions and those of the Persianate cultural sphere.

The preface is attributed to the Ottoman courtier Kalender Pasha, who died in 1616.[2] Kalender's renown for paper joinery is evident from Mustafa Âli's eulogy to him at the end of his *Menakıb-ı Hünerveran* (Exploits of the artists).[3] In addition to his artistic skills, Kalender was also a successful bureaucrat. With the aid of a calligraphy album he presented to Ahmed I, Kalender was promoted from his post as a secretary-treasurer of the second rank and was appointed to supervise the



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1
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 14a.

All images Ottoman, Istanbul, ca. 1610; opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper; 47.5 x 33.5 cm. Topkapı Palace Museum Library, ms. no. B 408. Photos: Hadiye Cangökçe.

construction of Ahmed I's mosque, which was built between 1609 and 1617. He eventually became a vizier in the Imperial Council in 1614.[4] Kalender was clearly well established in the Ottoman court of the early seventeenth century, and he seems to have taken part in the literary and cultural life of the court as well. This is perhaps most evident in the preface to the Ahmed I album.

The content and structure of the album's preface echo those of sixteenth-century Persian, or Safavid, album prefaces, suggesting Kalender had access to these kinds of texts. [5] Yet, compared to the Safavid prefaces, the present one places unprecedented emphasis on the power of the visual. Kalender begins with praise of God as creator and inventor (*mubdiʿ* and *mūcīd*) of beautiful and artful things. Then he describes God's creation of Adam, saying he "molded and depicted" (*taḫmīr* and *taṣvīr*) Adam with his own hands out of the four elements and breathed life into him, as is expressed in a quotation from the Koran (15:29): "I blew in Him from my soul" (*Nafaḫtu fīhi min rūhī*).[6] This visceral description of the Creation evokes sculptural and painterly activities with the words "molded" and "depicted." While using metaphors of painting and writing to praise God's creation was common in Safavid album prefaces, this degree of specificity with regards to depiction, and the reference to plasticity found in the word "molded," are quite unusual. On the other hand, calligraphy often plays a large role in the metaphors used by Safavid authors when writing prefaces, but it is not emphasized in this album at all, even though it contains many examples of calligraphy. The focus in the preface is clearly on the art of depiction and the wonders of the visual.

The emphasis on the arts continues with a description of the sultan's appreciation of beauty and wisdom.

> Since his beautiful heart is always full of the jewels of knowledge and the pearls of meaning and wisdom, those resplendent pearls of art and invention (the most precious of the precious speech, and the most beautiful of the beauties of design) which are in the palace without fault and the irreproachable pavilion, decorate the daughters of subtleties with embellishments of words and sights, and tricky ornaments, and have seduced the sovereign and astonished and excited the nature of the people of the heart.[7]

In other words, the palace is full of awe-inspiring, beautiful, "resplendent" works of art that have won the hearts of the courtiers and the sultan. The words chosen here to describe the effects of the "pearls of art and invention" are "seduced," "astonished," and "excited" (*ferīfte, alufte, aşufte*). They ascribe a mysterious power to artworks and suggest a certain nervousness about their incomprehensible potency.

This subtle anxiety results in a defense of images, or an explanation of why they are included in the album. Every time the mirror of existence is observed by those with penetrating eyes, Kalender begins, it shows designs and figures, but it becomes rusty because of daily occurrences. In these useless days (*eyyām-ı nāfercām*), he says, if one contemplates some respectable figures (*ṣuver-i mu'teber*) and sights of good example (*seyir-i pür 'ibr*), which are demonstrated by numerous kinds of colorful designs, they will be the source of great learning, and they will ornament the eye of experience.[8] Thus, he presents the images in this album not only as tools for learning and sources of wisdom but also as means to counter troubling times and as sources for rejuvenation.[9] He then adds that they are appreciated by the sultan: they enliven his spirit and give pleasure to his luminous conscience and his heart.[10] In these few lines, then, is a rationale for collecting paintings and also for representing them in the album. The next sentence, which relates the sultan wanted these materials to be collected in an album, begins with the word "consequently" (*binā'en aleyh*). The rejuvenating value of art, it appears, is precisely why the sultan ordered the album. In other words, because works of art could teach and inspire people, the sultan asked Kalender to organize several examples in an album format. Presumably this would make it easier for people to view the works of art, and it would enhance the power of the artwork by juxtaposing select pieces. The visual relationships among paintings, calligraphies, and drawings carefully arranged on specific pages could perhaps guide viewers to conclusions they may not have otherwise drawn by looking at the individual works of art.

While similar imagery can be found in prefaces to Safavid albums, it is rarely activated to this degree.[11] By presenting images as a means to something else, Kalender suggests they are not simply admired for their beauty, but that beauty is employed in the service of a greater goal—wisdom, knowledge, and rejuvenation. The benefits, it is implied, make up for the anxiety caused by the mysterious powers of images. The depictions become particularly important when the "mirror of existence" is rusty, because the images are then the only way of demonstrating the "respectable figures" and the "sights of good example" from which viewers can learn. The use of the mirror motif alludes to contemporary notions of the creative process, by which the forms that the eye perceives were understood to be stored in the artist's humor, which was thought to be a polished surface.[12] The mirror motif appears in other album prefaces as a metaphor or intermediary for visual perception and depiction. It is also a Sufi metaphor for self-improvement, that is, polishing the heart so it can reflect God's creation.[13] The phrase "people of the heart," a reference to Ahmed's courtiers, is also related. With his word choices, Kalender specifically argues for the value of art as a vehicle for sensual and cognitive renewal. What one cannot get from the mirror of existence during uncertain times, one can learn from paintings. Kalender thus presents a contemporary, courtly Ottoman view of the significance of art as mysterious, powerful, and ultimately useful. In the Ottoman context, such a strong and explicit statement on the value of painting is, to my knowledge, exclusive to this album preface, which renders it that much more unusual and important.

In addition to presenting a rationale for collecting individual paintings and calligraphies, Kalender's preface also provides information about artistic patronage and production at the Ottoman court. The sultan had amassed (*birikdürüb*) and sent specific pieces to Kalender. This indicates the ruler recognized the album both as a miniature version of his collection and as a memorial to himself.[14] These works had been given to the sultan as gifts, according to the preface, or they accompanied requests for favors. By highlighting the sultan's involvement—in first owning such pieces, and then in selecting them for the album—Kalender praises his good taste, wisdom, and wealth.

Kalender's job as agent was to organize the pieces chosen by the sultan, and he does not shy away from boasting of his album-making abilities. He states the sultan wanted these sheets to be arranged "with respect to each one's relationship to each other" (*her birisinüñ bir birisine münāsebeti ile tertīb olunub*) and illuminated and bound into an album. He repeats the phrase "each one's relationship to each other" when he writes that he joined paintings (*taṣvīrāt*) and calligraphic panels (*muḳaṭṭaʿāt*) and pasted them onto colored papers and turned them into an album.[15] He presents his organization of the album as being guided by aesthetic concerns: "It is no secret to those who see minutiae that these have been arranged with respect

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2
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 6b.

3
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 7a.

to either their color or their cutting or their height and width so that all their edges match up."[16] The act of album-making is explained here as an exercise in composition, one that valorizes attention to detail and skill in geometry, and thereby attests to Kalender's aesthetic sensibilities. The examples of calligraphy were matched with paintings not by provenance or topic but rather by their visual characteristics, that is, by the style of depiction, the calligraphic script, and the size and appearance of the sheets. This detailed description of the task of album-making is an attempt to put the art of "paper joinery" (*vassale*) on the same level as calligraphy and painting. Perhaps he is suggesting that his act of presenting these materials is a means of activating their wonder and wisdom-inspiring capacities.

Although Kalender emphasizes the visual aspects of his task, his organization of the album materials betrays a deliberate forging of other connections between the materials. These connections, considered in tandem with the contents of the preface, are highly informative about the Ottoman view of the relationship between their artistic traditions and those of the Persians. Two threads provide information on this matter. The first is the juxtaposition of pages from historical manuscripts with portraits of the Ottoman sultans (figs. 2 and 3). This is surely inspired by Kalender's description of paintings as vehicles for learning. He is even more explicit about this view in the preface of the *Falname* of Ahmed I, where he explains that he compiled stories and images of prophets, saintly men, and past kings because sultans and great rulers should learn from the actions of memorable men.[17] This implies images of heroes from the past will incite the rulers of the present to wise actions. Kalender's particular framing of images in the album, then, is intended to activate their power to inspire the sultan and his courtiers.

The paintings in question include five manuscript pages extracted from a book on Ottoman history. All are of the same size and are consistent in style. Their sparse backgrounds in pastel colors, the pose and depiction of human figures, the compositions against single or double hills, and the inclusion of small lakes and water canals are strongly reminiscent of the paintings in the first volume of the

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4
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 10a.

Hünername (Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 1523), an Ottoman dynastic history. Judging by the style of the paintings and the text, these works are probably from a similar book produced by the court historian's office around the same time and were incorporated into the album, either because the book for which they were originally made was damaged or perhaps never completed.

The titles above the images on folio 6b both begin with the phrase "Of the ancestors of the House of Osman" and name two of the Ottomans' Oghuz ancestors, Yalvaç Beg and Ḳurtarı Beg. The ancestors named on the surrounding folios are Sunghur, Çemendur, and Tugrul, all of whom are part of the same genealogy.[18] These heroes who give alms and clothes to the poor, wield their swords in cunning ways, hunt with falcons, tame wild horses, and offer gifts to the caliph are the exemplary predecessors of the Ottomans. They are important links in the genealogical chain that connects Ahmed I with his ancestor Oghuz. Portraits of the first four Ottoman sultans (fig. 3 and fol. 7a) are inserted into the midst of these ancestral images, creating a strong link between the present and the past. The sultanic portraits in the album localize and even personalize this connection for Ahmed I. By arranging these specific images with respect to each other, Kalender not only alludes to art's capacity to renew, but he also actualizes it as a way to compel Ahmed to great deeds by reminding him of his awe-inspiring genealogy.

The importance of the Ottoman dynastic theme in the album becomes clear with folio 10a (fig. 4), which contains a portrait of an Ottoman sultan as well as two panels of *nastaliq* calligraphy. One of them is signed by Shah Mahmud al Mashhadi and begins:

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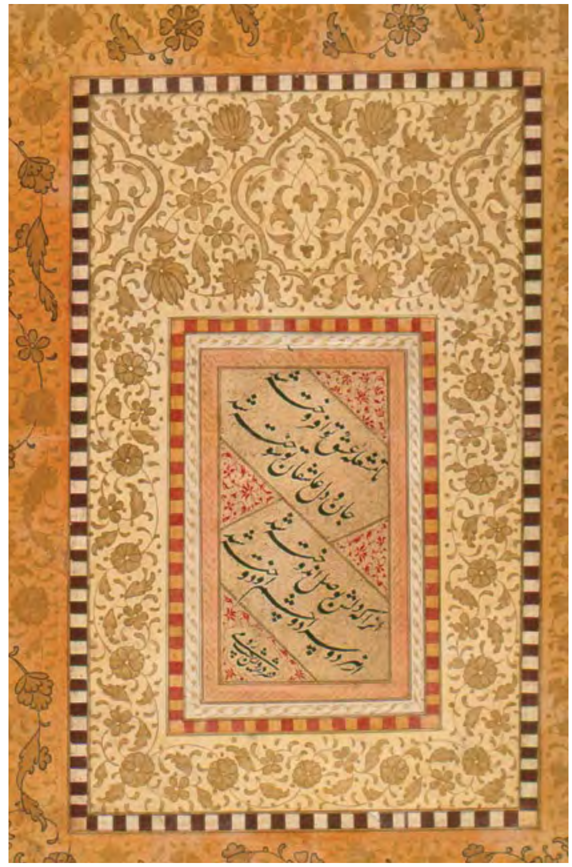

6

5
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 31b.

6
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 31a.

Kāsh bar ham khvord īn silsila-ya ẓāhir-e mā
Tā āz īn tafarruqhā jamʿ shavad khāter-e mā

I wish that his external chain of ours would break apart
So that from this separation our minds would come together[19]

The poem is probably incorporated here because it contains the word "chain" (*silsila*), which is one of the titles given to Ottoman historical works that include dynastic portraits and form genealogical chains. The fact that the album has numerous other examples of close word-and-image relationships strengthens this possibility.[20] The connection between the calligraphic panel and the portrait is not simply a visual one; it also relates to content. Kalender's organizational choices here strengthen the link between the Oghuz ancestors and the sultanic portraits, thus enhancing their power to signify.

A second thread is formed by the calligraphic examples in the album, which are exclusively in the *nastaliq* script (figs. 5 and 6) and constitute a different kind of *silsila*. Kalender states in the preface that the album includes calligraphies by Nur Ali, Shah Mahmud, and Mir Ali; paintings by artists whose works resemble those by Bihzad and Erjeng and Mani; and designs by Yari and other illuminators who were well known in Rum and Ajam. He mentions two cultural spheres: Rum, which mostly refers to Ottoman lands; and Ajam, the Persianate world. The Persian calligraphers represented here—Mir Ali Haravi (died 1543), Shah Mahmud Nishapuri (died 1564–65), Shah Muhammad al Mashhadi (active circa 1560), and Malik

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7
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 24b.

Daylami (died 1561–62)—are sixteenth-century representatives of the Persianate (Ajami) school of *nastaliq* script, whose calligraphic genealogies go back to Mir Ali Tabrizi.[21] The calligraphy examples are all *ghazals* of Persian lyric poetry.

The Ottoman, or Rumi, calligraphers are Derviş Receb-i Rumi, Ali Çavuş-u Dergah, Mevlevi-i Rumi, and Mehmed Emin al Katib al Mekki (fig. 6 and fol. 31a). They all write in the *nastaliq* script and are almost indistinguishable from their Safavid counterparts. Writings by Rumi and Ajami calligraphers often grace opposite sides of the same folio (figs. 5 and 6) or facing pages, calling for a comparison between the two. The juxtaposition of masters from different geographies emphasizes the links between these different practitioners, and at the same time it sets up the Rumi school against the Ajami one.[22]

Interpreting this juxtaposition in relation to the wider artistic context of the early seventeenth century is compelling. By this time, an identifiable "Ottoman" visual idiom had been created for illustrated manuscripts, constituting a deliberate move away from Persianate styles.[23] The historical manuscripts were written predominantly in *naskh*, and by the end of the sixteenth century they were no longer in Persian. The focus on *nastaliq* emphasizes that in other Ottoman contexts, Persianate aesthetics were still appreciated. This is also evident from the fact that all the poetry incorporated into the album is in Persian. There are no verses by Baki or Fuzuli, the renowned Ottoman poets of the previous generation who composed their work in Ottoman Turkish. Yet, the present album actually contains more Ottoman specimens than the album of Murad III. In the fifty-one folios of

8

8
Kalender, *Album of Ahmed I*, fol. 19a.

that album, only two works are by Ottoman calligraphers.[24] Similarly, the preface also emulates the structure of those in Persian albums, but it departs from them in significant ways, as discussed above. By recontextualizing Persian pieces and juxtaposing them with Ottoman ones, thereby comfortably incorporating the *nastaliq* style and Persian poetry with Ottoman historical scenes and sultanic portraits, the present album seems to signal difference and continuity simultaneously. The Persianate cultural heritage is not simply presented as "other"; rather, it is claimed as a part of the Ottoman artistic genealogy, and it is deliberately appropriated. There is, however, the added twist of juxtaposing the Persianate material with contemporary Ottoman works. Just as the portraits of Ottoman leaders are linked with rulers of the past, so the works of Ottoman calligraphers are linked with masters from the Safavid lands. In this period of intense rivalry between the Ottoman and Safavid states, the juxtaposition takes on added significance.

The album also bears traces of personal relationships, which further anchor it in the complex culture of the Ottoman court. Two examples are signed by court scribes: folio 9b bears the signature of Ali, Çavuş-u Dergah; and folio 12b is addressed "for the sake of Kalender Efendi" (*Be ceḥat-ı Ḳalender Efendi*) and is signed by Katib al Sultani Amir Muhammad Amin al Tarammudi. Folio 5b is thought to be written in the sultan's own hand. A similar balance can be found in the paintings. While a majority of them resemble Safavid single-page drawings (figs. 1 and 7), examples of a burgeoning Ottoman genre style also exist (fig. 8). Stylistically, the depiction of the body in the single-figure studies, with silhouettes that curve like bows and display wispy, curly sideburns and wide hips, are much closer to drawings by the Safavids Sadiqi Beg or Aqa Riza than they are to works by the Ottoman painters Osman or Nakkaş Hasan.

Kalender Pasha took Persianate forms, whether the structure of an album preface or actual pieces of Safavid calligraphy, and seamlessly incorporated them into an Ottoman album that was anchored in the local context through the use of Ottoman artworks, signatures by courtiers, images from Ottoman history, and even the sultan's own calligraphy. The unmistakably Ottoman work of art explicitly draws on the Persianate cultural world, but it does so in juxtaposition with Ottoman examples. The album easily traverses what might be seen as aesthetic boundaries between Ottoman and Persian worlds, and it reminds us that the Ottomans deliberately participated in the artistic trends of the early modern Islamic world. Despite the development of specific visual idioms by the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals at this time, the three artistic traditions still shared aesthetic preferences, some of which link them to their common artistic ancestor, the Timurid court. Certainly the collecting preferences of Ahmed I, as exemplified by his album, suggest the Ottomans viewed their own artistic tradition as being distinct from but still closely related to the Persianate sphere. The album does not present a linear view of Ottoman art history, but it does have a synecdochic relationship to that corpus, as it does to the collections in the palace, which consist of treasures from Ajam and Rum. Kalender Pasha, as he signals in his preface, uses the works of art in the album to teach his audience about Ottoman history, inspiring them to follow in the illustrious footsteps of their ancestors. He also presents Ottoman art in the larger context of Islamic art, and he reminds us of the links between Rumi and Ajami masters and styles, all of which are capable of enlivening our spirits and giving pleasure to our consciences and hearts.

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NOTES

1 The binding is no longer intact, and it is likely that the order of the folios has been changed. David J. Roxburgh, in "Disorderly Conduct?: F. R. Martin and the Bahram Mirza Album," *Muqarnas* 15 (1998), pp. 32–57, shows five folios in the so-called Bellini Album at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that might have belonged to the album of Ahmed I. The author would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for *Ars Orientalis* and David J. Roxburgh for their helpful comments on this paper.

2 B. 408, fols. 1b–4b. The anonymous album compiler states that he had presented other albums to Ahmed I. Based on this, and on the stylistic similarity between this preface and that of the *Falname* prepared for Ahmed I, scholars attribute this album to Kalender Paşa. See Serpil Bağcı, "The *Falnama* of Ahmed I," in *Falnama: The Book of Omens*, ed. Massumeh Farhad with Serpil Bağcı (Washington, DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2009), pp. 68–75. For an overview of the album and its preface, see Ahmed Süheyl Ünver, "L'Album d'Ahmed Ier," *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario orientale di Napoli*, n. s. 8 (1963), pp. 127–62.

3 Mustafa Ali Gelibolulu, *Menāḳıb-ı Hünerverān* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1926), pp. 76–77. Bağcı, "*Falnama* of Ahmed I," p. 68, provides an English translation.

4 Muṣṭafā Naīmā, *Tārīḫ-i Naīmā: Ravżatü'l-Ḥüseyn fī ḫulāsat-ı aḫbār-ı'l-hāfiḳayn*, 6 vols. (Istanbul, 1864–66), vol. 2, p. 131. For Kalender's career, see Bağcı, "*Falnama* of Ahmed I," p. 68; Emine Fetvacı, "Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Manuscripts," *Ars Orientalis* 40 (2011), pp. 243–66; Tülay Artan, "Arts and Architecture," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839,* ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 408–81, especially p. 416. Artan suggests Kalender Paşa might have been associated with antinomian mystics because of the similarity of his name to the term for these groups, or he had made his way to the capital from areas under Safavid influence.

5 David J. Roxburgh, in *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 83–121, analyzes the content and structure of Persianate album prefaces. I am grateful to him for his comments on an earlier version of this paper during the HIAA 2010 symposium and for encouraging me to distinguish Kalender's argument for the power of images from that of Safavid prefaces.

6 This is an unusual allusion that also has parallels to the Koranic story of Jesus sculpting a bird out of clay and breathing life into it via a miracle from God (Koran 3:49).

7 *Dāīmā cevāhir-i ʿirfān-ı ʿavārif ve lā'alī-yi meʿāni ve maʿārif birle ḳalb-i laṭīfleri memlū olmagla ol dürer-i gurer-i ṣanāʿi ve bedāʿinü sara-yi bī ʿayb ve serāperde-yi lāreybde olan enfes-i nefāyis-i müḳālāt ve iḥsān-ı müḥāsin-i muṣavvirāt benāt-ı nikāta ḥalye-yi ḥulel elfāẓ ve ebṣārla zīver ve zīb virüb zīnet-i dilferīb ile ḳulib cihānbāni-yi ferifte ve ṭabʿ-i ehl-i dilāni alufte ve aşufte itmişlerdir*

8 *taḥsīl-i sermāye-i ʿilm-i ḥikmet ve sebeb-i tekmīl-i piraye-yi ʿayn-i ʿibret*

9 Kalender also characterizes images as such in the preface to his *Falname*. Topkapı Palace Museum, ms. no. H. 1703, fols. 4b–6a. Translated in Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr., and Sergei Tourkin, "Appendix A: Reproductions and

Translations of the Dispersed *Falnama*, H. 1702 and H. 1703," in Farhad and Bağcı, eds., *Falnama*, p. 296.

10 *pādişāh-ı ʿāli derecāta mūcīb-i tenşīṭ-i ḫāṭır-ı ḫaṭīr ve mustavcīb-i teṭeyyib-i żamīr-i münīr ve ḳalb-i müstenīr olmaḳ*

11 See David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 18–20, 188–96, 272–94, and Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, pp. 83–121, 181–89, for similar imagery in Safavid albums.

12 Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, pp. 184–85: "Integral to the Safavid culture was the understanding that by perception, forms were transferred (by intromission) to the artist's humor, which was thought to be a polished surface. In the act of perceiving, the image became impressed on the humor. In a second stage, the forms from both eyes were impressed on the composite sense, and in the third stage they were stored in the memory [*khiyāl*]."

13 Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, pp. 181–89; Priscilla Soucek, "Nizami on Painters and Painting," in *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Richard Ettinghausen (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972), pp. 9–34, especially pp. 12–15. Some of these albums were already in the Topkapı by the early seventeenth century.

14 See Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, pp. 112–15, for consideration of the album as a memorial of its owner or maker. Other examples from Ahmed I's collection can be found in the *Falname* (H. 1703), which was published in full in Farhad and Bağcı, eds., *Falnama*, as well as a calligraphy album prepared for Ahmed I (Topkapı Palace Museum, H. 2171), which also contains examples of *nastaliq* calligraphy and writings in other scripts.

15 *muḳaṭṭaʿāt ve taṣvīrāt evrāḳını biri birisine münāsebeti ile envāʿi renk amīz kağıdlara vaṣl idüp muraḳḳaʿ itmek*

16 *Rengāreng olan nakş-ı buḳalemun-u abrī ve sulṭānī ve aḥmedabādī ve devletābādī ve ḫatāyī ve ʿadilşāhī ve ḥarīrī ve semer ḳandī evrāḳdır. Ve eger ṣanʿat-ı vaṣṣālīde her bir ḳıtaʿnıñ kenarlarına feresgūrī alaca kumaş ṭarẓında ikişer ve üçer kat ḫurde evrāḳdır. Ḫurdebinān ve ḫurdedān ehl-i ʿirfāna ḫafī ve puşīde degilgir her birisine imʿān-ı naẓarla iltifāt müteʿalliḳ olsa inşallah teʿalā çahar guşeleri ve muḳabelesi cemiʿen biribirisine eger renginde ve eger cerminde ve ṭūl-u ʿarżında muvāfıḳ ve mutābıḳ vāḳiʿ olmuşdur.*

17 Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı, "The *Falnama* in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in Farhad and Bağcı, eds., *Falnama,* p. 30, quote from the *Falname* text: "The history of past nations is a manual for people and that it is appropriate to learn a lesson … from those who have preceded us."

18 I am grateful to Sara Nur Yıldız for helping me identify these names. She has found all of these names in the chronicle of Bayatī Mahmudoglu Hasan, *Cam-i cem ayin*. For Bayatī, see John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1999), pp. 177–79.

19 The poem continues: *Tīre rūzīm o siyah bakht o perīshān āwqāt/Vāy agar chashm-e ʿināyat nashavad nāẓir-e mā/ Zūd bāshad ke be divānegī efsāne shavīm/ Eger īnast fusūn fusūn-e ṣenem sākhīr-e mā*. "We are in dark days, black fortune and a disheveled state/ If your eye of kindness does not look upon us/ It may be quick that in madness we become a legend/ If this is magic, then our magician is the enchantment of the beloved." I am grateful to my colleague Sunil Sharma for his help with this translation.

20 See Emine Fetvacı, "Love in the Album of Ahmed I," *Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 34, no. 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 37–51.

21 In a private conversation, Abolala Soudavar has raised the possibility that the calligraphies in this album might be sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century forgeries, since a vibrant market for the calligraphers was named in the preface. See "Forgeries: Introduction" (Abolala Soudavar) *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* vol. 10, fasc.1 (1999), pp. 90–93.

22 This juxtaposition might be viewed as being akin to the rhetoric of translating the *Shahnama* into Turkish as modeled by Serpil Bağcı, "From Translated Word to Translated Image: The Illustrated Şehnāme-i Türkī Copies," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000), pp. 162–76.

23 See Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Gülru Necipoğlu, "A Ḳānūn for the State, a Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Art and Architecture," in *Soliman le magnifique et son temps,* ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris: Documentation Française, 1992), pp. 195–216; Gülru Necipoğlu, "L'idée de décor dans les régimes de visualité islamiques," in *Purs décors? Arts de l'Islam, regards du XIXe siècle. Collections des Arts Décoratifs*, ed. Rémi Labrousse (Paris, 2007), pp. 10–23.

24 Aimée Elisabeth Froom, "A Muraqqaʿ for the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595): Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Mixtus 313," PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2001, pp. 196–214, 378–83.

NOURANE BEN AZZOUNA

THE GULISTĀN OF SAʿDĪ ATTRIBUTED TO YĀQŪT AL-MUSTAʿṢIMĪ AND ITS MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

From the Mongols to the Mughals and Beyond

Abstract

This paper focuses on the *Gulistān* of Saʿdī that has been attributed to Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī, in the Gulistān Palace Library in Tehran. First, it discusses the attribution to Yāqūt to determine whether the manuscript is a genuine work or a forgery; then it explores the different stages of the *Gulistān*'s history. It concludes that even though it is certainly a forgery, this manuscript holds great interest, for it is most likely one of the oldest-known illustrated copies of the *Gulistān*. Dated to fourteenth-century Iran or to pre-Mughal India, its original paintings were completed or overpainted at the Mughal imperial workshop at the beginning of Jahangir's reign. Then these paintings themselves were removed, but some of them can be identified in several album pages that are scattered in various public and private collections.

MANUSCRIPTS OFTEN TELL STORIES, not only through their contents but also as objects in themselves. A prime example is the *Gulistān* (Rose Garden) of Saʿdī (died AH 691/1292 CE), number 642 in the Gulistān Palace Library (GPL) in Tehran.[1] It stands out due to several aspects: first, it is the only known copy of the *Gulistān* from Saʿdī's own lifetime (AH 668/1270 CE).[2] Second, it is attributed to the so-called "Cynosure of calligraphers" (*Qiblat al-kuttāb*), Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī (died AH 698/1298–99 CE), who is credited with major achievements in the history of Islamic calligraphy, notably the canonization of the so-called "six styles" in Arabic script.[3] Copying his handwriting was thus a way to master the art of calligraphy, and imitating his signature both a glorifying and a lucrative business. As a result, more than 120 manuscripts have been attributed to him. Among these, the *Gulistān* also stands out as the only one in Persian. It therefore deserves careful examination to determine whether it is a very important original or a banal forgery.

During my PhD studies, I examined most of the manuscripts attributed to Yāqūt and established a set of criteria to distinguish the genuine ones from the forgeries.[4] First, the colophon must comply with the historical information available on Yāqūt and with the codicological, paleographical, and stylistic features of the context in which he lived and worked, i.e., Bagdad at the beginning of the Ilkhanid period (AH 656–736/1258–1335 CE). Since Yāqūt was not only a calligrapher, particularly of the Koran, but also a scholar (*adīb*) and a first-rank scribe (*kātib*), the colophon must be dated to his lifetime and also be devoid of grammatical and orthographic mistakes. Moreover, it must have been copied on the same kind of paper as the rest of the manuscript and not be altered, i.e., scratched, modified, or overwritten.

The colophon of the *Gulistān* (fig. 1) is in Arabic and reads as follows:

> katabahu al-ʿabd al-faqīr / ilā Allah al-ghanī Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī / fī awākhir shahr Ramaḍān / al-mubārak min sanat thamānin / wa sittīn wa sitta-miya ḥāmidan / ʿalā niʿamih wa muṣalliyan ʿalā / nabiyyih Muḥammad wa ālih wa musalliman kathīrā

> The slave in need of God the Wealthy, Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī, wrote this at the end of the blessed month of Ramadan in the year 668 [mid-May 1270 CE], praising for his favors and blessing his Prophet Muhammad and his relatives and saluting a lot.

This colophon is devoid of grammatical mistakes, although one word, "Allah," has apparently been omitted between *ḥāmidan* and *ʿalā*. As a matter of fact, the praise typically reads *ḥāmidan Allah ʿalā niʿamih* rather than *ḥāmidan ʿalā niʿamih*. As for orthography, six hundred is spelled *sitta-miya*, with a two-dot *yā*ʾ, which seems odd since the orthodox ways of spelling one hundred are *māʾa* and *miʾa*, while *miya* seems to correspond to an oral pronunciation. Moreover, in the course of my study of the different manuscripts attributed to Yāqūt, I have identified a dozen most likely genuine ones,[5] and in all of them, one hundred is always spelled *māʾa*, with an *alif*. Likewise, in the *Gulistān*, *ʿalā* is spelled without an *alif maqṣūra*, while in the dozen most likely genuine manuscripts, it is always spelled with a *maqṣūra*. In addition, in the *Gulistān*, Yāqūt is called "the needy slave" while the likely genuine manuscripts are devoid of such epithets and signed "Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī."

Regarding the codicological features, the colophon occupies the verso of the last folio of the manuscript. It is more decorated than the likely genuine colophons; in fact, it is so illuminated, it is impossible to see the paper underneath. Moreover, it has creases, which may indicate that it is actually two sheets pasted together. It is written in white, outlined in black, and the loops of letters such as ʿ*ayn*, *fā*ʾ, and *qāf* are filled in black. The interlinear spaces are adorned with small vegetal motifs and irregular grids in black on a gilt background. Then, like in Koranic frontispieces, the main area of the composition is framed by a wide border. This is decorated with linear, spiral arabesques bearing blue, green, and red vegetal motifs on a gilt background. These arabesques are set within elongated cartouches that are interrupted on the vertical and horizontal axes by circular medallions decorated with radiant compositions of gilt vegetal motifs on a deep blue background.

The small discrepancies in the text and in the appearance of the colophon thus suggest that it is a forgery. On the other hand, the style of its illumination is very close to that of the frontispiece of a Koran dated to AH 694/1295 CE that is definitely

1

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1
Sa'dī's *Gulistān*, colophon bearing the name of Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī and the date 668 AH (1270 CE). Gulistān Palace Library, Tehran, no. 642, p. 335. Photo by N. Ben Azzouna.

2
Koran, Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī, 694 AH (1295 CE). Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Nurosmaniye 9, f. 1v–2r. © Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi.

by Yāqūt (fig. 2). The composition of the two illuminations is very close; both have a central field and two borders, a wide one that is divided and adorned almost in the same way, with linear spiral arabesques on a gilt background, and a thin one that is probably unfinished in the *Gulistān* and half-finished or reworked with a latticework in the Koran. Some of the vegetal motifs are slightly different, but the palette of the two decorations is also the same.[6]

The rest of the *Gulistān* consists of 335 pages, i.e., 168 folios, provided with new margins (the manuscript bears page numbers instead of folio numbers; I will thus refer to page numbers throughout this essay). The text-block areas measure 175 x 126 mm and the whole folios 307 x 220 mm. The text-block areas are made of two different kinds of paper. Most of the folios are of a fine, cream, rather thin paper with horizontal laid lines, twenty of them measuring around 28 mm, whereas a few folios (pp. 32–33, 46–47, 220–39, 252–91, 296, etc.) are later replacements by various hands, and the margins are of a darker and thicker paper that is flecked with gold. The original text-block areas are ruled with a *miṣṭara*[7] consisting of eleven lines spaced 16 mm apart. The *miṣṭara* is applied on the front side, i.e., the verso of the right-hand side and the recto of the left-hand side of every open bifolio. Thus, even though the original folios were cut out, set in new margins and bound again, the *miṣṭara* layout allows us to identify the original gatherings as quaternions, i.e., eight-folio gatherings, which is unusual for Bagdad, where quinions, i.e., ten-folio gatherings, were almost always the rule, as in the case of the genuine manuscripts mentioned above.

Finally, as far as the handwriting is concerned, the *Gulistān* is in *naskh*. My study of Yāqūt's genuine manuscripts in *naskh* allowed me to divide his works into two chronological phases: an early one from the AH 670s/1270s CE to the end of the AH 680s/1280s CE and a later one during the AH 690s/1290s CE.[8] A comparison between the *Gulistān*'s script and Yāqūt's *naskh* in the AH 670s/1270s CE reveals that the handwriting in the former is very fine. Nevertheless, it looks rounder and more

3
Saʿdī's *Gulistān*. Gulistān Palace Library, Tehran, no. 642, f. 1v. Photo by N. Ben Azzouna.

fluid than Yāqūt's style at the same period. For instance, in the beginning of *bāʾ* and similar letters, the line slopes more to the left and is much rounder. The final *bāʾ*, *dāl*, as well as initial *djīm* are also often rounder and closed. Furthermore, the use of *tarwīs*[9] is very limited. Indeed, the handwriting in the *Gulistān* is closer to Yāqūt's later style, with other features such as *ṭams*[10] and the use of *dālī kāf*.

In summary, the discrepancies in the colophon, the use of quaternions instead of quinions, and the differences between the *naskh* scripts in the *Gulistān* and in Yāqūt's contemporary work indicate that the *Gulistān* is a forgery. Nonetheless, several elements suggest that it may be an early, probably a fourteenth-century copy. First, its paper is coarser and darker than the fine and light paper usually used in fifteenth-century Iranian manuscripts. Second, some of its orthographic features—notably the dotting of certain *dāl*s into *dhāl*s—as well as the use of *naskh* stand out; *nastaʿlīq* is the dominant script in fifteenth-century Persian literary copies. Finally, the style of the illumination of the colophon is clearly pre-Timurid and, in fact, is almost identical to that of the frontispiece of the genuine Koran dated AH 694/1295 CE by Yāqūt.

Another observation supports the hypothesis that the *Gulistān* may be an early or at least an archaistic copy. It is the decoration of its remaining pages. The original decorations were completely removed—unlike Yāqūt's genuine manuscripts, which further underlines that it is a forgery—but they were replaced by new ones during successive periods. The first double page (folios 1v [fig. 3] and 2r) was adorned with lavishly illuminated borders. Then, the first page (folio 1v) was provided with a *sarlawḥ*,[11] and thirty-seven other pages[12] (see fig. 4) were given surprisingly large, rectangular or square illuminated panels on pieces of dark-brown paper that were pasted on the lighter text-block areas. Their style indicates that these illuminated panels were added at a very late date, i.e., in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Nevertheless, their oblong or square formats recall late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Arab and Persian manuscript illustrations, which suggests that illustrations rather than illuminations were, or at least were meant to be, originally in the *Gulistān*. In each case, the text is complete, which signifies that the illustrations were not added over the text some time after its completion, but that they were original.[13] Thus, not only can we assume that our *Gulistān* is an early or at least an archaistic copy, but also that it may be the oldest or at least one of the oldest known illustrated copies of this classic of Persian literature and book painting. Furthermore, the surviving illuminated panels allow us to reconstruct the original illustration program as follows:

- Chapter I, stories 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 32, 35, 40
- Chapter II, stories 2, 7, 11, 27, 33
- Chapter III, stories 6, 14, 19, 27 (two illustrations)

4
Sa‘dī's *Gulistān*. Gulistān Palace Library, Tehran, no. 642, p. 103. Photo by N. Ben Azzouna.

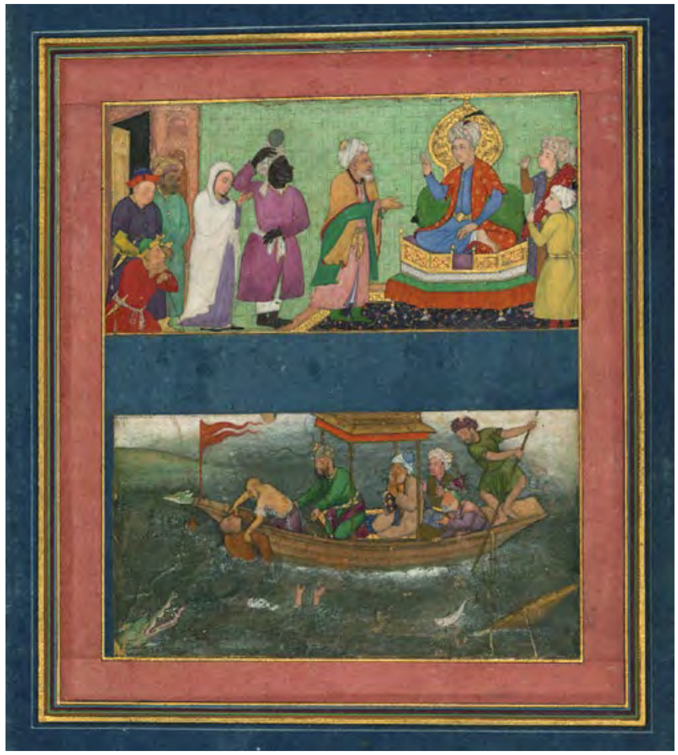
- Chapter IV, stories 10
- Chapter V, stories 4, 16, 17, 19, 20
- Chapter VI, stories 2, 9
- Chapter VII, stories 3, 12, and 16[14]

When and where this manuscript was produced, in fourteenth-century Iran or after a fourteenth-century Iranian model, is still an open question. Although several factors suggest a fourteenth-century Iranian origin, others point to a later date and a different place of production. For instance, the paper, calligraphy, and format of the paintings recall some fifteenth- to sixteenth-century Indian Sultanate manuscripts, such as the unique *Ni‘mat-nāmah* produced in Mandu.[15] Moreover, the high number (approximately forty) of the original paintings of the *Gulistān* seems inconsistent with the later development of the tradition of illustrating the *Gulistān* in Iran. As a matter of fact, the extant illustrated copies of this text from Iran usually show a few, i.e., half a dozen or a dozen, paintings, while those from India often have a richer program of illustration.[16] This issue must be further investigated.[17] Nevertheless, more information is available on our *Gulistān*'s subsequent transformation.

Indeed, its first double-page illuminated borders are obviously late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century Mughal illuminations. Moreover, in the margins below these illuminated borders and most of the presently illuminated, i.e., formerly illustrated panels, are the names of several well-known Mughal painters:

- Folio 1v (Nādir al-Zamān)
- Chapter I, stories 3 (Bāltshand), 4 (Narsing), 9 (Nādir al-‘Aṣr Ustād Manṣūr), 10 (Ikhlāṣ), 13 (Pidārat), 15 (Dahnarādj), 17 (‘Ināyat), 21(Dahnarādj), 24 (Narsing), 27 (Manūhar), 28 (Mūhan), 32 (Latshman), 35 (Dawlat), 40 (Mīrzā Ghulām).
- Chapter II, stories 2 (Basāwan?), 7 (Mūhan), 11 (Basāwan?), 27 (Guvardhan), 33 (Manūhar)
- Chapter III, stories 6 (Narsing), 14 (Bishandās?), 19 (‘Ināyat), 27 (Bāltshand, then Ustād Manṣūr)
- Chapter IV, story 10 (Nānhā?[18])
- Chapter V, stories 4 (Bāltshand), 16 (Dawlat), 17 (Narsing), 19 (Mīrzā Ghulām), 20 (Guvardhan)
- Chapter VII, stories 3 (Dahnarādj?), 16 (Mūhan).

These painters were primarily active in the in the late sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century. This indicates that the original copy was provided with new illuminated borders and illustrations at the end of the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar (reigned AH 963–1014/1556–1605 CE) or at the beginning of the



5
Album page bearing two illustrations from the *Gulistān*: the king, the Chinese slave girl, and the black slave (chapter I, story 40; above), and the sinking vessel with the two brothers (chapter I, story 35; below). Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, W.668, f. 36v. © 2011 Walters Art Museum.

rule of his son and successor Jahangir (reigned AH 1014–37/1605–27 CE). So far, Basāwan, Latshman, and Narsing have been known only by works dated to the reign of Akbar.[19] Nevertheless, Mīrzā Ghulām seems to have worked exclusively for Prince Salim,[20] Abū al-Ḥasan was born into the latter's court, and both painters continued to work for him when he became Emperor Jahangir.[21] It is, thus, more likely that our manuscript was refurbished at the beginning of Jahangir's reign, probably in parallel with a *Bustān* that was copied in AH 1014/1605–6 CE and illustrated by many of the same painters.[22] Since the titles Nādir al-Zamān (Wonder of the Time) and Nādir al-ʿAṣr (Wonder of the Age) were not given to Abū al-Ḥasan and Ustād Manṣūr before AH 1027–28/1618–19 CE[23], the attributions in the lower margins could not have been added before that date. Then the images produced by Jahangir's workshop themselves were cut out before the manuscript was "restored" and given its final shape with illuminated panels, gold-flecked margins, and the binding, either in India or probably after it was taken back to Iran in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century.[24]

The illustrations by Jahangir's workshop were certainly cut out in order to be sold or reused. Some of them, however, have survived. Fourteen dispersed paintings—already identified as being from a lost *Gulistān* and attributed to the beginning of Jahangir's reign[25]—can be linked, indeed, by their topic and format to our *Gulistān*. These fourteen paintings appear now on a seventeenth-century lacquer mirror case and several eighteenth- or nineteenth-century album pages, as follows:

- Three paintings on a mirror case in the David Collection in Copenhagen (Inv. no. 1/2009)[26]
- Seven paintings pasted on three album pages in the Walters Art Museum (WAM) in Baltimore: W.668, f. 36v (fig. 5),[27] f. 48v (three images),[28] and f. 49 (two images)[29]

- Two paintings on two album pages formerly in the Rothschild Collection in Geneva[30] (present location unknown)
- Two paintings on one page in a private collection in the United States[31]

These fourteen images differ in size and shape, but except for two that are still to be identified,[32] they can be placed in the GPL *Gulistān* as follows:

PAINTING	STORY ILLUSTRATED	MANUSCRIPT PAGE	PREVIOUS ATTRIBUTION(S)	ATTRIBUTION IN THE MARGIN
US private collection, upper register (63 x 89 mm)	Chapter I, story 1	32[33]	Manūhar,[34] Dawlat[35]	
David Collection 2 (63 x 123mm)	Chapter I, story 4	42	Abū al-Ḥasan[36]	Narsing
WAM, W.668, f. 48v, median register (63 x 122mm)	Chapter I, story 9	101		Nādir al-ʿAṣr Ustād Manṣūr
W.668, f. 49, lower register (66 x 124mm)	Chapter I, story 13	107[37]		Pidārat
US private collection, lower register (62 x 88mm)	Chapter I, story 32	87	Mīrzā Ghulām[38]	Latshman
WAM, W.668, f. 36v, lower register (66 x 124mm)	Chapter I, story 35[39]	91	This painting is inscribed: "done by the slave of the court Dawlat"[40]	Dawlat
WAM, W.668, f. 36v, upper register (62 x 126mm)	Chapter I, story 40	97		Mīrzā Ghulām
David Collection 3 (65 x 126mm)	Chapter II, story 33	150	ʿĀbid[41]	Manūhar
David Collection 1 (85 x 123mm)	Chapter V, story 4	225	This painting is inscribed "*bandah* [the servant] Bāltshand"[42]	?
Rothschild 1 (L shape, 85 x 130mm)	Chapter VI, story 9	272		
WAM, W.668, f. 49, upper register (63 x 124mm)	Chapter VII, story 3	275[43]	Abū al-Ḥasan[44]	Dahnarādj (?)
Rothschild 2 (76 x 125mm)	Chapter VII, story 16	290		Mūhan

Since the Mughal painting specialist John Seyller has argued that the three paintings that are now in the David Collection in Copenhagen may have been reworked by the court painter Murar at the beginning of the reign of Shah Jahan (AH 1037–68/1628–57 CE) so they could be reused in the lacquer mirror case, these paintings may have been removed from the manuscript as early as the 1630s or 1640s.

In summary, the *Gulistān* of Saʿdī attributed to the Cynosure of calligraphers is definitely not a genuine manuscript from the hand of Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī. Nevertheless, it is extremely interesting as far as both literary history and art history are concerned. As a matter of fact, it was most likely produced in fourteenth-century Iran or after a fourteenth-century Iranian model in a later Indian Sultanate workshop, which makes it the oldest or at least one of the oldest known illustrated copies of this classic of Persian literature and painting. The manuscript, however, was refurbished and provided with new illuminations and illustrations at the beginning of the seventeenth century by the court painters of Emperor Jahangir. The new illustrations themselves were subsequently also removed, perhaps as early as the 1630s or 1640s. Nevertheless, fourteen of these paintings have been uncovered in a seventeenth-century mirror case and several eighteenth- or nineteenth-century album pages.

Linking the GPL *Gulistān* to these paintings thus not only sheds new light on the manuscript but also on various aspects of the Mughal paintings. As a matter of fact, when they were first published in the 1950s and early 1960s, these illustrations caused some confusion due to their unusual formats, which were interpreted as a way to evacuate the "problem" of painting landscapes and architectures by placing emphasis on figures and actions,[45] or as a feature that may have been inherited from the Sultanates period.[46] Comparing the GPL *Gulistān* to these images thus not only determines their provenance and clarifies the original illustration program to which they belonged, it also explains their format. In addition, it makes it possible to identify their topics and attributions to different hands more precisely, thus paving the way for new discussions about the manuscript, the paintings, and the careers of several Mughal painters. For all these reasons, our initial question about the value of the *Gulistān* as a very important manuscript or a banal forgery can be answered: it is a very important forgery.

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NOTES

1 *Gulistān-i Saʿdī bi-khaṭṭ-i Yāqūt-i Mustaʿṣimī* [The Gulistān of Saʿdī in the handwriting of Yāqūt al-Mustaʿṣimī], facsimile, ed. Badrī Ātābāī (Tehran, 1968).

2 Ahḥmad Munzawī, *Fihrist-i Nuskhah-hā-yi Khaṭṭī-i Fārsī* [Index of the Persian Manuscripts] (Tehran, 1969), vol. 5, p. 3602.

3 Thulth, Muhḥaqqaq, Tawqīʿ, Naskh, Rayḥān, and Riqāʿ; see Sheila S. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh, 2006), p. 242.

4 Nourane Ben Azzouna, "La Production de manuscrits en Iraq et en Iran occidental à l'époque des dynasties mongoles (Les Ilkhanides et les Djalayirides [658–814/1256–1411])," PhD diss., École pratique des hautes études, Paris, 2009), pp. 38–93, 314–23. The word "forgery" is used here to mean the opposite of "genuine." Nevertheless, it obviously encompasses various types of non-genuine manuscripts, from student facsimiles to forgers' deceptions; see Walter B. Denny, "Forgeries," *The Dictionary of Art* XVI, pp. 545–46.

5 Nine Korans. Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (TMSK), Istanbul: E.H.76 (Martin Lings, *The Quranic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination* [Westerham 1976], pls. 24–25, and David James, *The Master Scribes: Qur'ans of the 10th to 14th Century* [Oxford, 1992], no. 11); E.H.74 (Lings, *The Quranic Art,* pls. 26–27, and James, *The Master Scribes*, p. 60); and E.H.61 (Martin Lings, *Splendours of Qur'an calligraphy and illumination* [Vaduz, 2005], pl. 38). Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi, no. 507 (Can Kerametli and Zahir Güvemli, *Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi* [The Turkish and Islamic Art Museum] [Istanbul, 1974], p. 12). Süleymaniye Library, Nurosmaniye 9 (unpublished). Mevlana Museum, Konya, Turkey, no 15(unpublished). National Museum, Tehran, no. 4277 (Lings, *The Quranic Art*, no. 23; Martin Lings and Yasin Hamid Safadi, *The Qur'ān* [London, 1976], no. 57; Blair, *Islamic calligraphy*, pp. 243–47). Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, Mashhad, Iran, no. 120 (Aḥmad Gultshīn-Maʿānī, *Rāhnamāh-yi Gandjīnah-yi Qur'ān dar Mūzah-yi Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī-i Mashhad* [A Guide to the Collection of Qur'ān-s in the Museum of Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī in Mashhad] [Mashhad,1969], no. 46; Lings, *The Quranic Art*, pl. 28; Lings and Safadi, *The Qur'ān,* no. 58; James, *The Master Scribes*, 59). Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, Arabe 6716 (Annemarie Schimmel, *Islamic Calligraphy* [Leyden, 1970], pl. IX-b; Muḥammad Sharīfī, *Khuṭūṭ al-maṣāḥif ʿinda al-mashāriqa wa al-maghāriba min al-qarn al-rābiʿ ilā al-qarn al-ʿāshir al-hijrī* [The Qur'anic calligraphies in the East and the West (of the Islamic World) from the Fourth to the Tenth Century after the Hidjra] [Algiers, 1982], pp. 141–45, figs. 27–28; François Déroche, *Les Manuscrits du Coran: Du Maghreb à l'Insulinde* [Paris, 1985], no. 523, pl. XXVI-A; *Splendeur et majesté, Corans de la Bibliothèque Nationale* [Paris, 1987], no. 29; *L'Art du livre arabe, du manuscrit au livre d'artiste* [Paris, 2001], no. 43). A copy of *Dīwān al-Ḥādira* in the Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofia 3933, Istanbul (unpublished). A book of prayers (*Adʿiyat al-Ayyām al-Sabʿa* [Prayers of the Seven Days]) in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, no. 4237 (unpublished). And probably a compendium of proverbs in the British Library, Add. 23475 (unpublished; Ben Azzouna, "La Production de manuscrits," pp. 38–93).

6 The style of the illumination of the AH 694/1295 CE Koran, which is signed by Muḥammad b. al-Sāʿātī, is notable for its use of linear spiral arabesques on a gilt

background also recognizable in three other manuscripts: another genuine Koran by Yāqūt (Istanbul, TSMK, E.H.61, dated AH 696/1297 CE); the fifteenth *juz'* (section) of a thirty-volume Koran attributed to Yāqūt (London: Khalili Collection, Qur. 29 [James, *The Master Scribes,* no. 11]); and the first *juz'* of another thirty-volume Koran produced in Bagdad for Sultan Ūldjāytū (reigned AH 703–16/1304–16 CE) (Leipzig, Albertina, K. 1, f. 5 [David James, *Qur'āns of the Mamlūks* (London, 1988), no. 40]).

7 A *miṣṭara* is a ruling device consisting of a cardboard or a wooden board upon which are taut threads that correspond to the text-block frames and base lines.

8 Ben Azzouna, "La Production de manuscrits," pp. 38–93.

9 From *ra's* (head): a stroke placed at the beginning of a downward line, such as *alif*, head of *bā*, head of *dāl*, etc.

10 Filling in certain letters such as median '*ayn* and *mīm*.

11 Illuminated heading.

12 Pages 37, 42, 59, 66, 70, 73, 80, 82, 86, 87, 91, 97, 101, 103, 106, 110, 114, 121, 123, 150, 173, 179, 182, 200, 204, 215, 225, 243, 246, 250, 251, 258, 265, 272, 274, 287, 290.

13 There are exceptions, but they only confirm this observation. On p. 86, the left halves of lines 5 and 6 are missing. The space illuminated is thus too narrow to contain an illustration. The illumination was thus probably started on the recto, but that mistake was corrected and the illumination was completed on the right halves of lines 3 to 6 of the verso of the same folio (p. 87). Likewise, on p. 250, lines 6 to 9 of the text are missing, but an illumination was executed mistakenly on the recto and exactly in the same place on the verso of the same folio (p. 251). Finally, on p. 265, two lines of text are missing, but the other ones are unusually spaced so that it is likely that the painting was not added over any of the original text.

14 This illustration program is incomplete. Most of the illustrations were numbered, but parallel to the thirty-six extant panels are numbers from 1 to 42. In addition, a note on the last page of the manuscript mentions forty-three illustrations (*waraq-i muœawwar*), which suggests that seven paintings are missing, most likely four at the beginning of the manuscript—illustration I-4 is in fact numbered 6—and three between III-27(2), numbered 29, and V-16, numbered 34. Illustrations I-3 and IV-10 are not numbered.

15 India Office Library, London, IO Islamic 149 / ETHE 2775 (Norah M. Titley, *The Ni'matnâma Manuscript of the Sultans of Mandu: The Sultan's Book of Delights* (London, 2005); Eloïse Brac de La Perrière, *L'Art du Livre dans l'Inde des Sultanats* (Paris, 2008), n. 16, pls. 25–26).

16 I thank Lamia Balafrej, who is carrying out research on the illustrated manuscripts of the *Gulistān*, for this information.

17 The manuscript's text does not always match classical editions of the *Gulistān*; the one used here is that of Muḥammad 'Alī Furūghī (Tehran, 2009). A careful textual analysis of the GPL manuscript in comparison to other early copies would certainly be informative about the history of this manuscript as well as the text of the *Gulistān*.

18 I am not certain about the accuracy of some of the names, notably Nānhā "Zunnār-Dār."

19 Som Prakash Verma, *Mughal Painters and Their Work: A Biographical Survey and Comprehensive Catalogue* (Aligarh, Oxford, 1994).

20 The birth name of Emperor Jahangir.

21 John Seyller, "The Walters Art Museum Diwan of Amir Hasan Dihlawi and Salim's atelier at Allahabad," *Arts of Mughal India. Studies in Honour of Robert Skelton*, ed. Rosemary Crill, Susan Stronge, and Andrew Topsfield (London and Ahmedabad, India, 2004), p. 108.

22 Terence McInerney, "Three Paintings by Abu'l Hasan in a Manuscript of the Bustan of Sa'di," in *Arts of Mughal India*, pp. 81–94.

23 Verma, *Mughal Painters*, pp. 47, 261.

24 Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Indian and Iranian illumination and bookbinding are still insufficiently known to propose a more precise attribution for these restorations.

25 Basil Gray, "Painting," in *The Art of India and Pakistan*, ed. Leigh Welch (London, 1950), pp. 153, 155; Richard Ettinghausen, *Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India in American Collections* (New Delhi, 1961), pl. 10; Stuart C. Welch, *The Art of Mughal India* (New York, 1963), p. 71; Ernst Grube, *The World of Islam* (London, 1966), pl. 100; B. W. Robinson, *Persian and Mughal Art* (London, 1976), no. 89, pl. 204; Asok Kumar Das, *Mughal Painting During Jahangir's Time* (Calcutta, 1978), p. 94; Milo Cleveland Beach, *The Grand Mogul: Imperial Painting in India, 1600–1660* (Williamstown, 1978), p. 66; *Trésors de l'Islam* (Geneva, 1985), no. 138; B. N. Goswamy and Eberhard Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age: Painting at the Court of the Great Mughals* (Zurich, 1987), no. 79; John Seyller, "Two Mughal Mirror Cases," *Journal of the David Collection,* 3 (2010), pp. 131–43.

26 Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, pp. 131–43, figs. 1–2 (David Collection 1), figs. 6–7 (David Collection 2), and figs. 9–10 (David Collection 3).

27 Gray, *Painting*, p. 155, no. 695, pl. 133; Das, *Mughal Painting*, p. 96; Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 16.

28 Gray, *Painting*, p. 153, no. 683; Ettinghausen, *Paintings*, pl. 10; Das, *Mughal Painting*, pp. 95–96; Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 17.
29 Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 18; Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, fig. 8; http://poetryprayer.thewalters.org/poetry/gulistan/ (accessed February 1, 2011)
30 Robinson, *Persian and Mughal Art*, and *Trésors de l'Islam*, no. 138 (henceforth labeled Rothschild 1); Robinson, *Persian and Mughal Art*, and Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 20 (Rothschild 2).
31 Stuart C. Welch, "Early Mughal Miniature Paintings from Two Private Collections Shown at the Fogg Art Museum," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), p. 142, pl. 11, fig. 18; Welch, *The Art of Mughal India*, pl. 25; Das, *Mughal Painting*, pp. 94–96.
32 W.668, f. 48v, upper and lower registers (respectively 63 x 122 and 47 x 122 mm).
33 This entire folio was replaced.
34 Welch, *Early Mughal Miniature Paintings*, p. 142; Welch, *The Art of Mughal India*, p. 71.
35 Das, *Mughal Painting*, p. 96.
36 Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, p. 137.
37 The illuminated panel that replaced this illustration was pasted back to front.
38 Welch, *The Art of Mughal India,* p. 71.
39 This painting was previously identified as an illustration of chapter I, story 7 (Ettinghausen, *Paintings*).
40 Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 16; Verma, *Mughal Painters*, p. 129.
41 Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, pp. 141–43.
42 Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, p. 131.
43 Pasted back to front.
44 Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, no. 18; Seyller, *Two Mughal Mirror Cases*, pp. 137–39.
45 Das, *Mughal Painting*, p. 95.
46 Ettinghausen, *Paintings*.


تولد غازان خان
١٦٩

YAEL RICE

MUGHAL INTERVENTIONS IN THE RAMPUR *JĀMIʿ AL-TAVĀRĪKH*

1
Birth of Ghazan Khan, from a manuscript of the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* by Rashīd al-Dīn (1247–1318). India, Mughal, AH 1004/1596 CE. Watercolor on paper. Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, Jerome Wheelock Fund, 1935.12. Photograph courtesy Worcester Art Museum.

Abstract
This article explores late sixteenth-century Mughal attitudes towards Persian illustrated manuscripts of earlier provenance, taking as a case study the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* (Compendium of chronicles) in the Raza Library in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh. Copied in Tabriz in the fourteenth century, the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* was embellished at one or more courts of Iran and Central Asia during the fifteenth and possibly sixteenth centuries before it finally ended up in the hands of Akbar's artists during the 1590s. The manuscript thus functions as a palimpsest, bearing text in a fourteenth-century hand and eighty-two paintings dating from a span of almost three centuries. Some Mughal-period compositions in the manuscript even incorporate and build around fragments of paintings dating from the fifteenth century and perhaps earlier. In focusing on these works in particular, this article considers how Mughal painters constructed a distinctive artistic idiom upon and through layers of the past.

IT WOULD NOT BE AN EXAGGERATION TO SAY that the Mughal emperor Akbar (1542–1605) was possessed of an historical impulse. During his nearly fifty-year tenure on the throne (reigned 1556–1605), he commissioned multiple dynastic histories in Persian, including the *Akbarnāma*, a chronicle of his own reign; the *Ta'rīkh-i khāndān-i timūriyya*, a history of the Timurid lineage up to the Mughals; and the *Ta'rīkh-i alfi*, a history of the first Muslim millennium that begins with the Prophet Muḥammad's death and concludes with Akbar's reign. Akbar also ordered the translation of Arabic- and Sanskrit-language histories into Persian. Even the memoirs of Babur (1483–1530), the founder of the dynasty and Akbar's grandfather, found a new life in the official court language.[1]

Many of these works were lavishly and copiously illustrated in a recognizably Mughal idiom that, as a number of scholars have noted, departs significantly from the Timurid, Safavid, Jain, and Sultanate painting traditions to which Akbar's artists were heir.[2] This divergence from established and no doubt familiar modes of representation and pictorial cycles may be explained in part by the nature of the texts themselves. Many of them, such as the *Ta'rīkh-i alfi*, had been only recently composed. Thus Akbar's artists had no codified program of illustration to which to turn.[3] The painters charged with illustrating the *Razmnāma* (Book of war), a Persian rendering of the Mahabharata produced at Akbar's court in the early 1580s, found themselves in a similar predicament. Although the sacred epic predated the Mughals by many centuries, an illustrative program had not been established in the form of a codex. With no immediate models at hand, Akbar's artists were compelled to compose a corpus of narrative images anew and afresh, often with spectacular results.[4]

2

2
Birth of Ghazan Khan, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* p. 268, here dated to 15th or 16th century. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 133 x 270 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph from Barbara Schmitz and Ziyaud-Din A. Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur*, pl. 259.

But what about cases where precedents did exist and where prototypes were available? A *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* (Compendium of chronicles) dated AH 1004/1596 CE (Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran, and dispersed to other collections) presents just such a problem.[5] Although the royal library possessed an earlier illustrated copy of this text (Raza Library, Rampur, P.1820), Mughal court artists chose to envision history through their own distinctive artistic framework, dispensing entirely with the model even when there was an overlap in subject matter (compare, e.g., figs. 1 and 2).[6] What drove this decision? Further, what does this impulse towards "the new" say about Mughal attitudes about the past?

This older illustrated *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, today housed in the Raza Library in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh, offers a unique framework through which to explore some of these questions. The manuscript bears paintings executed at the Mughal court during the 1590s, as well as paintings dating from the sixteenth, fifteenth, and possibly fourteenth centuries (figs. 3 and 4). In some cases, images from two different periods are combined on a single page (fig. 5).[7] The Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* is a fascinating testimony to artistic reuse; it is also, however, in a state of disarray. A full codicological study of the manuscript remains to be done; my comments here are preliminary and shall remain focused primarily on establishing a rough timeline for the production of a select number of the illustrations. Conclusions drawn from this exercise indicate the Mughal-period paintings in the Rampur manuscript were painted in an idiom that is distinguished from—rather than imitative of—older exemplars. Akbar's painters may have done this deliberately because they saw artistic style as a kind of historical imprint or trace. By including their own distinctive images into the Rampur manuscript, they sought to insert their patron and his family into an esteemed Mongol lineage, while at the same time they underscored Akbar's role as a *mujaddid* (renewer of faith) who would usher in a new age.[8]

The Rampur manuscript was copied in Persian, in *naskh* script, probably during the second half of the fourteenth century. It draws from the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*'s first volume, the history of the Mongol rulers, beginning with the Qipchaq princes and ending with the birth of Ghazan Khan.[9] The manuscript's corpus of images—eighty-two paintings in total—poses a challenge. They are stylistically and temporally disparate, and their state of preservation varies, which may explain in part why the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* had been relatively neglected by Mughal scholars until recently. Barbara Schmitz and Ziyaud-Din A. Desai's 2006 catalogue of

3

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3
Enthronement scene, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* p. 66, 1590s. Opaque watercolor on paper, 390 x 270 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph by author.

4
Enthronement of Buraq Khan, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* p. 58, 15th or 16th century. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 202 x 270 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph by author.

the Mughal and Persian paintings and illustrated manuscripts in the Rampur Raza Library ameliorated this situation.[10] According to Schmitz's calculations, the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* was copied and furnished with a select number of illustrations in the mid- or later part of the fourteenth century in Iran. She attributes a second painting campaign to the Herat court of the Timurid prince Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Mīrzā (1438–1506), i.e., circa 1470 to 1490. A third and final phase of illustration, Schmitz posits, can be attributed to the patronage of the Mughal emperor Akbar. The author dates these paintings to circa 1590 to 1595.

Many of Schmitz's attributions are fairly straightforward. More problematic is a group of paintings that Schmitz describes as being in a "Mughal historicizing style," which she also dates to circa 1590 to 1595 (figs. 2 and 6). While these works appear to date from a single phase of production, as is evidenced by the similarities in facial and body types as well as by the presence of a common type of male headdress, they bear no resemblance to the more recognizably Mughal additions to the manuscripts (compare figs. 3 and 6). Why would Akbar's artists execute paintings in two different historicized styles, one clearly in a Mughal mode, the other bearing no resemblance to anything known to have come out of the royal workshop at that time? Further, if these paintings were indeed produced at the Mughal court, why is there so little compositional overlap in images depicting the same subjects in the 1596 *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*?

In fact, these "historicized" paintings seem to share a closer formal relationship with paintings produced in Tabriz and Herat during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than with Mughal painting of the 1590s. The double-page enthronement scenes, for example, clearly echo *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* compositions found in the Diez

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Enthronement of Temür Öljeitü, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* p. 152, 15th or 16th century, with Mughal additions of 1590s. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 388 x 270 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph by author.

Albums (Staatsbibliothek, Berlin, Mss. Diez A fols. 70–72) and in Hazine 2153 in the Topkapı Palace Library, Istanbul.[11]

Some of the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* paintings also find a curious parallel in early fifteenth-century Timurid manuscript painting, in what has been dubbed the so-called historical style.[12] For example, the enthronement scene in an anthology dated AH 813/1410 CE (Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, L.A. 161, fol. 260v) and made for Iskandar Sulṭān (1384–1415) in Shiraz clearly recalls images of similar subjects in the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*.[13] A compelling link is also found in the illustrative program of a *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. Supp. Pers. 1113) that Francis Richard has convincingly attributed to the patronage of the Timurid prince Bāysunghur (1397–1433) at Herat.[14] Indeed, the Rampur birth scene clearly seems to follow the Paris painting of the same subject, or vice versa, with the mother, wet nurse, astrologers, and attendants depicted in strikingly similar poses (figs. 2 and 7). There is, moreover, an obvious formalistic connection between the two manuscripts' representations of the siege of Baghdad, which also evidently share a relationship with a depiction of the same scene in one of the Diez Albums.[15]

A third *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, now housed in the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta (Ms. D31), finds so many links with the Rampur manuscript—in terms of composition and even folio size—that it is difficult to believe the two were not once housed in the same royal collection-workshop. In some cases, a nearly one-to-one relationship exists between the images.[16] Dating the Calcutta manuscript is another matter altogether. In an article written in 1954, Basil Gray proposed a date some-

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Enthronement scene, *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh,* p. 70, here dated to 15th or 16th century. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 392 x 310 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph by author.

where in the late fourteenth century, or at least prior to the Bibliothèque nationale *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh.*[17] Barbara Brend has more recently suggested it was produced in the mid-sixteenth century, perhaps at the court of Akbar or that of his father, Humayun (1508–1556).[18]

To complicate the issue further, a *Tavārīkh-i guzīda-i nusratnāma* (Selected histories of the book of victory) (British Library, London, Or. 3222) that was probably copied and illustrated in Transoxiana during the 1560s also shares an uncanny relationship with some of the "historicized" illustrations in the Rampur *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh*.[19] The manner of rendering headgear, figures, and thrones in the British Library *Tavārīkh-i guzīda-i nusratnāma*, for example, finds an echo in some of the Rampur manuscript's paintings.[20] This correspondence between the two manuscripts compels consideration of the possibility that some portion of the Rampur *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh* was illustrated in an archaizing mode, either in Samarqand or Bukhara, during the mid-sixteenth century.[21] This tantalizing line of inquiry warrants further investigation that is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

Unraveling the complex web of relations among the Rampur, London, Calcutta, Paris, and Lisbon manuscripts, moreover, remains to be done. I raise the issue of their association primarily to demonstrate that the "historicized" paintings in question belong to an artistic tradition concerned with imitation (from Iran or Central Asia, probably dating from the late fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth century), and as such the works stand apart from late sixteenth-century Mughal frameworks of image-making.

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Birth of Ghazan Khan, *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh,* fol. 210v, 1420s. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. Supp. Pers. 1113. Photograph courtesy Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Several scholars have raised the issue of repetition and imitation in manuscript painting from the Timurid and Safavid courts.[22] Regarding Persian albums of paintings, drawings, and calligraphies, David J. Roxburgh writes: "Creativity in calligraphy and depiction involved the recreation of models and depended on the practitioner's ability to assimilate and synthesize a series of performances. There was no anxiety of influence.... The viewer's reception of any calligraphy, painting, or drawing—no less than for poetry—involved the anticipation of ancestry, even if specific models could not be recalled in visual memory."[23] The Persian art of depiction was thus, in a sense, always palimpsestic. This interest in the imitation of older models is evident not only in mid-sixteenth-century Safavid albums but also in manuscripts made for Timurid princes in Shiraz, Herat, and Samarqand during the fifteenth century.

At the Mughal court during the 1590s, on the other hand, the production and appreciation of images were, to a great degree, predicated upon the marked expansion of a known visual corpus.[24] Whereas the Persian court painting traditions conceived the manuscript page as a frame or anchor to contain discrete, codified pictorial units drawn from a relatively finite vocabulary of images, the Mughal visual lexicon was potentially endless, expanded indefinitely by the rise of a descriptive mode of depiction that privileged unique physiognomic likenesses and depictions of contemporary and near-contemporary events. This distinction between Persian and Mughal painting practices suggests these traditions were not just stylistically distinct but were even systemically different, informed by contrasting attitudes towards the function of images and the problem of vision. Certainly, as Eleanor Sims has shown, Mughal artists in the sixteenth century drew inspiration for compositional formulas from earlier materials, especially illustrated Timurid manuscripts, but one-to-one copying is rare.[25] The Mughal case, moreover, evinces another kind of approach towards models and precedents, one in which the materials of the past were treated as traces of a historical moment, intrinsically distinct from the present. In this artistic system, imitation did not necessarily carry the weight that it did at the Safavid and Timurid courts.

Many of the Mughal paintings in the Rampur *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh,* even when executed in a vaguely historicizing mode, depart both stylistically and compositionally from the older images in the same manuscript (compare figs. 3 and 6). The illustrations in the 1596 *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh* likewise diverge from models that would have been available in the Rampur manuscript (see figs. 1 and 2). At the same time, Akbar's artists left many of the Rampur manuscript's older paintings relatively unaltered. This comes as a bit of a surprise. As John Seyller and others have demonstrated, court artists were actively engaged in repainting and augmenting pre- and early Mughal illustrations and narrative cycles, with the Cleveland *Ṭūṭīnāma*

(Tales of the parrot) and the so-called Princes of the House of Timur in the British Museum, London, being perhaps the most well studied examples.[26]

Manuscripts illustrated during the Timurid period were not wholly excluded from this treatment. At Akbar's behest, two paintings were added to Muḥammad Jūkī's *Shāhnāma* (Book of kings) of circa 1444–45 (Royal Asiatic Society, London, Pers Ms. 239).[27] The *Khāmsa* (Quintet) of Mīr ʿAlī Shīr Navāʾī (1441–1501) (Royal Library, Windsor Castle, Ms. A.8), which was copied by Sulṭān ʿAli of Mashhad (1442–circa 1519) in Herat in AH 897/1492 CE and then had paintings added in Bukhara during the mid-sixteenth century, was similarly augmented with overpainting and illustrations, including a Last Judgment and a picnicking scene, in circa 1605 under the direction of Akbar's son and successor, Jahangir (reigned 1605–27).[28] These examples are qualitatively different from the case of the *Ṭūṭīnāma.* While the Timurid manuscripts may have been augmented in places (sixteenth-century paintings from Bukhara, for example, were not exempt from overpainting), their fifteenth-century features were, in large part, left untouched, thus preserving their original state.[29] This more conservative approach to the illustrated book is perhaps best exemplified by Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Mīrzā's *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of victory) of Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, the flyleaves of which bear the seals of both Akbar and Jahangir. Its six double-page miniatures received no further retouching at the Mughal court, nor were any paintings added to the manuscript.[30]

The early fourteenth-century Arabic-language *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* may provide an additional link between the Mongol Ilkhans and the Mughals. Sheila Blair conjectures that this now-dispersed manuscript made its way into the Mughal royal library, perhaps during the reign of Akbar. Blair's hypothesis rests not on the existence of Mughal seals or autographs (the manuscript is missing its first and last pages) but on the later addition of page numbers as well as Persian glosses next to and on top of many of the illustrations, a practice associated with the Mughal court of the late sixteenth into the seventeenth century.[31] Like the *Ẓafarnāma,* the Arabic copy of the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* shows no signs of Mughal overpainting dating from the late sixteenth century.

This variability in the reception of illustrated manuscripts may be explained in large part by the historical nature of the materials. Descended from both Timurid and Mongol stock, the Mughals celebrated their lineage, stressing in particular their relationship to the famed ruler Timur (1336–1405), in order to legitimize dynastic claims. In addition to manuscripts, they also collected gems and jades known to have a Timurid provenance. Into these rubies and emeralds, Akbar and Jahangir—as well as their successors—had their names inscribed next to those of esteemed Timurid forebears, a practice analogous to their marking of the flyleaves of Timurid manuscripts with royal seals and records of inspections. Both of these inscriptional acts provided a means to mark physical presence and underscore a genealogical proximity.[32] Augmenting these same manuscripts with Mughal paintings served a similar purpose by imprinting the prized, historical object with distinctively contemporary traces. Thus, by supplementing what were likely perceived to be Timurid and possibly earlier Mongol paintings with new iterations, Akbar's artists literally inserted the Mughals into a revered history. Historical continuity is demonstrated not so much through stylistic or formal affinities as through the shared use—and evidence of shared use—of the same objects.

The question of overpainting in the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* still requires further exploration. Scientific analysis may reveal that some of the full-page Mughal additions were executed on top of late fourteenth- or fifteenth-century images. Even if this is the case—and this remains to be shown—other examples in the manuscript indicate Mughal artists were less interested in covering up older paintings than in employing them as points of comparison (see figs. 5 and 8). In a Mughal-period illustration of Temür Öljeitü's court, for example, the artist(s) incorporated an older depiction of Mongol figures into the composition, as if to draw attention to some intrinsic difference between the two modes of representation (fig. 5). In style and type, the image of the Mongol couple recalls similar depictions from Diez Album A (fol. 71, S.63).[33] The truncated, cropped appearance of the Rampur image suggests it, like the couples in the Diez Album, may have originally operated as a discrete entity, enclosed by a gold and colored ruling.[34] At the Mughal court during the 1590s, however, the stand-alone image was incorporated into a larger narrative composition.

The figures, however, have not been fully integrated into that larger composition. Although a faint sketch suggests one of the Mughal artists considered painting a background around the Mongol figures, this project never came to fruition. Instead, the older image—untouched and left in its original state—appears to hover within the compositional space, its crisp outlines and spare palette starkly visible against the colorful and tonal Mughal surround. Far from attempting to elide such discrepancies, the Mughal artists in these two instances instead chose to make these very differences a primary focus. Again, the Mughal painting practice of the late sixteenth century departs significantly from the Persian. Contrast and disjunction, rather than imitation, figured as foundational principles.[35] In this way, Mughal artists inserted themselves into a historical lineage, not through imitation but by underscoring the very qualities that differentiated their own work from that of the past—but to what end?

The historical nature of the text and its illustrations is certainly significant. As opposed to a poetic work, such as the *Khāmsa* of Niẓāmī (1141–1209) or even the *Shāhnāma*, the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, like a work such as Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī's

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Enthronement scene, *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* p. 32, 15th or 16th century, with Mughal additions of 1590s. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 395 x 271 mm. Raza Library, Rampur. Photograph by author.

Ẓafarnāma, chronicled a historical dynasty of the not-so-distant past, a dynasty that was an ancestor to the Mughals. This may explain why these older images in the Rampur manuscript were preserved, especially if it was believed the depictions themselves dated from an earlier, fourteenth-century Ilkhanid moment. Many scholars have observed that descriptive painting—portraiture and studies of flora and fauna, for example—came to figure centrally at the Mughal court, especially during the later decades of Akbar's reign. An accurate likeness was not the sole objective; equally important was that the depiction had been taken from life. The descriptive image was thus understood as a document of a real encounter. I would suggest, then, that these older images in the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* were approached in a similar manner, as indices of a historical encounter. The fact that the paintings depicted esteemed ancestors of the Mughals made them even more poignant.

While Mughal artists historicized their additions to the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* to some extent, their larger project was predicated upon evoking contrasts with earlier paintings in the manuscript. By doing so, they emphasized the unique historicity of each act of depiction, serving, in a way, to underscore the contemporaneity or "newness" of the Mughal artistic idiom. This practice may find its corollary, or even its impetus, in the millenarian tone that colored Akbar's reign to such a degree that the *Ta'rīkh-i alfi* even proclaimed him to be the *Mujaddid-i* *alf-i thānī* (Renewer of the second millennium).[36] In this way, the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* presented Mughal artists with a unique opportunity to convey in artistic terms the role of their patron as the reviver of Islam and the herald of a new millennial cycle. At the same time, in the process of pairing older and modern paintings (both from folio to folio and on the same page), Akbar's artists made a visual argument *connecting* the Mughal present to a Timurid and Mongol past.[37] Indeed, this was also an act of emulation, but one achieved through subtle and not-so-subtle juxtapositions rather than through imitation and repetition. With its range of image types, the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* manuscript as a whole tells the story of shifts in artistic practice and, as such, serves as a register of how images generate meaning for both practitioners and patrons.

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NOTES

1 The early fifteenth-century Timurid courts also saw a rise in the production of histories and genealogies, a trend that Akbar's own initiatives appear to echo. See John E. Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46, no. 2 (1987), pp. 81–108; and David J. Roxburgh, *Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 130–32.

2 The development of a Mughal style of painting during the sixteenth century has been the subject of a number of art historical studies. For a range of differing opinions and approaches, see Pramod Chandra, *The Tuti-nama of the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Origins of Mughal Painting* (Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1976); Milo Cleveland Beach, *Early Mughal Painting* (Cambridge: Published for the Asia Society by Harvard University Press, 1987); Priscilla P. Soucek, "Persian Artists in Mughal India: Influences and Transformations," *Muqarnas* 4 (1987), pp. 166–81; John Seyller, "Overpainting in the Cleveland Tutinama," *Artibus Asiae* 52, no. 1–2 (1992), pp. 283–318; *Humayun's Garden Party: Princes of the House of Timur and Early Mughal Painting*, ed. Sheila Canby (Bombay: Marg, 1994); Aboulala Soudavar, "Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition," *Iran* 37 (1999), pp. 49–66; and John Seyller et al., *The Adventures of Hamza* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2002).

3 The degree to and manner by which pictorial cycles in manuscripts became codified, and the role that such programs played in the production of later illustrative projects, deserves further examination, but it is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

4 On the illustrative program of the circa 1582–86 *Razmnāma* (Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II City Palace Museum, Jaipur) and its relationship to other Mughal *Razmnama*s of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see John Seyller, "Model and Copy: The Illustration of Three '*Razmnāma*' Manuscripts," *Archives of Asian Art* 38 (1985), pp. 37–66; and Asok Kumar Das, "Notes on Four Illustrations of the Birla *Razmnama* and their Counterparts in other *Razmnama* Manuscripts," in *Arts of Mughal India: Studies in Honour of Robert Skelton,* ed. Rosemary Crill et al. (Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing, 2004), pp. 67–79.

5 The bulk (ninety-eight illustrations) of the 1596 *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* remains in the Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran (no. 2254); individual paintings previously removed from the manuscript can be found in museum and library collections in Europe and North America. For a selection of illustrations from the Tehran portion, see Hana Kńižková and Jiří Marek, *The Jenghiz Khan Miniatures from the Court of Akbar the Great*, trans. Olga Kuthanová (London: Spring Books, 1963), as well as *Golestan Palace Library: A Portfolio of Miniature Paintings and Calligraphy* (Tehran: Zarin and Simin Books, 2000), pp. 141–53; and for a preliminary list of dispersed paintings from the manuscript, see Milo Cleveland Beach, *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court* (1981; revised and expanded, Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2012), p. 82.

6 Interestingly, the pictorial cycles of imperial copies of the *Bāburnāma*—which, like the *Razmnāma*, had only recently been composed (or more accurately, rendered into Persian from

the original Chaghatai)—do in fact share a close relationship to each other, a point that Seyller attributes to the "dynastic and political importance" of these manuscripts ("Model and Copy," p. 50). One would assume that the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* was similarly significant for Akbar, and yet his artists elected to maintain a distance between their own illustrations to this text and those available in the earlier Rampur manuscript. On the pictorial cycles of imperial *Bāburnāma* manuscripts, see Ellen Smart, "Paintings from the *Baburnama:* A Study of 16th Century Mughal Historical Manuscript Illustration," PhD diss., University of London, 1977; and Smart, "Yet Another Illustrated Akbari *Baburnama* Manuscript," in *Facets of Indian Art: A Symposium held at the Victoria and Albert Museum*, ed. Robert Skelton et al. (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1987), pp. 105–15.

7 I would like to thank David J. Roxburgh for reminding me of a parallel practice of "layering" in Ilkhanid manuscripts collected by the Timurids, e.g., Hazine 1653 and Hazine 1654. See Richard Ettinghausen, "Some Paintings in Four Istanbul Albums," *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954), pp. 91–103; Güner İnal, "Some Miniatures of the Jami al-Tawarikh in Istanbul, Topkapı Museum, Hazine Library no. 1654," *Ars Orientalis* 5 (1963), pp. 163–75; and Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, chapter 3, especially pp. 130–47.

8 I have examined the question of artistic agency at the Mughal court during this period, and especially during the early seventeenth century, in "The Emperor's Eye and the Painter's Brush: The Rise of the Mughal Court Artist, ca. 1546–1627," PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2011.

9 The *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* was initially conceived as a history of the Mongols. Its author, Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓl-Allāh Hamadānī (1247–1318), began the work at the behest of Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304), the ruler of the Ilkhanate in Tabriz. Rashīd al-Dīn later expanded the text under Ghazan Khan's successor, Öljeitü (r. 1304–16). In its completed form (no copy of which is known to exist today), the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* comprised four volumes. The first covered the reigns of the Mongol rulers, beginning with Genghis Khan and ending with the death of Ghazan Khan. The second dealt with the reign of Öljeitü up to the year 1310 and included a world history of the non-Mongols of Eurasia. The third was a genealogy of the Arabs, Jews, Mongols, Europeans, and Chinese, and the fourth volume was a geographical compendium. It was the author's intention that the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* be copied in both Arabic and Persian every six months. How many manuscripts were in fact produced remains in question. Rashīd al-Dīn was executed in 1318, and his living quarters were subsequently plundered. Today, only portions of the first three volumes of Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* survive, while no copies of the fourth volume are known to exist. The earliest known copy of the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* is a fragmentary Arabic manuscript divided between the Edinburgh University Library (Arabic Ms. 20) and the Nasser D. Khalili Collection (MSS 727). Executed between 1306 and 1314 in Tabriz, the two fragments cover sections of volume two, from the pre-Islamic Persian dynasties to the Ghaznavids (Arabic Ms. 20), who ruled most of Khwarazm from 975 to 1187; and (MSS 727) the histories of Islam, China, India, and in small part, the Jews. For a comprehensive analysis of this early, fragmentary *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, see Sheila S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London: Nour Foundation, 1995).

10 Barbara Schmitz and Ziyaud-Din A. Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur* (New Delhi: Rampur Raza Library and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 2006), pp. 171–79.

11 On the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* images in Diez Albums folios 70–72, see M. Ş. Ipşiroğlu, *Saray-Alben: Diez'sche Klebebände aux den Berliner Sammlungen* (Wiesbaden, 1964), pp. 17–18; Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 93–98; David J. Roxburgh, "Heinrich Friedrich von Diez and his eponymous Albums: MSS. Diez A, fols. 70–74," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995), pp. 112–36; Karin Rührdanz, "Illustrationen zu Rašīd al-dīns *Ta'rīḫ-i Mubārak-i Ġāzānī* in den Berliner Diez-Alben," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole, études réunies et présentées*, ed. Denise Aigle (Paris, 1997), pp. 295–306; Stefano Carboni and Linda Komaroff, *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), cat. nos. 17–32; and Julia Gonnella and Christoph Rauch, eds., *Heroische Seiten: Tausend Jahr persiscehs Buch der Könige* (Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 2011), cat. nos. 18–32.

The *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* images in Hazine 2153 have been discussed by Beyhan Karamağaralı, "Camiu't-Tevarih'in bilinmeyen bir nüshasina ait dört minyatür (Four miniatures from an unknown copy of the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*)," *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı* 2 (1966–68), pp. 70–86; Filiz Cağman and Zeren Tanındı, *Topkapı Saray Museum: The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts*, ed. J. M. Rogers (Boston: Little Brown, 1986), nos. 43–44; and Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 93–98.

12 Richard Ettinghausen, "An Illuminated Manuscript of Hafiz-i Abru in Istanbul,

Part I," *Kunst des Orients* 2 (1955), pp. 30–44. For a reassessment of this term, see Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, pp. 132–33.

13 Illustrated in Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles*, fig. 68.

14 Francis Richard, "Un des peintres du manuscript *Supplément persan 1113* de l'Histoire des Mongols de Rašīd al-dīn identifié," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, pp. 307–20.

15 The double-page scene of the siege of Baghdad (Diez A, fol. 70, S. 7 and 4) is reproduced in Ipşiroğlu, *Saray-Alben,* pp. 17–18.

16 Compare, for example, the two manuscripts' depictions of the enthronement of Chaghatai Khan and his wife (P1820, p. 54; D31, fol. 58v), Qubilai Khan's soldiers drowning (P1820, p. 107; D31, fol. 105r), and the enthronement of Buraq Khan (P1820, p. 58; D31, fol. 56v). Images from the Asiatic Society of Bengal manuscript are reproduced in Basil Gray, "An Unknown Fragment of the 'Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh' in the Asiatic Society of Bengal," *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954), pp. 65–75, figs. 15, 18, and 23; and for the Rampur images, see Schmitz and Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings*, pls. 239–40, 245.

17 Gray, "An Unknown Fragment," pp. 66–68.

18 Barbara Brend, "A Sixteenth-Century Manuscript from Transoxiana: Evidence for a Continuing Tradition in Illustration," *Muqarnas* 11 (1994), pp. 103–16, especially pp. 108–109.

19 The *Tavārīkh-i guzīda-i nuṣratnāma*, a history of the Turkish races up to the reign of Abū 'l-Fatḥ Muḥammad (ca. 1451–1510), was composed in Chaghatai during the early sixteenth century. The British Library illustrated copy of this text (Or. 3222) is discussed at length in Brend, "A Sixteenth-Century Manuscript."

20 Compare, for example, p. 58 of the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* (illustrated as fig. 4 here) with folio 50v in Or. 3222 (illustrated in Brend, "A Sixteenth-Century Manuscript," fig. 2).

21 As Brend shows, both Or. 3222 and the Calcutta *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh,* like the Rampur *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*, share a curious relationship with fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century illustrated historical manuscripts from Tabriz and Shiraz. Together, the three codices may speak to a broader mid-sixteenth-century archaizing trend in manuscript illustration that, as Brend outlines, first took root in Transoxiana and then traveled to India. See Brend, "A Sixteenth-Century Manuscript," especially pp. 108–14.

22 See, for example, Ada Adamova, "Repetition of Compositions in Manuscripts: The *Khamsa* of Nizami in Leningrad," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 67–75; Ada Adamove, "The Hermitage Manuscript of Nizami's *Khamsa* Dated 835/1431," *Islamic Art* 5 (2001), pp. 53–132, but especially pp. 77–78; Roxburgh, *Persian Album*; and David J. Roxburgh, "Persian Drawings, ca. 1400–1500: Materials and Creative Procedures," *Muqarnas* 19 (2002), pp. 44–77.

23 Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 300.

24 As Seyller has shown, Akbar's artists did not even mine their own creative output from the circa 1582–86 *Razmnāma* (Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II City Palace Museum, Jaipur) in the production of the now-dispersed 1598–99 *Razmnāma* (Seyller, "Model and Copy"). Interestingly, the pictorial cycles of imperial copies of the *Bāburnāma*—which, like the *Razmnāma*, had only recently been composed (or, more accurately, rendered into Persian from the original Chaghatai)—do in fact share a close relationship to each other, a point that Seyller attributes to these manuscripts' "dynastic and political importance" ("Model and Copy," p. 50). One would assume that the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh* was similarly significant for Akbar, and yet his artists elected to maintain a distance between their own illustrations to this text and those available in the earlier Rampur manuscript. On the pictorial cycles of imperial *Bāburnāma* manuscripts, see Smart, "Paintings from the *Baburnama,*" and Smart, "Yet Another Illustrated Akbari *Baburnama* Manuscript," pp. 105–15.

25 Eleanor Sims, "Ibrahim Sultan's Illustrated Zafarnama of 1436 and its Impact in the Muslim East," in *Timurid Art and Culture*, ed. Golombek and Subtelny, pp. 132–43. Admittedly, one-to-one copying is rare in Timurid manuscripts as well.

26 See Seyller, "Overpainting in the Cleveland Tutinama," pp. 283–318; John Seyller, "Recycled Images: Overpainting in Early Mughal Art," in Canby, ed., *Humayun's Garden Party*, pp. 49–80; and Laura E. Parodi et al., "Tracing the History of a Mughal Album Page in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art," http://www.asianart.com/articles/mughal/index.html, accessed March 1, 2011.

27 The two Mughal-period additions are on folios 430v and 531r; overpainting (most likely a repair) also dating from the Mughal period is evident in the rendering of Bīzhan on folio 180r. For the most recent and comprehensive discussion of the Mughal history of RAS Pers 239, see Barbara Brend and A. H. Morton, *Muhammad Juki's Shahnamah of Firdausi* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 2010), pp. 148–75.

28 The Last Judgment (fol. 5v) is ascribed to Manohar (act. 1580–1620) and Nanha (act. 1582–1635), and the picnicking scene (fol. 6r) to Narsingh (act. late sixteenth to early seventeenth century). The former is reproduced in R. H. Pinder-Wilson et al., *Paintings from the Muslim Courts of India* (London: British Museum, 1976), no. 94a. Mughal treatment of manuscripts whose illustrative programs originated in Bukhara have been explored by a number of scholars, most recently by Mika Natif, "The SOAS *Anvār-i Suhaylī*: The Journey of a 'Reincarnated' Manuscript," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008), pp. 331–58.

29 Another manuscript copied by the famed calligrapher Sulṭān ʿAlī of Mashhad, a *Dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ (1325/26–1389/90) (British Library, London, Or. 14139), was remargined with elaborate *ḥāshiya* (border) designs, some featuring human figures, that were added in the early seventeenth century at Jahangir's court. See J. P. Losty, "The 'Bute' Hafiz and the Development of Border Decoration in the Manuscript Studio of the Mughals," *The Burlington Magazine* 127, no. 993 (1985), pp. 855–56, 858–71.

30 The manuscript, which is dated AH 872 (1467–68 CE), is in the John Work Garrett Collection, Milton S. Eisenhower Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland. The manuscript's six double-page paintings are on folios 82v–83r, 115v–116r, 174v–175r, 282v–283r, 359v–360r, and 449v–450r. The Timurid dimensions of the manuscript are discussed in Eleanor Sims, "The Garrett Manuscript of the Zafar-Name: A Study in Fifteenth-Century Timurid Patronage," PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1973, pp. 367–75; and in Thomas Lentz and Glenn Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1989), pp. 262, 357. For the manuscript's afterlife at the Mughal court, see Michael Brand and Glenn Lowry, *Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory* (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1985), pp. 91–92, 150–51.

31 Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles,* pp. 31–32.

32 Examples of inscribed rubies are reproduced in Manuel Keene with Salam Kaoukji, *Treasury of the World: Jewelled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals* (New York: Thames and Hudson in association with The al-Sabah Collection), cat. nos. 12.1–12.11. Jahangir's interest in gems is discussed within a broader framework of royal collecting and political legitimacy in Corinne Lefèvre, "Recovering a Missing Voice from Mughal India: The Imperial Discourse of Jahāngīr (r. 1605–1627) in his Memoirs," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50, no. 4 (2007), pp. 452–89, especially pp. 478–80.

33 Reproduced in Carboni and Komaroff, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, fig. 133.

34 According to Karin Rührdanz ("Illustrationen zu Rašīd al-Dīns," pp. 297–98), the Mongol couples in the Diez Album may have been created to illustrate genealogical charts in the first volume of the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārīkh*. The Rampur manuscript, as mentioned previously, also draws from this first volume of Rashīd al-Dīn's text.

35 A recent article by Molly Emma Aitken presents exciting insights into artistic reuse as well as narrative and formalistic disjunction in paintings and album pages from the Mughal and Rajput courts. See Molly Emma Aitken, "Parataxis and the Practice of Reuse, from Mughal Margins to Mīr Kalān Khān," *Archives of Asian Art* 59 (2009), pp. 81–103.

36 Qazi Ahmad Tattavi and Asif Khan Qazvini, *Tarikh-i Alfi* (Millennial history), ed. Ghulam Riza Tabatabai Majd, vol. 1 (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intisharat-i ʿilmi va farhangi, AH 1382/2003 CE), p. 241. In a fascinating parallel—though predating the *Ta'rīkh-i alfi* by more than one hundred fifty years—Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī applied the title of *mujaddid* to Shāhrukh in his *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of victory), completed around 1425. On the concept of *mujaddid* more generally, see E. van Donzel, "Mudjaddid," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, CD-ROM* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); and in the context of Timurid and Mughal formulations of power and legitimacy, see Ahmed Azfar Moin, "Islam and the Millennium: Sacred Kingship and Popular Imagination in Early Modern India and Iran," PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2010.

37 Roxburgh has argued that the coexistence of a "purposeful anachronism of style" and antiquarian modes of depiction in historical manuscripts created for Shahrukh, Baysunghur, and Ibrahim Sultan during the early fifteenth century served not only to "stress continuity" but also "to make the present seem inevitable, preordained…" (*Persian Album*, pp. 132–33).

KRYSTA L. BLACK

BIBLE ILLUSTRATION IN TENTH-CENTURY IBERIA

Reconsidering the Role of al-Andalus in the León Bible of 960

Abstract

During the height of Umayyad power and the final years of the reign of ʿAbd al-Rahman III in Córdoba, the scribes Florentius and Sanctius of Valeránica in Burgos penned and decorated the León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2) for an unidentified patron. Produced along the permeable frontier between northern Iberia and al-Andalus, it remains the most densely illustrated Bible to survive from the first millennium and despite many years of study, much remains unknown about the codex. Utilizing the courtly material culture of tenth-century al-Andalus, references to the diplomatic and familial relationships across the Iberian frontier, and the program of illustration within the manuscript, this paper[1] seeks to place the León Bible within a tenth-century Iberian aristocratic context of production and provide new avenues through which to examine its illuminations. Previous evaluations have tended to isolate single illustrations and either minimize Islamic contributions or ascribe a political message to discrete motifs. This study, however, suggests that by considering the manuscript's overall program alongside the resonances of Umayyad courtly art, one may not only reopen the question of the relationship between Andalusi art and Mozarabic manuscript illustration, but also begin to respond to the León Bible's many unanswered questions, including patronage, function, and meaning.

IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY, the Mallorcan historian José María Quadrado recalled his examination of the pages of the León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2) in the archives of the Real Colegiata de San Isidoro in León, writing the following words:

> Of all the famous tenth- and eleventh-century codices that enrich the library, brought together from the ancient monasteries to San Isidoro, only the precious Bible written in 960 by the priest Sanctius remains complete. Its illuminations and vignettes are admirably luxurious for its period and with its darkened-faced figures, curious costumes, and gloomy fantasies, it provides an exact type of the artistic character of that anxious and tenebrous century.[2]

With reference to the somber, yet fantastical character of the Bible's illustrations, Quadrado's comments register as romantic, while at the same time suggest that he saw within the book something of its tenth-century Iberian context. Alluding to the darkened skin of the figures, due to age rather than any intention of the artist, and drawing attention to what he considered the troubled time in which the illuminations were executed, Quadrado's characterizations of the Bible of 960 attempt to link the codex to its own cultural matrix rather than as a tool for reconstructing a lost and even more distant past.

Because many approaches to the León Bible have used the manuscript as a lens through which to see the lost beginnings of early Christian Bible illustration, it is productive to seek alternative avenues for inquiry that bypass this ontological goal in order to understand the codex on its own terms.[3] This process involves both considering the Bible as an artifact whose illustrations inflect its use and taking into account its tenth-century frontier context of production as a means to nuance ongoing explorations of its function and elaborate program of illumination. By reevaluating previous scholarly approaches that regard the manuscript as a distinctly Iberian artifact whose manufacture is inextricably linked to a dynamic multicultural milieu, I propose to take into account the rich cross-cultural interaction along the borders of al-Andalus and northern Iberia, while simultaneously considering the Bible of 960 as a whole, experiential tenth-century object.

The Manuscript

The León Bible of 960 is an illuminated pandect, or complete Bible, a format that was exceedingly rare in the early Middle Ages.[4] Also known also as the Codex Biblicus Legionensis and the Visigothic-Mozarabic Bible, it is the most densely illustrated Bible to survive from the first millennium. Its colophon precisely dates its completion to June 19, 960, during the brief reign of the Leonese king Ordoño IV. The Bible was produced in the scriptorium of the now-ruined monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica in Burgos.[5] It has been in the archives at San Isidoro in León since at least the twelfth century, as indicated by the presence of a copy completed in 1162 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 3).[6]

Despite the codex's immense size and luxurious qualities, the patron of the León Bible remains unidentified as do the exact contributions of the two scribes responsible for its creation. The scribe Sanctius takes credit for the manuscript in the colophon and elsewhere in the book, yet the final illustration—the oft-reproduced omega page, a standard form that appears in many valuable tenth-century Spanish manuscripts—suggests another scribe had a role in the Bible's production (fig. 1). The full-page illustration features a large omega outlined in bright yellow pigment and filled with intricate lozenges of interlace and gold, blossoming on each side into a green split palmette. Below the omega, two figures, Sanctius and Florentius, raise their chalices to commemorate the completion of the manuscript. Additional labels underscore the congratulatory appearance of the painting and present a dialogue between the two characters in which Florentius, also the known scribe of several other codices, praises his *discipulo*, while Sanctius congratulates his *magister*.[7] As rare as it is to have such detailed information about the date and artists of an early

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Florentius and Sanctius, Detail of page with Omega and Self-Portraits, León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2), f. 514r, ink and color on vellum, 47.5 x 34.5 cm, produced at the monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica (Burgos, Spain). After *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Biblia visigotica-mózarabe* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, 1999).

medieval work of art, there is much that remains unknown, including the patronage, function, and context of the manuscript's use.

The most notable aspect of the Bible is undoubtedly the amount of illumination contained within its pages. It consists of 517 folios containing the Latin Vulgate with marginal glosses preserving the Vetus Latina text. Arabic glosses, variously dated from the tenth and twelfth centuries, often appear in the margins.[8] The manuscript is densely illustrated with narrative scenes, decorated initials, ornamental vine scrolls, and other extra-biblical subject matter, beginning with a frontispiece featuring the Maiestas Domini, followed by genealogical tables punctuated by figural illustrations, present also in illustrated versions of Beatus of Liébana's *Commentarius in Apocalypsin*. The Old Testament has ninety-two narrative illustrations spread throughout its books, though they are not evenly distributed. These illustrations, with few exceptions, are situated within the columns of text where space was left for their addition; this arrangement has led scholars to conclude that the Bible of 960 retains the format of the earliest forms of manuscript illustration and is based on an intermediary closely linked to an early Christian or Visigothic archetype. The New Testament appears virtually without illustration, featuring only the Eusebian canon tables inhabited with beasts and four portraits, commonly designated as the Apostle Paul, appearing at the incipit of four of his letters: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians.

Previous Approaches

Despite its significance within early Spanish manuscript illustration, discussions of the Bible of 960 are few, often brief, and generally relative to a broader topic of inquiry, with few exceptions. The primary focus of these studies, though, is the

2
Florentius and Sanctius, Page with Canon Table, León Bible of 960, León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2), f. 402v, ink and color on vellum, 47.5 x 34.5 cm, produced at the monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica (Burgos, Spain). After *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Biblia visigotica-mózarabe* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, 1999).

way in which the illustrations stem from earlier traditions of manuscript illumination rather than how they pointedly reference the Bible's own context of production. This methodology has remained the primary scholarly approach to the codex.[9] Studies of the Bible that also consider cultural exchange along the frontier of northern Iberia and al-Andalus are rare, and these considerations generally fall within two categories. One seeks to isolate motifs or styles within the Bible that presumably indicate a type of "borrowing" from Islamic art or Sasanian art. The other, which also isolates specific illustrations, uses particular miniatures to suggest the presence of interaction, usually frontier conflict, within the pages of the manuscript. As early as 1881, Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos remarked on the "markedly Mohammedan character" of one page of the Bible's canon tables, suggesting that the architecture of the table—with its double arcade, trapezoidal impost blocks, prevalence of red and yellow, and overall decadence—recalled that of the Great Mosque of Córdoba (fig. 2). Based on these observations, the author posited that Sanctius was likely a Mozarab and the illustration "undoubtedly made under the impression or memory" of the great Cordoban building.[10]

While twentieth-century critical inquiries into the illustrations largely focused on using a philological approach to reconstruct a possible archetype for the manuscript, brief mentions were made of how it might relate to Islamic art. Although John Williams acknowledges that northern artists were familiar with the decorative vocabulary of textiles, ivories, and other portable goods from the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, he concludes that the use of Islamic sources in the León Bible is minimal. The exception is the omega page, which contains motifs such as the split palmette and toasting figures that Williams likens to Islamic ivories and Nishapur ceramics, respectively.[11] Following Williams, O. K. Werckmeister presents studies that more directly address Islamic art and the Bible of 960. He argues not only that single miniatures had a relationship to Islamic and Sasanian sources, but also suggests a possible political element in which the illuminations evoke Islamic-Christian conflict along the frontier. In illustrations such as the Battle of Gilboa, Werckmeister observes, the Philistine leader rides in a way that recalls the posture of hunting royalty on Sasanian silver, which was possibly adapted from an Islamic model (fig. 3).[12] The image is then further inflected by contemporary exegesis, such as that of Eulogius of Córdoba, in which the biblical precedent is linked to the Mozarabic martyrs' movement in ninth-century Córdoba. While the examples are scattered, Werckmeister argues that monastic artists were occasionally able to use Islamic source material as a means for a sort of political commentary while also following precedents in more benign ways, such as the utilization of particularly personal colophons, which he likens to inscriptions on Cordoban ivories.[13]

Although discussions of the varied roles of Islamic art are more prevalent in

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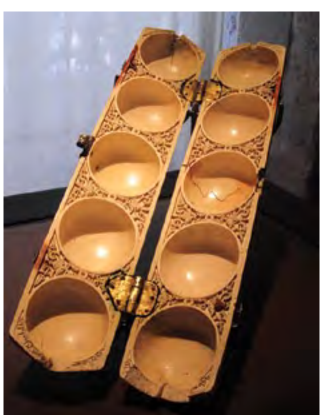
Florentius and Sanctius, Detail of page with the Battle of Gilboa, León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2), f. 124v, ink and color on vellum, 47.5 x 34.5 cm, produced at the monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica (Burgos, Spain). After *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Biblia visigotica-mózarabe* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, 1999).

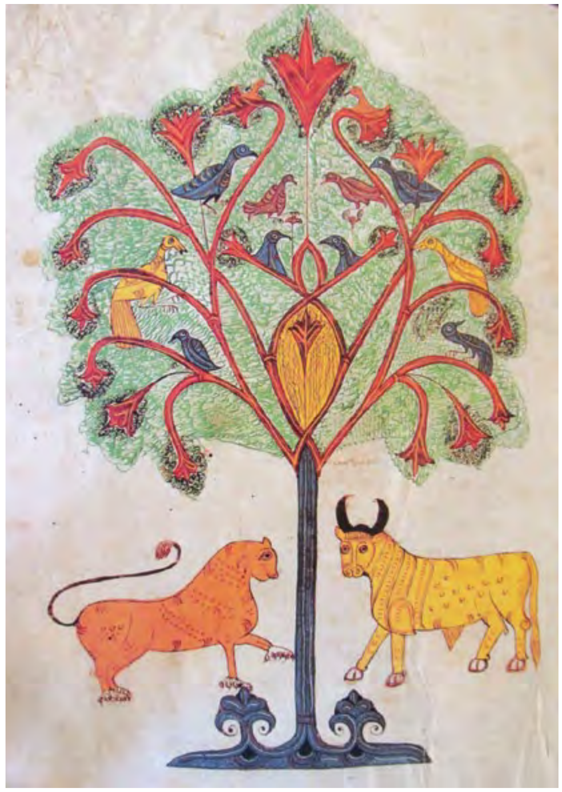
examinations of Mozarabic illustration as a whole, studies of the Bible of 960 seem to circumvent the possibilities of an Umayyad contribution to the decoration of the codex. Seeking out visual indices of Islamic art within the Bible without further explanation of their use does little to explain how the artists of the manuscript responded to their particular social and artistic environment. Likewise, the isolation of single illustrations as containing political content does not establish how the manuscript as a whole is a product of its own cultural milieu, although such approaches do allow for more nuanced readings than do attempts that seek to find some "orientalizing" quality within the Bible's miniatures.

The Context

Certainly visual correspondences between the manuscript's illustrations and Umayyad royal artistic production during the reign of ʻAbd al-Rahman III (912–61) exist. Portable luxury objects like those produced in the Madinat al-Zahra' palace workshops attest to the refinement of Cordoban courtly material culture, which was in dialogue with the artistic production of Baghdad and earlier Mediterranean centers, as seen in tenth-century lusterware ceramics. Objects such as the game box produced for the daughter of ʻAbd al-Rahman III feature ornamental motifs, primarily vegetal in nature, that visually resonate with the vegetation presented in the Bible of 960 (fig. 4).[14] Often used as diplomatic and royal gifts, portable items served as important symbols of kingship, power, and luxury and also helped transmit artistic style throughout the peninsula. The game box itself is said to have made its way into the hands of Fernán González, the famed Conde de Castilla (930–970), who later donated it to the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos. Caliphal workshops also produced fine textiles for analogous purposes.[15] The decorative borders and medallions featuring stylized birds and animals share visual similarities with motifs also encountered in manuscript illumination. It is notable that aside from diplomatic gifts, *tiraz*, or embroidered textiles, also arrived in the north as linings or wrappings for caskets used for martyrs' remains. The use of a visual vocabulary



4
Ivory game box for the daughter of ʻAbd al-Rahman III, before 961, ivory and metal, 46.5 cm (length), 9 cm (diam.), from the workshop at Madinat al-Zahra' (Córdoba, Spain), Museo de Burgos (no. 244). Photo by the author.



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5
Florentius and Sanctius, Detail of page with the Dream of Nebuchadnezzar, León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2), f. 319v, ink and color on vellum, 47.5 x 34.5 cm, produced at the monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica (Burgos, Spain). After *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Biblia visigotica-mózarabe* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, 1999).

associated with the artistic output of courtly al-Andalus is easily detectable within the pages of the Bible of 960. A depiction of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, for example, features a confronted lion and bull under a lush tree housing a number of birds of various colors, sizes, and types (fig. 5). Confronted pairs were commonly found on Sasanian and early Islamic textiles as well as on tenth-century caliphal ivories from the workshop at Madinat al-Zahra'.[16] Córdoba was well known throughout Europe as an intellectual center and hub of book production, employing numerous female copyists and secretaries.[17] This is known only through descriptions, however; no material remains of illustrated manuscripts produced there survive. Still, it is probable that a thriving book industry—alongside the production of luxury objects from Córdoba's fashionable and intellectual center, especially during the reigns of ʿAbd al-Rahman III and his son Al-Hakam II (961–76)—stimulated continued interchange between al-Andalus and its frontiers, particularly in aristocratic circles regardless of religious affiliation.

The visual communication between the Bible of 960 and the courtly arts of al-Andalus extends beyond portable objects. While scholars typically link the ornamental motifs of the manuscript, particularly the interlace, to illustration in northern Europe, especially Tours, the winding vegetation of the Bible's display pages recalls the delicately carved marble panels of Madinat al-Zahra' (figs. 6, 7).[18] There is no indication that either Florentius or Sanctius ever traveled to Córdoba, but diplomatic and familial relationships between the north and south (as well as the accompanying exchange of gifts) underscore the availability of monumental examples to prestigious audiences from Christian Iberia.[19] The Chronicle of Sampiro relates a particular diplomatic visit to the Umayyad capital by the unfortunate Leonese monarch, Sancho I (reigned 956–58, 960–66), which is also recounted by

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6
Florentius and Sanctius, Page with *Biblioteca in quo continentur libri septuaginta duo*, León Bible of 960 (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, MS 2), f. 3v, ink and color on vellum, 47.5 x 34.5 cm, produced at the monastery of San Pedro y San Paulo de Valeránica (Burgos, Spain). After *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Biblia visigotica-mózarabe* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, 1999).

7
Marble Relief from Madinat al-Zahra', 936–76, marble, 104 x 50 cm, Museo Arqueológico Provincial de Córdoba (no. 487). After *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, ed. Jerrilynn Dodds (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), no. 35.

al-Maqqari.[20] Commonly known as el Craso ("the Fat"), Sancho fled to Pamplona to seek refuge with his grandmother, Toda, after the "wicked" Ordoño IV and Fernán González deposed him. In 958, Sancho, accompanied by his grandmother and a noble entourage, was received in Córdoba, where the king found an ally in Toda's great-nephew, ʿAbd al-Rahman III. The caliph not only formed an alliance with the deposed king but also provided the medical services of Hasdai ibn Shaprut, who cured Sancho of his obesity and enabled him to ride on horseback.

A Program?

The connections, both artistic and otherwise, between al-Andalus and northern Iberia were strong across the permeable frontier, resulting in a shared visual vocabulary. The Bible of 960 provides evidence of the appeal of Cordoban courtly refinement in northern Iberia, while simultaneously referencing aristocratic artistic production north of the Pyrenees. Yet any analysis of the Bible's illustrations must go beyond noting these visual similarities. Rather than isolating single images for analysis, it is fruitful to consider the manuscript's overall program of illustration in order to formulate hypotheses about its production and patronage. The notion of a program within the Bible of 960 is contentious, considering that the illustrations do not harmonize with any one liturgy, exegetical tradition, or liturgical song.[21] The conclusion that the manuscript lacks a particular program is based on the assumption that it was intended to remain within the monastic community. However, such a luxurious volume, featuring a staggering amount of illustration and the use of gold, suggests a "deluxe" Bible rather than an "economy" book, which itself promotes the idea of an aristocratic or influential patron, although he or she remains unidentified.[22]

Looking to the manuscript's illustrations, it is apparent that certain cycles are emphasized over others and in such a way that may underscore the suggestion of an aristocratic patron. Exodus and the books of Kings have considerably more illus-

8
The Dispersion of Old Testament Miniatures in the León Bible of 960.

BOOK	NUMBER OF ILLUSTRATIONS
Genesis	2
Exodus	26
Leviticus	1
Numbers	0
Deuteronomy	4
Joshua	10
Judges	0
Ruth	0
Kings (I–IV)	33
Chronicles (I–II)	0
Ezra	0
Nehemiah	0
Tobit	0
Judith	0
Esther	0
Job	3
Psalms	0
Proverbs	0
Ecclesiastes	0
Song of Solomon	0
Isaiah	0
Jeremiah	4
Lamentations	1
Ezekiel	1
Daniel	7
Hosea	0
Joel	0
Amos	0
Obadiah	0
Jonah	0
Micah	0
Nahum	0
Habakkuk	0
Zephaniah	0

trations than do any of the other cycles. Rather than reflecting a lost archetype, it is more likely that the density of illustration in these particular books resonates with the concerns of the party who commissioned the manuscript (fig. 8). Exodus and Kings in particular take on metaphorical significations whose multivalent meanings are not only biblical, but also historical and allegorical in nature, relating to issues of exile, warfare, and kingship in contemporary Iberia.[23] Allusions to these contemporary subjects are reiterated in the accouterments of war depicted in the manuscript.[24] Robert Calkins noted as early as 1984 that the decoration of illuminated manuscripts establishes a sequential hierarchy and ultimately affects the reader's overall experience and interpretation of a book.[25] By viewing the Bible of 960 in this manner, the density of illustration in Exodus and Kings is arresting. When considered alongside the scribes' use of a courtly visual vocabulary (both Christian and Islamic), the suggestion of an aristocratic commission becomes more plausible. Although he does not utilize the illustrations as evidence, Vicente García Lobo suggests that perhaps the infanta Elvira served as the patron and intended the book for San Salvador de Palat de Rey.[26] The feasibility of this particular attribution requires further substantiation, but from surviving documents it is clear that Florentius had connections to aristocratic patrons, particularly Fernán González and his son Garcí, for whom he served as a notary.[27]

Much remains unclear about the León Bible's context of production. By noting the visual similarities between its illustrations and Umayyad artistic production, scholars have reiterated the presence of a shared visual vocabulary on the Iberian peninsula that in some instances could be deployed for prophetic, political, or even subversive reasons. Without considering the overall format of the manuscript, these conclusions cannot be fully validated.[28] It remains necessary to consider simultaneously the artistic production of ʿAbd al-Rahman's court and the presence of a carefully constructed program of illustration. The strategic use of admired courtly imagery derived from Cordoban objects alongside a program emphasizing kingship lends further credibility to the notion that Florentius and Sanctius produced the book for a powerful patron, which is further underscored by the manuscript's luxurious qualities.

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NOTES

1 This paper is based on research conducted as part of my ongoing dissertation project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill under the direction of Dr. Dorothy Verkerk.

2 J. M. Quadrado, *Recuerdos y bellezas de Espana: León y Asturias* (Asturias: Ayalga Ediciones, 1977). p. 352. Translation is my own.

3 The most significant contributions to the study of the Bible of 960 (as well as the numerous illustrated versions of Beatus of Liébana's *Commentarius in Apocalypsin*) in the twentieth century are undoubtedly the studies by John Williams. See John Williams, "The Illustrations of the León Bible of 960, An Iconographic Analysis" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1962); John Williams, "Model for the León Bibles," *Madrider Mitteilungen* 8 (1967), pp. 281–86, pls. 69–72; John Williams, "A Castilian Tradition of Bible Illumination: The Romanesque Bible from San Millán," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), pp. 66–85; John Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination* (New York: G. Braziller, 1977); John Williams, "The Bible in Spain," *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, ed. John Williams (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 179–218.

4 Lawrence Nees recently highlighted the significance of illustrated pandects in the early Middle Ages and their part in a larger "pattern of gift-giving" in aristocratic culture. Lawrence Nees, "Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Bibles from Northwest Europe," in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, pp. 121–77.

5 The monastery was likely part of a series of foundations by Fernán González. See John Williams, "A Contribution to the History of the Castilian Monastery of Valeránica and the Scribe Florentius," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Archäologischen Insituts* 11 (1970), pp. 231–48, and Luciano Huidobro, "El monasterio de San Pedro de Berlangas en Tordomar y su célebre calígrafo el monje Florencio," *Boletín de la Comisión Provincial de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos de Burgos* 14 (1935), pp. 245–56, 286–90 as well as works on the scriptorium, such as Barbara Shailor, "The Scriptorium at San Pedro de Berlangas" (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 1975); Justo Pérez y Urbel, O.S.B., "Florencio, el miniaturista famoso del monasterio de Valeránica," in *Classica et Iberica: A Festschrift in Honor of the Reverend Joseph M.-F. Marique, S.J.*, ed. P. T. Brannan, S.J. (Worcester, MA: Institute for Early Christian Iberian Studies, College of the Holy Cross, 1975), pp. 393–416, and more recently Elena García Molinos, "Florencio de Valeránica, calígrafo y notario del siglo X," *El reino de León en la edad media XI* (León: Centro de studios e investigación San Isidoro, 2004), pp. 243–415.

6 Ana Suárez González, *Los codices III.1, III.2, III.3, IV y V: Biblia, Liber capituli, Misal*, Patrimonio Cultural de San Isidoro de León, B (León: Universidad de León, Secretariado de Publicaciones, 1997). How the Bible came to be in the collection of San Isidoro remains an unknown aspect of the manuscript's provenance.

7 Florentius is the scribe responsible for a copy of Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 80), a *Liber Homiliarum* of Smaragdus (Córdoba, Biblioteca Capitular, MS 1), a *Commentary on the Book of Psalms* by Cassiodorus (lost), and the fragments of the Oña Bible at Santo Domingo de Silos (1 leaf) and the Casa Central of the Hermandad de Sacerdotes Operarios

Diocesanos in Rome (11 leaves). Documents also remain that demonstrate Florentius's work as a notary.

8 J. M. Casciaro Ramirez, "Las glosas marginales árabes del codex visigóticus legionensis de la vulgata," *Scripta Theologica* 2 (1970), pp. 303–39, and Ángel Custodio López López, "The Arabic Marginal Glosses in the Codex Visigothicus Legionensis," in *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Twenty Studies* (León: Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, Fundación Hullera Vasco Leónesa, Universidad de León, Ediciones Lancia, 1999), pp. 303–18.

9 In the most recent major publication on the Bible of 960, *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Twenty Studies*, this remains the primary methodology, despite John Williams's contribution to the volume, which pointedly disputes the applicability of such an approach.

10 Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos y Villalta, "Página de una Bibla del siglo X que se conserva en el Archivo de San Isidoro de León," *Museo español de antigüedades* 9 (1881), pp. 521–32. Translation is my own.

11 Williams, "Iconographic Analysis," pp. 146–49. Specifically, Williams cites an ivory from *A Survey of Persian Art*, vol. 5, ed. A. U. Pope (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938–39), pl. 593b, and a Nishapur bowl from Arthur Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, 4th ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), pls. 19, 20a. See also John Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of the Illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse*, vol. 1 (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1994).

12 Werckmeister cites a seventh-century Sasanian silver-gilt plate found at Novo-Bayazet that depicts a king hunting on horseback with his leg bent toward the rear of the horse (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, no. I.4925). O. K. Werckmeister, "Islamische Formen in spanischen Miniaturen des 10. Jahrhunderts und das Problem der mozarabischen Buchmalerei," *Settimane di Studi del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 22 (Spoleto, 1965), pp. 933–67, and for the Gerona Beatus, O. K. Werckmeister, "The Islamic Rider in the Beatus of Girona," *Gesta* 36, no. 2 (1997), pp. 101–6.

13 O. K. Werckmeister, "Art of the Frontier: Mozarabic Monasticism," in *The Art of Medieval Spain, A.D. 500–1200* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), pp. 120–32. On the Cordoban ivories, see Manuel Gómez-Moreno, "Los marfiles cordobeses y sus derivaciones," *Archivo español de arte y arqueologia* 3 (1927), pp. 233-43; José Ferrandis, *Marfiles y Azabaches Españoles* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1928); John Beckwith, *Caskets from Córdoba* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1960); Ernst Kühnel, *Die islamischen Elfenbeinskulpturen, VIII–XIII Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1971); Renata Holod, "Luxury Arts of the Caliphal Period," in *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, ed. Jerrilynn Dodds (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), pp. 41–48; Oleg Grabar, "Two Paradoxes in the Islamic Art of the Spanish Peninsula," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), pp. 583–91; Julie Harris, "Muslim Ivories in Christian Hands: The Leire Casket in Context," *Art History* 18, no. 2 (1995), pp. 213–21; Avinoam Shalem, "From Royal Caskets to Relic Containers: Two Ivory Caskets from Burgos and Madrid," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995), pp. 24–38; Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized: Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998); Francisco Prado-Vilar, "Circular Visions of Fertility and Punishment: Caliphal Ivory Caskets from al-Andalus," *Muqarnas* 14 (1997), pp. 19–41; Mariam Rosser-Owen, "A Cordoban Ivory Pyxis Lid in the Ashmolean Museum," *Muqarnas* 16 (1999), pp. 16–31; Sheila Blair, "Ivories and Inscriptions from Islamic Spain," *Oriente Moderno* 23, no. 2 (2004), pp. 375–86; Cynthia Robinson, "Love in the Time of Fitna: 'Courtliness' and the 'Pamplona' Casket," in *Revisiting al-Andalus*, ed. Glaire Anderson and Mariam Rosser-Owen (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 99–113; and the series of essays on the ivories of Muslim Spain in *Journal of the David Collection* 2, nos. 1 & 2, ed. Kjeld von Folsach and Joachim Meyer (2005).

14 See Holod, "Luxury Arts of the Caliphal Period," in *Al-Andalus*, and catalogue entry 1 in the same publication.

15 See, for example, the textile fragment in the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan in Madrid, 2071, thought to be a piece from a Muslim *almaizar*. *Al-Andalus*, pp. 224–25.

16 For instance, the Pyxis of al-Mughira (Paris, Louvre, OA 4068) features facing figures beneath a luxurious tree as well as numerous confronting beasts or figures enveloped in a thick web of vegetation.

17 Robert Hillenbrand, "'The Ornament of the World': Medieval Córdoba as a Cultural Centre," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. S. K. Jayyusi (New York: E. J. Brill, 1992), pp. 112–35. Al-Maqqari attests to the status of books in al-Andalus. See Pascual de Gayangos, *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, vol. 1 (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1840), pp. 139–40.

18 Fernando Galván Freile downplays the presence of Islamic ornamentation in the manuscript. Fernando Galván Freile, "Initials, Borders, and Other Decorative Elements in the Miniatures of the Codex," in *Codex Biblicus Legionensis:*

Twenty Studies, pp. 253–65. Considerably more attention had been paid to Florentius's innovative use of northern interlace. See Jacques Guilmain, "On the chronological development and classification of decorated initials in Latin manuscripts of tenth-century Spain," *Bulletin of the Rylands University of Manchester* 63, no. 2 (spring 1981), pp. 369–401; Jacques Guilmain, "Zoomorphic Decoration and the Problem of the Sources of Mozarabic Illumination," *Speculum* 35 (1960), pp. 17–38; Jacques Guilmain, "Interlace and the Influence of the North on Mozarabic Illumination," *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960), pp. 211–18; Jacques Guilmain, "Observations on some Early Interlace Initials and Frame Ornaments in Mozarabic Manuscripts of León-Castile," *Scriptorium* 15 (1961), pp. 23–35; Jacques Guilmain, "Some Observations on Mozarabic Manuscript Illumination in Light of Recent Publications," *Scriptorium* 30 (1976), pp. 183–91; Jacques Guilmain, "Northern Influence in the Initials and Ornaments of the Beatus Manuscripts," *Actas del Simposio para el estudio de los codices del Commentario al Apocalipsis de Beato de Liébana*, vol. 2 (Madrid, 1980), pp. 65–67; John Williams, "Tours and the Medieval Art of Spain," in *Florilegium in Honorem Carl Nordenfalk Octogenarii Contextum* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseums Stockholm, 1987), pp. 197–208.

19 Although he refers to himself as *peregrini* in a colophon, it is unlikely that Florentius came from al-Andalus. Molinos, "Florencio de Valeránica," p. 262. D. F. Ruggles emphasizes the familial connections between northern Iberia and al-Andalus in "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Genealogy, and Acculturation in al-Andalus," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34, no. 1 (winter 2004), pp. 65–94.

20 *Historia silense*, ed. Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), pp. 369–70, Justo Pérez de Urbel, *Sampiro, su crónica y la monarquía leonesa en el siglo X* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1952), pp. 334–39, and, for al-Maqqari, Gayangos, vol. 2, pp. 139. See also Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Historia de España*, vol. 6 (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, S.A., 1956), pp. 142–43; Reinhart Dozy, *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne pendant le moyen âge*, vol. 1(Paris: Maisonneuve, 1881), pp. 96–98; and Reinhart Dozy, *Spanish Islam: A History of the Moslems in Spain*, trans. Francis Griffin Stokes (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), pp. 440–47.

21 Williams, "Bible in Spain," pp. 215–18.

22 On deluxe versus economy books, see Lawrence Nees, "Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Bibles from Northwest Europe," in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, pp. 121–77.

23 The association of Asturian and Leonese kings with the Visigoths has received considerable attention, and sources such as the Prophetic Chronicle, which utilizes a fictional prophecy by Ezekiel to foretell the defeat of the Umayyads, attempt to use biblical history to explain contemporary events. See Yves Bonnaz, *Chroniques Asturiennes* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987), pp. 1–9.

24 Cordoban arms and symbols of caliphal power, such as the knotted flag (*ʿuqda*), appear throughout the manuscript's illustrations. Alvaro Soler del Campo, "Weapons, Harnesses and Flags in the Miniatures of the Codex," in *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Twenty Studies*, pp. 207–18.

25 Robert Calkins, *Programs of Medieval Illumination*, Franklin D. Murphy Lectures V (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Museum of Art, 1984), and Robert Calkins, "Liturgical Sequence and Decorative Crescendo in the Drogo Sacramentary," *Gesta* 25 (1986), pp. 17–23.

26 Following from Justo Pérez de Urbel's observation that unlike in his other productions, Florentius does not mention his monastery and abbot. Vicente García Lobo, "The Birth of the Codex," in *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Twenty Studies*, pp. 73–81.

27 Molinos, "Florencio de Valeránica," pp. 381–430, and M. C. Díaz y Díaz, "The Escriptorio of Valeránica," in *Codex Biblicus Legionensis: Twenty Studies*, pp. 53–72.

28 Jerrilynn Dodds highlights Mozarabic artists' strategic use of Cordoban precedents while noting that such usages can exhibit both tension and admiration. Jerrilynn Dodds, "Islam, Christianity, and the Problem of Religious Art," in *The Art of Medieval Spain, A.D. 500–1200*, pp. 26–37.

HEATHER ECKER AND TERESA FITZHERBERT

THE FREER CANTEEN, RECONSIDERED

1
Front of the Freer canteen,
Freer Gallery of Art, F1941.10.

Abstract
Widely considered a masterpiece of medieval Islamic metalwork, the Freer canteen is also an enigma. It is one of a diverse group of thirteenth-century objects from the Islamic world that bear Christian iconography. Though complex in structure and unique in decorative program, it lacks documentary inscriptions that would attest to where and when it was made, and for whom and what purpose. Its compelling Christian scenes also set it apart from the standard "princely" category of much inlaid metalwork of the thirteenth century. Furthermore, its large body, small neck, and slight handles seem incongruously, if not impractically, assembled. This article revisits the structure and decoration of the canteen in order to dispel some of the scenarios that have been proposed thus far for its use and manufacture. It proposes new purposes and contexts for its use based upon both observed and comparative evidence, and argues for a shift in locus of manufacture from Jerusalem to the Jazira.

LIKE MANY ICONIC WORKS OF ART, the silver-inlaid brass flask known as the Freer canteen (F1941.10; figs. 1, 2) has been much studied and widely published.[1] Long perceived as emblematic if enigmatic, it was the focus of studies in the inaugural editions of two prominent American journals dedicated to the field of Islamic art, *Ars Islamica* and *Muqarnas*.[2] Its physical condition is remarkable, and its unusual form and decoration have attracted the attention of three generations of scholars who have offered a variety of ideas regarding its origin and intended purpose. Among them are several students of Oleg Grabar, and it seems fitting that this exceptional object should be reconsidered in a volume dedicated to his memory.

It has often been proposed that the canteen manifests aspects of cultural hybridity: it is an object of unusual shape and function—whatever it may be—crafted with techniques perfected in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in the central-eastern lands of the medieval Islamic world. It is decorated with both secular and Christian themes (Christological and hagiographic), and bears mainly benedictory inscriptions in Arabic (none documentary) commonly found on objects made for and by Muslims.[3] Its very strangeness suggests that its form and decoration were deliberate, and yet its hybridity has inspired a search for context, settings in which the canteen and its decorative program might find meaning among Christians and Muslims alike. Positioning the canteen between confessions, however, has detached it from any particular culture. As Julian Raby noted recently, "… boundaries of place and patronage and even sectarian meaning became increasingly porous, and two of the most recent interpretations have centered on the notions of porosity, liminality and portability—[the canteen] an object of no fixed abode."[4]

2

2
Back of the Freer canteen.

For this study of the canteen, a reconsideration of method is proposed: an inductive process that returns to the object itself, its physical nature, its structure, and the specificities of its design and decoration. Instead of suggesting a possible context at the outset, we will allow the "body" of the canteen to speak for itself, permitting a tangible benchmark against which to test and measure responses. This inquiry, like previous ones, seeks to move closer to the solution of its compelling mystery: what was the canteen, and for whom and what purpose was it made?

Observations on Structure

Physical examination and radiographs show that the major component of the canteen is a large, domed piece of brass formed by hammering. The brass dome has a decorated, concave boss at its apex and is divided into three registers by two articulated, annular moldings that resemble sewn welts—where the silver inlay is stitching—as if the canteen were made of leather.[5] The dome, in turn, is attached by soldering (and possibly a hooked "scarf" joint) to a brass strip. This joint, also evocative of a sewn welt, is not as well defined as the *repoussé* moldings on the dome: it is decorated on only one side and shows some signs of separation at the seam (fig. 3).

3

3
Profile of the Freer canteen.

The inlaid decoration on the brass strip—a series of knotted roundels with figures—is turned 180 degrees to the decorated registers of the dome.

On its other long side, the brass strip is attached to a flat, round brass plate that has a circular opening in the center. The plate is decorated with two nested concentric registers: the outer one comprised of twenty-five static and gesturing saintly figures standing below a colonnade of pointed arches, and the inner one called "a centrifugal group" by Rice for its nine mounted knights that appear to move endlessly counterclockwise.[6] The circular opening is attached with solder to a truncated cone formed from a brass sheet bent around a mandrel, soldered with a vertical seam, and sealed on the smaller end by a disk, also attached with solder. Thus the truncated cone is fixed into the interior of the canteen, its depth reaching to the topmost annular molding of the domed section.

The neck and mouth of the canteen are formed from a hammered brass sheet and are attached to the canteen at the level of the brass strip. Within the base of the neck is a flat, circular plate (possibly the brass strip itself) pierced with holes punched without artistry, whose primary function must have been to strain a liquid. Two slight and rather elegant cast brass handles link the neck to body and are soldered to the exterior of the vessel. The placement of the neck within the thickness of the brass strip, and not within the domed section, makes it appear to be off-center in profile views of the canteen. The placement of the neck is also off-center in relation to the canteen's upright orientation indicated by the orientation of the inlaid image of the Virgin Hodegetria on the central, concave boss of the domed section. The position is ungainly, but at the same time seems to be purposeful.[7]

Nonetheless, however intentioned their placement, the neck, handles, and the strip to which they are affixed may not be original. A number of details point to at least one campaign of repair of the canteen, if not two: the inlaid inscription on the neck is drawn in an elongated, cursive style that is different from the angular style found on the rest of the canteen; the silver "pearls" in the two borders, above and below the inscription have a different shape and pacing compared to those that divide the two registers on the back of the canteen; the brass strip to which the neck and handles are affixed is not only directionally transposed in terms of its decoration, but its silver roundels contain an array of secular, courtly themes (seated drinkers, musicians, and predatory birds attacking ducks) that do not bear any relationship to the ecclesiastical themes on the rest of the canteen.[8] There are also differences in the quality of craftsmanship and details of composition between the very fine domed section and the rather less fine brass strip that suggest that a replacement has been made.

In the animated register, three simple roundels contain a centered, seated, frontal figure that holds a crescent moon aloft.The figure fills the space completely, without any truncation of its halo. The background is suggested by fleshy palmettes, though it remains light in color. The three roundels are located precisely above the three scenes from the Life of Christ on the front, evidence too of the integrity and coherence of the decorative program of the domed section."[9] In the strip, knotted roundels contain figures that are proportionally smaller, not necessarily centered, often seated in three-quarters view, with truncated halos. The backgrounds are punched with small devices to appear darker and strongly contrasted with the figures.[10] It is hard to imagine that the dome and strip were made at the same time and by the same hand. Still, the strip was artfully integrated into the canteen and in the absence of its original patron, the canteen's custodians may not have considered the coherence of its decorative program to be of primary importance.

Together, the evidence of the replacement strip, the new neck and handles, and the strainer in the neck indicate that the canteen had a practical function and was used over a period of time. Surely one of the challenges of using soldered seams is ensuring watertightness. The internal pressure of the water (or other liquid) and the external pressure on lower right side of the canteen on which it probably rested when displayed may have contributed to the separation of its seams. Some evidence for this kind of stress-fracture can be seen at present in the separating seam between the strip and the flat plate at the bottom of the canteen. Stress fractures can also be seen in the mouth, suggesting that an inferior alloy containing a higher amount of lead was used for the repairs.

How it was held or displayed when in use in its original context remains a question as the new handles—though adding support to the neck—could not have borne any weight. It may have rested upon its flat side, perhaps preserved in a special box. If hung for display, it might have been suspended by a leather support around the bottom that threaded through the handles or even by chains. In use, it may simply have been held or steadied by one or two people.

If one can accept that the strip with roundels is a replacement, what was the decorative program of the original strip?[11] The registers in the domed section alternate between figural imagery and inscriptions, terminating with a register of animated, anonymous titles. Thus, the strip may have contained what has always seemed oddly missing from such a luxurious object: the name of its patron and documentation of its manufacture.

If the object was not anonymous and did not bear secular, decorative themes originally, there is less evidence for its manufacture in a fluid and porous Muslim-Christian context, as has been suggested previously. Instead, the role and even nature of the patron comes into focus in the apparent purposefulness of canteen's odd shape and in the layout, content, and anomalies in its major, decorated sections. There is no doubt that the canteen is a hybrid; it bears ecclesiastical imagery that is at times altered purposefully and at times inaccurately. Its inscriptions are in Arabic, and it does not bear a single inscription—unless it is the missing one—in Syriac, the language of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Mosul, where it is likely that the canteen was made. Its hybridity is not intercultural, however, but rather communitarian: ecclesiastical and lay.

The "Pit and Pole" Theory

When Laura Schneider concluded quite rightly that the canteen had a practical function, she offered a well-intentioned hypothesis to explain how such a large object with disproportionately small handles might have been lifted to dispense its contents: the void created by the truncated cone functioned as a socket for the horizontal arm of a wooden post that supported the filled canteen (the "pit and pole" theory).[12] Supporting this idea was a personal communication from Prof. Richard Frye who claimed to have witnessed a similar practice near Samarkand. This Central Asian use has never been independently documented, and whatever it was, it has no bearing on the Freer canteen.[13] However, the idea was imaginative and evoked other fanciful images. One example: the canteen was a commemorative item commissioned and brought to Europe by a crusader knight (who perhaps steadied it on the pommel of his saddle by means of its "pit").[14] A conditioning factor here is that the canteen shape, with its one flat side, is clearly meaningful: it evokes travel and the pilgrim, and was also copied symbolically in glass.[15] Nonetheless, there is no evidence that the Freer canteen was intended to be or was ever carried on horse-, mule-, or camel-back. Indeed, its generally excellent condition and careful repairs would seem to point to a very judicious and attentive use. Its evocation of pilgrimage clearly had a different significance.

Schneider observed that "the truncated pit, however, shows signs of wear, and was undoubtedly the means by which the piece was steadied…"[16] Reexamination of the soldered seam between the circular opening in the flat plate and the truncated cone reveals signs of filing—tool marks—not signs of wear from use (fig. 4). This is a fundamental point. Furthermore, radiographs of the interior show that the

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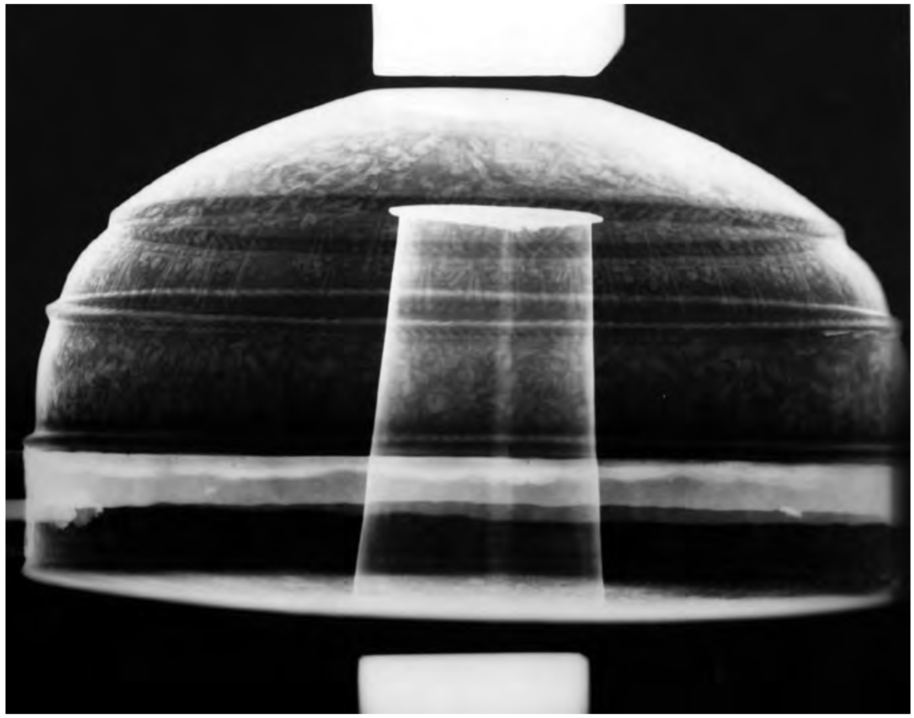

5

4
Detail of mouth of truncated cone in the canteen.

5
Radiograph of the canteen in profile. Courtesy of Freer|Sackler Department of Conservation and Scientific Research.

sides of the truncated cone are straight and not distorted in any way, something that can also be observed by the naked eye (fig. 5). There is no physical trace of a pole inserted into the cone, or that the cone, made of relatively thin metal, ever sustained the weight of the full canteen. Finally, a cone made of hammered metal with soldered seams—observed but misinterpreted by Schneider—is an unlikely support for sustaining great weight.

If the "pit and pole" theory can be discarded for lack of evidence, what was the function of the cone inside the canteen? The filing marks around the rim of the opening suggest that something has been removed. This point will be returned to shortly.

The Porcelain Parallels

Some scholars have asserted that the Freer canteen is a unique object that served as the inspiration for a blue-and-white porcelain canteen produced at Jingdezhen in the fifteenth century, also in the Freer collection.[17] This observation is partially but not entirely correct. There are eight known porcelain canteens[18]:

1. The Freer porcelain canteen (F1958.2).
2. A similar one sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong in 1999.[19]
3. A porcelain canteen at the National Palace Museum, Taiwan.[20]
4. A similar one sold at Christie's London in 2007.[21]
5. Four canteens of differing sizes in the Palace Museum, Beijing. One has its contemporary lid with a bud-shaped finial, originally attached by a chain.[22]

The eight canteens share common aspects: first, though their scale and blue-and-white painted decoration varies, the shape and configuration of their necks and handles do not. This strongly suggests that though they may copy each other,


6


7

6
Front of the porcelain canteen, Freer Gallery of Art, F1958.2.

7
Back of the porcelain canteen, Freer Gallery of Art, F1958.2.

all are derived from a single, shared brass model that differs in some significant details from the Freer canteen.[23] Second, most of the porcelain canteens survive in imperial Chinese collections, suggesting that they were perceived as significant objects—not necessarily Islamic ones—and were not created as gifts or commercial items aimed at Muslim diplomatic and trading partners.[24] Third, although the painted decoration on the canteens comprises standard Ming floral and wave motifs, the bands of decoration appear to respect the separate registers found on the brass model as well as, in some cases, incorporating motifs inspired by its inlay, for example an eight-pointed star motif (fig. 6) on the central boss. Fourth, on the flat, unglazed side of the porcelain canteens (fig. 7), there is an artifact of a central boss that is slightly depressed or concave, but there is no conical void, or "socket."[25]

From these observations, one can surmise that though the porcelain canteens copy an inlaid brass canteen, the model was not the Freer canteen, but a second canteen (and there may have been others). The porcelain canteens were rare objects, not widely circulated; it may be significant that none have survived in the great Ottoman and Safavid collections. While it is possible that the porcelain canteens were appreciated for their technical virtuosity and were collected in the imperial palace as exotic curiosities, it is more likely that the significance of the object was understood based on the person (or community) who took it to China, possibly as a gift to the emperor himself. Thus, at least one precious canteen was taken on a long journey—though surely not carried on the pommel of a saddle—but to China, not crusader Europe.[26]

The Truncated Cone—A Proposal

The Chinese porcelain canteens appear to be faithful to the shape of an original brass model as well as to the layout—if not the content—of its inlaid decoration. Thus the concave disk found on their flat, unglazed sides seems significant. It can be inferred that the brass original also had a concave disk at the center of its flat side. The disk would have acted as a cover, concealing the interior of the canteen from view and comprising a fundamental element of its decorative program. In turn, it seems likely that the Freer canteen once had such a cover. The cover was probably inlaid with silver, like its counterpart on the other side. Its decoration, like that of the other major portions of the canteen, would have been well planned in advance and laid out by means of a cartoon.

The domed side of the canteen is conceptually tripartite with a central medallion containing an image of the Virgin Hodegetria with other figures, and three scenes from the Life of Christ culminating in the Entry into Jerusalem. This program is essentially narrative. The back is quite different: two registers without intervening text hover around the hollow center, the outer comprising a row of saints and an Annunciation scene—linking back to front—and the inner comprising mounted knights, some clearly crusaders, with fully caparisoned horses, and others bearing lances, crossbows, and pennants, engaged in infinitely circular pursuit.[27] The back has a wordless visual impact. It is a symbol, a puzzle or rebus of opposites: active and passive, standing and moving, celestial and terrestrial. The mind that created it surely chose an arresting image for the central boss, one that would have resolved the polarity. A possibility is the Crucifixion, the potent inverse of the Hodegetria, an axis mundi that unites heaven and earth.[28]

Behind the concave boss that may have borne an image of the Crucifixion was a chamber formed by the truncated cone, a vessel that in length nearly reaches the opposite end of the canteen. Its specificity of shape and size must echo the form of the object it once held. The conical shape with straight sides suggests a glass beaker, perhaps from Syria.[29]

Contexts

While there might be no better pairing than a glass beaker for drinking and a canteen for holding water, given the eccentricities of the object and its superb decoration, a scenario requiring some interpretation is likely. Still, the symbolism may be more literal than previously assumed: the form of the canteen implies something carried to or from pilgrimage, the inlaid scenes from the Life of Christ evoke a place, Jerusalem, while the encircling protection of crusader knights around the inner vessel suggests its precious contents: a relic brought to Iraq from the tomb of Christ.[30]

The canteen is a magnificent object. If it was made as a reliquary, the relic must have been something perceived as extraordinarily precious, requiring magnification, elevation, and protection. But, as the structural evidence shows, the canteen was not conceived only as a symbol but also as an object of practical use. The form of the canteen would lend itself well to the production of secondary relics; liquid would have swirled within the canteen around the holy object at its core, and through its proximity, acquire sanctity. The resulting liquid could have been decanted, bottled, and distributed for its healing powers.[31]

If the canteen was intended as a reliquary, it is also necessary to reconsider its hybrid design in light of this. If the seated drinkers, musicians, and pairs of birds

8

8
Nativity, Syrian Orthodox Lectionary, dated 1220 or 1260 CE. © 2011, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Syriaco 559, f.16a.

in knotted roundels on the soldered strip—which may be a later repair—are put to one side, then what is left is the juxtaposition of Christian imagery, secular titles, and good wishes to the owner in Arabic, along with the animated inscription and fillers of knotted roundels with birds and quadrupeds. These various elements sample from Muslim and Christian traditions conceived together in a context in which such composite decoration was plausible.

An association of the canteen may be made with Jerusalem—or a Jerusalem component such as a relic—through the tripartite scenes on the front showing Christ's Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, and Entry into Jerusalem, and on the rear by the frieze showing heavy and light cavalry, including five horses with crusader-style horse armor.[32] A particular anomaly in the Nativity scene, however, strongly suggests it was originally intended for a Jazīran audience.[33]

It is generally agreed that the Christological iconography on the Freer canteen closely resembles the thirteenth-century illustrated manuscript tradition of the Eastern Christian churches, and in particular the Vatican Library's Syrian Orthodox Lectionary (MS Syriaco 559) copied at the Monastery of Mār Mattai near Mosul.[34] However, the canteen's scenes include significant deviations from standard Eastern Christian iconography. One of these alterations was clearly intentional; others could be misinterpretations of prototypes or conceivably carelessness, although this seems unlikely in an object produced to such a high artistic standard—an understanding of the iconography should be distinguished from the craft skills required to reproduce it on metalwork. These alterations help to localize the object and contribute to piecing together a context or process for its manufacture.

The most significant iconographic deviation on the canteen is the replacement of the three kings in a standard Nativity scene—as in the Vatican Lectionary (fig. 8)—by the figure of a mounted Saljūq atabeg, wearing the traditional headgear of authority, the *sharbūsh*, accompanied by a mounted body guard (fig. 9).[35] A sub-

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9
Detail, Nativity scene, Freer canteen.

stitution of this kind is more likely to have occurred in a zone under atabeg rule, such as the Jazīra during the period of Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū', than in a western Syrian Ayyūbid or crusader context.[36] Less controversial, but nonetheless unexpected, is replacing the ox and ass behind the manger, familiar to any Christian child, with three bovines. Misinterpretation of a decorative formula is suggested by crosses added to the surfaces of the three domes representing the Temple in Jerusalem in the Presentation scene (see fig. 1). Crosses on the Jewish Temple are clearly inappropriate, and some confusion with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre may have occurred. However, a comparison with the same scene in the Vatican Lectionary, suggests that cross formations in decorative tile work depicted on domes in some thirteenth-century manuscripts may have been innocently assumed to be religiously significant.[37]

This adaptive approach to Christian iconography, alongside bands of titles in Arabic and secular design motifs, suggests that while the designer, probably a Christian, may have produced an accurate cartoon based on manuscript models, the metalworker, possibly a Muslim, was not necessarily wholly familiar with the Christian pictorial canon. It follows, then, that whoever paid for this elaborate and costly object did not check it for adherence to the strictest codes of Christian iconographic orthodoxy or feel that it was necessary. In addition, the presence of benedictory inscriptions and titles in Arabic, rather than Syriac, suggests that the canteen was commissioned by a lay person rather than a cleric and not designed for use in the strictest of liturgical contexts.[38]

The Jazīra in the period of the so-called "Syriac Renaissance," circa 1150–1300, coincided with a period of particularly porous cultural boundaries.[39] For example, some thirty kilometers southeast of Mosul lies the shrine of Dayr Mār Behnam the Martyr[40]; known also as Dayr al-Khiḍr and Dayr al-Khiḍr Ilyās, it was revered equally by Christians, Muslims, Jews, Yazidis, and Mongols. From its foundation around 382 CE, at the site where a local Christian prince of Ashur, Behnam, was martyred with his sister Sara and their retinue, the martyrion became a place of popular pilgrimage famed for its miracles. Its spring with healing waters was deemed particularly efficacious for skin complaints and epilepsy. The shrine also became associated with the biblical Elijah (Ilyās), and the Koranic prophet al-Khiḍr, both of whom hold strong associations with water and longevity. Special veneration was afforded to the Virgin Mary, to whom a chapel was dedicated decorated with inscriptions in both Syriac and Arabic; also to Mār Mattai, who con-

10B

10A, 10B
Royal Gate, between nave and narthex, Dayr Mār Behnam, Iraq, 13th-century. Photos courtesy of Iraq Department of Antiquities and Dr. Christel Kessler.

10A

verted and baptized Behnam, and to Saint George (Ḥaḍrat Jirjīs), the warrior saint *par excellence* of the Eastern Christian churches and Muslims, having lived before the coming of Islam. According to Arab historians such as Ṭabarī, Saint George was martyred in Mosul in the fourth century CE during the persecutions of Diocletian.[41] Bas-reliefs of two warrior saints, probably Saint George and Mār Behnam, above the so-called Royal Gate in the east wall of the nave (fig. 10a), may date from renovations and embellishments carried out at the shrine between approximately 1233 and 1259.[42] The shrine was also famed for its treasures, which were looted by Mongols in 1295.[43] However, an inscription not only records their safe return by order of the Il-Khān Baydū, it also states that the only objects of value not taken by the looters were the Gospels displayed on the altar and the reliquary of the saint, from which "God turned away their eyes."[44] This attests to the presence of at least one reliquary in the shrine at that time.

The figures on either side of the enthroned Virgin in the concave roundel on the front of the canteen (fig. 11) are correctly attired to represent, on the left, a turbaned saint or perhaps patron—albeit standing rather than kneeling—with hands raised in the *orans* posture and, on the right, a bare-headed patriarch. If the latter is Elijah/Ilyās, then the cone-shaped object in his right hand, may represent the "high mountain" on the top of which he appeared with Moses, flanking Christ at the Transfiguration, when the voice of God was heard naming Jesus as His son.[45]

The chivalric exercises shown on the back of the canteen suggest the ideals of the warrior saints venerated by crusaders and Muslims alike as supporters in the ongoing battle of good against evil and the quest for salvation. Since Mosul's army, on occasion, fought in Syria alongside the Ayyūbids, and there was a trading community of Nestorian Christians from Mosul established in Acre, known as "mosserins," crusader-style caparisoning of horses would have been familiar. On the canteen, although the horses and riders may appear accoutered for war, crusaders are not depicted confronting Muslim foes in battle order, no bloodletting is apparent, and Christians are not shown as victors. Dimand was the first to note that the mounted warriors in this frieze appear to be European Christians, probably crusaders, with the exception of one turbaned figure at whom a crusader is aiming a crossbow. However, since the headgear interpreted by Dimand as a turban is also worn by a standing saint in the register above them, all the riders in the lower register also appear to be Christians. A comparison with equestrian warrior saints at Dayr Mār Behnam supports this reading and relates it to an established Jaziran pictorial repertoire (fig. 10b). While standing figures in the outer register suggest

11

11
Detail, Enthroned Virgin and Child (Virgin Hodegetria), the Freer canteen.

those already counted among the heavenly elect, the cavalry may represent the ongoing struggle on Earth below. Protection is invoked for the canteen—especially that which was borne in its interior chamber—and by extension for beneficiaries of the liquid contents of the flask surrounding it.[46]

The Shrine of Mār Behnam is associated with healing water. The inscription on the neck of the canteen reads: *al-akram* [handle] *al-āfiya* [handle] (… the noblest/most precious good health/well-being); and the canteen is in the form of a pilgrim flask.[47] It seems plausible, therefore, that the inscription could refer to the dispensing of *barakat*-rich liquid to pilgrims visiting such a shrine. The example of Dayr Mār Behnam cogently demonstrates that in the thirteenth century, Mosul and its environs were not only famed for the manufacture of inlaid metalwork, but also provided contexts appropriate for secular patronage of religiously inspired Christian objects that memorialize political and cultural realities of the time.

The Freer canteen bears the hallmarks of a Jazīran object, made for a Jazīran public, who were likely to gather at a particular shrine or monastery, possibly Dayr Mār Behnam or Dayr Mār Mattai. It was made to house something extraordinarily precious, something that was thought to provide *barakat* and possibly good health, and more profoundly, focus the mind on salvation itself. Its decorative program points to something Christological and, more important, something associated with Jerusalem. The container that held this relic was beaker-shaped, which, in turn, may suggest a liquid content—possibly oil from the lamp that burned over the tomb of Christ. Water that swirled in the canteen around such a relic would acquire its salvific qualities, a benefit that may have been sought after by Christians and Muslims alike. Physical evidence shows that the canteen was used enough for it to have been carefully repaired when a split appeared in its seams.

The hybridity of the design elements suggests that the canteen was not an internal, ecclesiastical commission. Rather it was one made for a lay person, perhaps as a donation to a holy place, with the figure to the left of the Virgin Hodegetria on the central concave boss representing a turbaned donor. The substitution of a *sharbūsh*ed ruler for one of the three kings who attended the infant Christ, reminds us that the thirteenth-century Jazīra was a time when members of the Christian intelligentsia achieved high office in the service of Muslim rulers, irrespective of confessional affiliation.[48] Perhaps such a high-ranking member of society commissioned the canteen? Questions remain to be answered, but what is undeniable is that it ranks among the most arresting pieces of medieval metalwork to have reached our times.

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NOTES

1 The ideas for this study originated in a seminar on the Freer canteen held at the Freer Gallery of Art in 2003. The participants included Julian Raby, Massumeh Farhad, Teresa Fitzherbert, Heather Ecker, and Amy Landau. A workshop on the same was held at the HIAA *majlis* in 2010 with a much larger group. Some of the ideas expressed by our colleagues are cited here as we remember or have recorded them; we apologise for any lapses in this regard. We would like to thank all of our friends for their many conversations with us, in particular Julian Raby, for his generous exchanges over a long period of time.

2 The principal studies include: Michelangelo Lanci, *Trattato delle simboliche rappresentanze Arabiche e della varia generazione de' Musulmani caratteri sopra differenti materie operati*, vol. 2, pp. 141–45, vol. 3, pls. XLV–XLVI (Parigi: Stamperia orientale di Dondey-Dupré, 1845); Maurice Dimand, "A silver inlaid bronze canteen with Christian subjects in the Eumorfopoulos Collection," *Ars Islamica* 1 (1934), pp. 17–21; Laura Schneider, "The Freer Canteen," *Ars Orientalis* 9 (1973), pp. 137–56; Renee Katzenstein and Glenn Lowry, "Christian themes in thirteenth-century Islamic metalwork," *Muqarnas* 1 (1983), pp. 53–68; Esin Atil, W. T. Chase, and Paul Jett, *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1985), pp. 124–33; Eva Baer, *Ayyubid Metalwork with Christian Images* (Leiden, 1989); Nuha Khoury, "Narratives of the Holy Land: Memory, identity and inverted imagery in the Freer Basin and Canteen," *Orientations* (May 1998), pp. 63–69; Eva Hoffman, "Christian-Islamic Encounters on thirteenth-century Ayyubid metalwork: Local culture, authenticity and memory," *Gesta* 43 (2004), pp. 129–42; Bas Snelders and Matt Immerzeel, "The thirteenth-century flabellum from Deir al-Surian in the Musée Royal de Mariemont (Morlanwelz, Belgium)," *Eastern Christian Art in Its Late Antique and Islamic Contexts* 1 (2004), pp. 113–39; Bas Snelders, *Identity and Christian-Muslim Interaction: Medieval Art of the Syrian Orthodox from the Mosul Ar*ea (Leiden, 2010).

3 The canteen, acc. no. F1941.10 (45.2 x 21.5 x 21.5 cm), was purchased by the Freer Gallery of Art from Hagop Kevorkian, New York. In 1845, it was in the collection of Prince Filippo Andrea Doria, when it was published by Michelangelo Lanci. By at least 1934, when it was published by Maurice Dimand, the canteen formed part of the Eumorfopoulos Collection, London.

4 Julian Raby, "The Principle of Parsimony and the Problem of 'the Mosul School of Metalwork,'" in *Metalwork and Material Culture in the Islamic World: Art, Craft and Text. Essays presented to James W. Allan*, ed. Venetia Porter and Mariam Rosser-Owen (London, 2012 forthcoming); special thanks are due to Julian Raby for access to his article.

5 The concavity of the roundel would assist stability if the vessel was placed on its front, possibly also to facilitate access to the back.

6 David S. Rice, "Studies in Islamic metalwork–III," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 15, no. 2 (1953), pp. 235–37, pl. 8; on the identification of the knights as fighting Crusaders, see Dimand 1934, p. 17.

7 It may or may not be significant that the neck is off-center to the right both in relation to the Hodegetria, as well as the standing figures of Gabriel and the Virgin in the Annunciation scene under the colonnade on the reverse. Could this off-center position facilitate right-hand

access to the mouth of the vessel during ritual use?

8 The strip, with its apparently secular decoration of seated drinkers and musicians, has always proved difficult to explain in the context of the canteen's ecclesiastical program. It is often compared to the d'Arenberg Basin (Freer, F1955.10), which also has mixed sacred and secular themes. However, there is no evidence of replacement or repair on the basin, while on the canteen there is. The basin's mixture of sacred and secular scenes is clearly intentional, but its purpose may be very different. An analysis of the metallurgical compositions of both the silver and the brass on the strip and domed section of the canteen would be useful in this regard, as well as additional radiographs of the joining of the components.

9 See Raby 2012 on this image, considered variously to be the emblem of Mosul, or the coat of arms of its ruler, Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū'. Information on the three roundels from personal communication with Julian Raby.

10 We are grateful to Rachel Ward for her comments in this regard.

11 Of course, we may be mistaken about the transposition of the placement of the neck and handles on the original to the replacement—the displacement to the neck to the right with respect to the two images of the Virgin (Hodegetria and Annunciation) may simply represent a misalignment of the two major components of the canteen, the domed section and the flat plate, as a result of the repair.

12 Schneider 1973, p. 153; Atil et al. 1985, p. 125; Khoury 1998, pp. 63–64.

13 In April 2011, Ecker asked Prof. Frye about the canteens he saw in Samarkand, and he recalled that they were made of stone. Whatever the mechanism for pouring was and whatever the container, they do not seem to represent convincing parallels for the canteen.

14 Baer 1989, p. 48; Khoury 1998, p. 66; and see Atil et al. 1985, p. 133.

15 Baer 1989, p. 45.

16 Schneider 1973, p. 153.

17 Atil et al. 1985, p. 133. The Freer Gallery purchased the porcelain canteen (F1958.2) in 1958 from John Sparks, Ltd., London, which had bought it at the Clare de Pinna sale, Sotheby's London, October 29, 1957. Its previous provenance is unknown.

18 The porcelain canteens are clearly related to, but not identical to the *bianhu*, or moon-flasks, that were produced at Jingdezhen in some quantity from the Yongle to Qing periods. The moon-flasks, smaller than the canteens, which are unusually large, usually stand on a footring, whether square or oval, and interestingly, have bulbous necks and slight handles that are similar to those of the Freer canteen. They are assumed to imitate a Near Eastern metalwork prototype which is assumed to be Syrian. The misidentification of the place of origin of the Freer canteen as Syria may have contributed to this argument, and to some confusion between these different though related types. See for example British Museum, reg. no. 1968,0422.29.

19 Sotheby's Hong Kong, November 1, 1999, Sale HK0154, lot 311. Some doubts have been raised as to the authenticity of this example.

20 *Mingdai chu nian ciqi tezhan mulu* (National Palace Museum, Taipei, 1982), no. 1.

21 Christie's London, November 6, 2007, Sale 7431, lot 156.

22 *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum*, vol. 34, *Blue and White with Underglaze Red* (1) (Commercial Press, Hong Kong, 2000), nos. 34, 35, 36, and 37. Number 37 is the only one that retains its original lid. See also Geng Boachang, *Ming Qing ciqi jianding* (Beijing: Forbidden City Publishing, 1993), p. 24, figs. 39, 54; Rosemary Scott, "A very rare early Ming blue and white flask, bianhu," *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Including Export Art*, Christie's London auction catalogue, November 6, 2007, lot 156.

23 The differences can be summarized as: a convex central boss instead of a concave one, no void on the back, three ridges imitating leather welts and not four, the position of the neck within a single side-strip and not on the lower of two, loop handles and different type of tubular neck (although we have argued that the neck and handles on the Freer canteen are not the original ones).

24 This is not to say that only porcelain pieces that copied shapes derived from Islamic metalwork were exported or offered diplomatically to Muslim clients and dignitaries. However, such pieces did typically find their way into Middle Eastern collections. One might cite a Yongle-period blue-and-white porcelain ewer now in the British Museum (1963,1219.1) that is clearly derived from an Islamic prototype. Two such ewers are also found at the Ardabil Shrine. Furthermore, unlike the canteens, two *bianhu* flasks form part of the Ardabil collection.

25 This very crucial observation was made by Massumeh Farhad in 2003.

26 There are two plausible means by which the canteen was taken to China: by an ecclesiastical mission or as booty. The Nestorian community and its missions in China were active in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, protected by the Yuan dynasty, which had long been allied through marriage with Nestorian Christian families. While the compara-

tive manuscript evidence point to a Syrian orthodox origin for the canteen, it may come from a Nestorian context instead. If a relic was contained in this second, brass canteen, it does suggests a slightly different scenario than the endowment to a shrine or monastery in the Jazīra, such as Dayr Mār Behnam, proposed below. Instead, a relic might have been brought from the Middle East for the purpose of founding of a church. How it came to, or came into contact with, the imperial treasury instead is an intriguing question.

27 Or possibly crusader-inspired depictions of Eastern saints.

28 On the absence of these themes: Khoury 1998; Hoffman 2004, p. 132; the Syriac lectionaries discussed below (British Library Add.7170 and Vatican Library MS Syriaco 559) that provided models for the canteen's extant iconography are the likely source of the crucifixion image; an alternative icon that might have occupied the roundel is the Ascension of Christ, an illustration of which is also found in BAV MS Syriaco 559, f. 174b, and in BL Add. 7170, f. 188a. Christ is shown being borne to heaven in an oval ring sustained by four angels. The figure in an oval could have adapted well for a boss decoration, and synchronize with the inner and outer rings as "Church Militant" and "Church Triumphant."

29 We thank Julian Raby for this suggestion. The beaker would have had straight sides, thus dating to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century before the fashion for flaring profiles became prevalent. See the proposed chronology in Summer S. Kenneson, "Islamic enameled beakers: a new chronology," in *Gilded and Enamelled Glass from the Middle East*, ed. Rachel Ward (London: British Museum Press, 1998), pp. 45–49.

30 Dimand 1934, p. 17; between the Treaty of Jaffa (1229) and the Khwarezmian sack of Jerusalem (1244), crusading orders regained their limited purpose as the guardians of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As discussed below, this period falls well within the plausible timeframe for the manufacture of the canteen.

31 *The Travels of Marco Polo* suggests one kind of relic that might have been available and sought after in Jerusalem in the thirteenth century: "He [the Grand Khan] moreover signified his pleasure that upon their return they should bring with them from Jerusalem, some of the holy oil from the lamp which is kept burning over the sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he professed to hold in veneration and to consider as the true God." *The Travels of Marco Polo the Venetian*, trans. W. Marsden, revised by T. Wright and P. Harris, Everyman's Library, no. 313 (New York: Knopf, 2008), pp. 20–22. While beaker-reliquaries have not yet been identified in the Syrian Orthodox tradition, they have survived in other contexts, for example, the beaker-reliquary found in the Church at Mattsee (V&A, acc. no C.280-1936), that contains the bones of St. Laurentius and bears the seal of Sigmund, bishop of Salona, suffragan bishop of Passau. It has been dated to circa 1450.

32 Schneider 1973, pp. 143–45, pl. 1, fig. 2.

33 Fitzherbert owes Rachel Ward and James Allan particular thanks for discussions on Jazīran metalwork.

34 The colophon date read by Leroy as 1220 was subsequently reread by Fiey as 1260; Jules Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures conservé dans les bibliothèques d'Europe et d'Orient: contribution à l'études d l'iconographie des Eglises de langue syriaque* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1964), pp. 301–2; Jean-Maurice Fiey, "Hulagu, Doquz Khatun … et Six Ambons?" *Le Muséon* 88 (1975), pp. 59–64. Rima Smine is reconsidering the date of this manuscript in her forthcoming thesis. Fitzherbert is indebted to Sebastian Brock and Pier Giorgio Borbone for their advice.

35 Schneider noted the *sharbūsh* but associated it with Mamluk Cairo, on the basis of a single woodblock print, despite Rice having previously argued against it being typically Mamluk, but closely associated with areas under Seljuq-Zengid domination, particularly Upper Mesopotamia, where it appears not only in paintings but also on metalwork, glass, pottery, stucco and coins; Schneider 1973, pp.139 and n. 4; Rice 1957, p. 324 and n. 19. Atil and Snelders also mention the *sharbūsh* but do not discuss it in relation to other anomalies in the iconography; Atil et al. 1985, p. 126; Snelders 2010, pp. 360–61.

36 Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū' assumed the regency in AH 607/1210 CE, received a caliphal investiture to rule in his own right in AH 631/1233 CE and died in AH 657/1259 CE, having governed from Mosul for nearly fifty years; a *terminus ante quem* for the *sharbūsh* as emblematic of authority in Mosul would be the city's sack by the Mongols in AH 660/1262 CE, and the flight of the son of Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū', al-Sālih Ismā'īl, to the Mamlūks. Tripartite decoration, as on the front of the canteen, is typical of brasses known to have been made for Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū'; David Storm Rice, "The Brasses of Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū'," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13, no. 3 (1950), pp. 627–34 and pl. 13. In addition, the use of his portrait is attested in four surviving frontispieces to the twenty-volume copy of the *Kitāb al-Aghānī,* text completed in AH 616/1219 CE; David Storm Rice, "The

Aghānī Miniatures and Religious Painting in Islam, *Burlington Magazine* 95 (1953), pp. 128–34; S. M. Stern, "A New Volume of the Illustrated Aghānī Manuscript," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957), pp. 501–3.

37 Leroy 1964, p. 81, fig. 4. Other anomalies include the Virgin by the manger depicted without a clearly defined head-covering, and Christ shown riding a horse or mule into Jerusalem rather than an ass; Fitzherbert is grateful to Robert Hillenbrand for this discussion. It is also worth noting that the unusually stiff and unbending posture of the Christ Child, propped on the lap of the Virgin Hodegetria in the central roundel, is closer to that in the Vatican Lectionary than to other Syriac manuscript examples; see Leroy 1964, p. 77, figs. 4 and 3, where Hodegetria images from the Vatican Lectionary and the British Library's Syriac Lectionary (Add. 7170), dateable to 1216–20, are juxtaposed. For a detailed discussion of Syrian Orthodox iconography on metalwork and in manuscripts from the Mosul area, see Snelders 2010, pp. 103–50 and pp. 151–213.

38 For example, inscriptions on the two brass flabella made in Mosul in 1202 for the Dayr al-Suriani in the Wadi Natrun (Egypt) bear inscriptions in Syriac only, and are clearly ecclesiastical commissions; see Snelders and Immerzeel 2004 and Raby 2012.

39 On the "Syrian (or Syriac) renaissance," see Snelders 2010, especially pp. 68–73.

40 For the fullest coverage of Dayr Mār Behnam, see Snelders 2010, pp. 257–335, appendices A and B, pp. 553–570, and pls. 33–65. See also Afram Abdal, *Some Historical Vestiges of the Convent of St. Behnam the Martyr near Mosul* (Beirut: Syriac Catholic Patriarchy of Antioch, 1954), and Christoph Baumer, *The Church of the East: An Illustrated History of Assyrian Christianity* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), pp. 102–3.

41 For the linking, and often conflation, of al-Khiḍr, Elijah, Ilyās, Saint George, and Mār Behnam, see Ethel Sara Wolper, "Khiḍr and the Changing Frontiers of the Medieval World," *Medieval Encounters* 17 (2011), pp. 120–146; for the shrine of Mār Behnam, see especially pp. 139–142.

42 Snelders 2010, p. 275, and on the syncretistic nature of these sculptures, pp. 301–5.

43 Afram Abdal, *Some Historical Vestiges of the Convent of St. Behnam the Martyr near Mosul* (Beirut: Syriac Catholic Patriarchy of Antioch, 1954), pp. 4–5ff., and Baumer, *The Church of the East*, pp. 102–3.

44 Snelders 2010, appendix B, p. 566, Inscription AE.01.20.

45 Matthew 17:1–12, Mark 9: 2–13, Luke 9: 28–36; Elijah is not usually signified by a mountain, but in the Vatican Lectionary, Christ, Elijah and Moses are shown each standing on separate hill tops; Leroy 1964, p. 98, fig. 2.

46 See Douglas Patton, *Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū', Atabeg of Mosul, 1211–1259* (Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 1991), p. 20; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader manuscript Illumination at Saint Jean d'Acre, 1275–1291* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 5; for evidence of the crusader presence in Mosul itself, see also Raby, "The Principle of Parsimony." On mounted warriors as European Christians, see Dimand 1937, p. 17 and n. 1.

47 Although the canteen's neck is not likely to be the original, like its pearl border, the inscription may well echo that which preceded it. Since Dayr Mār Behnam was famed for its healing waters, the possibility of the truncated cone holding a beaker for dispensing it also invites consideration.

48 For example, Bar Hebraeus describes the case of the Christian physician Amīn al-Dawla Tāōma and his three sons, Shams al-Dawla, Fakhr al-Dawla, and Tāj al-Dawlah, who attained "great honours" at the court of the caliph al-Nāṣir (reigned 575–622/1180–1225), *The Chronography of Gregory Abū'l-Faraj son of Aaron, The Hebrew Physician commonly known as Bar Hebraeus*, vol. 1, facsimile repr., trans. Ernest A. Wallis Budge (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003), pp. 385–86.

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RENATA HOLOD

EVENT AND MEMORY

The Freer Gallery's Siege Scene Plate

1
Siege Scene Plate, obverse, Freer Gallery of Art, F1943.3.

2
Siege Scene Plate, reverse.

3
Siege Scene Plate, general profile view.

Abstract

The large enamel-painted (so-called *haft rang/mina'i*) plate in the Freer Gallery depicts the successful siege of a castle on the front and hunting feats on the back. This study proposes an interpretation of the plate, its time, and its intended audience. The front of the plate portrays a complex narrative of a battle and names the victors—Turkish emirs who played key roles in the incessant skirmishes, fort takeovers, and battles in the regions of northwest Iran. It can be assumed that one (or all) of the seven named emirs was the patron or the intended audience for this commemorative scene. The defenders of the fortress are presented through a series of discrete events that culminate in the disastrous loss of their leader. Although the visual narration stresses the specificity of the siege, the event is not mentioned in the main historic texts of the period. Thus, the task of the art historian is not only to propose an interpretation of the image but also to attempt a reconstruction of the region's history.

A detailed examination of the inscription on the rim has enabled the identification of the area where the event took place—the Tarom Mountains on the border between (Iranian) Azerbaijan and Daylam. This paper explores two different possibilities for dating the event and, therefore, the subsequent manufacture of the plate. The first possibility situates the siege among the exploits and adventures of Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Mingburnu, the last Khwarazmshah, during the 1220s. The alternative, driven more by the accepted internal chronologies and stylistic variations of Kashan as a ceramic production center, locates the event earlier within the narratives of the late twelfth to early thirteenth century.

A MUCH-REPRODUCED MONUMENT OF ISLAMIC ART is the large plate, painted with overglaze enamels (*haft rang/mina'i*) in the Freer Gallery of Art (F1943.3; figs. 1, 2).[1] It depicts the siege of a castle on the obverse and a series of hunters on the reverse. Its size, epigraphic program, and complex pictorial composition make this plate particularly fascinating. Forty-three centimeters in diameter, it is the largest *haft rang/mina'i* plate in existence. It exhibits a striking variety of figure types, landscape motifs, and architectural elements, and inscriptions identify the principal protagonists. Although very fragmentary and much restored, the original dimensions, profile (fig. 3), and pictorial and epigraphic program have now been completely verified as result of a close reexamination of both its body and its decoration.[2] This study proposes a more definitive analysis of the images on both the obverse and reverse, and the milieu in which the plate and its visual program were commissioned and produced.

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4
Detail of the obverse center, showing the victor and the vanquished.

5
Amir Sābiq al-Din.

Facing the Siege

The physical and visual center of the siege scene is occupied only by a bird. Two figures bracket it, and in their stances the kernel of the story is revealed: victory for the besiegers and defeat for the besieged (fig. 4). To the bird's right rides the leader of the attacking army, specifically identified by title and name as Lord (*khudāvand*, actually *khudhāvand)* Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn (خذاوند مظفرالدوله و الدين). On the left, the nameless leader of the besieged falls from the parapet of his castle, his body pierced by two arrows. The victorious army converges on this central space in six files, five across the field of the plate and one circling the rim. Seven warriors are identified by name:

> The lone horseman in the lowermost file is Amīr Sābiq al-Dīn (امير سابقالدين) (fig. 5).
>
> Above him ride Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīr Berīg/Barīk (بهاالدين محمد شير باريک), Shams al-Dīn Ilyās (شمسالدين الياس), and Beg Arslān Ūshi (بيک ارسلان اوشی) (fig. 6).
>
> Following the leader of the attacking army are Shams [al-Dī]n Menglībeh(?) (شمس [الد]ن منكليبه) and two unnamed riders (fig. 7).
>
> The next rank consists of … [al-Dī]n Muḥammad … (...[الد]ن محمد...) …, M.ḥaṭ.reh(?) Pisar-i Langar (محاطره (؟) پسر لنگر) (fig. 7) and two unnamed horsemen.
>
> In the top rank of the field, three unnamed horsemen are less carefully aligned.

Of the named riders, the three at the bottom, Amīr Sābiq al-Dīn, Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīr Berīg, and Shams al-Dīn Ilyās—as well as their leader, Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn, are also differentiated by size, beard, and costume to give them special prominence. Scattered among the horsemen are four foot soldiers and, in the topmost rank, an elephant with its attendant and a small, semi-nude figure of a drummer with armlets. On the rim, bands of horsemen alternate with groups of archers and scenes of single combat. Throughout the composition, the dead lie scattered underfoot, disrobed and dismembered.

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Left to right: Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīr Berīg, Shams al-Dīn Ilyās, and Beg Arslān Ūshi.

7
Shams [al-Dī]n Menglibeh(?) riding behind the leader, Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn; above and to the left: …[al-Dī]n Muḥammad, M.ḥaṭ.reh(?) Pisar-i Langar.

8
The fragmentary rim inscription.

On the lowest part of the preserved rim, written upside down in relation to the main action on the field of the plate, is a fragmentary line of a Persian text (fig. 8):

Transcription:

دگر بهاالدين به خلخال رفته بوذی... پسر لنگر در حق بهاالدين تا قتلی بسيار
رفته بوذ [(؟)لزرقه]

Translation:
Then Bahā' al-Dīn went to Khalkhāl,
… Pisar-i Langar went immediately to join Bahā' al-Dīn in the fierce battle [*l.z.r.qah* (?) or, less possible, *az rūz* (?)]…[3]

The beginning of the original inscription could not have been located in what is now the plaster infill area on the right, since immediately beyond it is an original piece of continuous rim and body without any writing. The area to the left of the remaining inscription has also been infilled with plaster. While one could suppose that the inscription extended the entire length of the latter infill, it seems that it formed a segment of a circle centered on the main scene and did not begin before the word "then" (*diger)*, the beginning of the remaining phrase. Therefore, it would not be possible for all the warriors named on the field to have been mentioned again on the rim. As it is, the order, rank, and differentiation among the warriors in the main image are not mirrored in the rim text: Bahā' al-Dīn is prominently shown, but Pisar-i Langar is not, and the name of the central victor, Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn, does not appear in the extant rim inscription.

The image and the text, then, do not follow one another's compositional imperatives. Judging even from the plate's fragmentary state, the message of the rim inscription is one of specific narration and does not seem to mirror the rhetorical turns of contemporary historical texts.[4] The inscription also lacks the poetic allusions so common in those on other contemporary ceramic objects.[5] It is a terse identification of an event (the battle), a place (Khalkhāl), and some of the attackers. Judging from its clear and pointed script, it was meant to be read or identified, at least originally. Its upside-down position may seem puzzling at first, but that can be explained when the sources for the image and the habits of ceramic decoration are considered (see below).

The location of the battle, Khalkhāl (on the southeastern border of Azerbaijan), is not only named on the rim but also might be represented in topographical detail. Shown as a mountainous landscape inhabited by animals, it presents the most extensive landscape in extant Persian images produced before the end of the thirteenth century (fig. 9).[6] That fact alone would not have ensured immediate recognition of the locale. Iran is a mountainous country, and castles abounded on hilltops. The coulisse-like contours of a rugged landscape inhabited by animals appear throughout pre- and post-Mongol imagery and would simply have been taken to connote the countryside.[7] The elaboration of the surfaces of the castle walls on the plate may be significant, however. The walls were originally decorated in a pattern of interlocking geometric figures,[8] and the central panel has a framing device similar to those used to indicate architecture on decorated ceramics such as the "Freer Beaker" (F1928.2) and in manuscripts like ʿAyyūqī's *Varqah va Gulshah*.[9] Together, the two motifs recall the elaborately reveted architecture of northwestern Iran, which featured ornamented surfaces covered in colored tile plugs and inserts until genuine tile mosaics appeared at the end of the thirteenth century.[10] This development has been amply documented on individual commemorative buildings, like the twelfth- through fourteenth-century group in Maragheh. Walls of large structures, citadels and congregational mosques, were apparently also developing color revetment, as is evident from the descriptions of the tile-enhanced walls of the early fourteenth-century citadel and congregational mosque at Sultaniyya, several days march to the southwest of Khalkhāl.[11]

In contrast to the written and visual identification of the victors and location, pictorial devices alone were marshaled to depict the defeated army and the battle's progress. As was done for the location, elements of visual constructs from other sources were utilized and reordered to provide the necessary density of clues for recognition and meaning.[12] The leader of the besieged fortress, clothed not in

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9
The fortress in its landscape setting.

armor but in a tunic and trousers, plummets to his death. His falling body, pierced by two arrows, is portrayed in a position similar to that of flying victories, but upside down.[13] He is barefoot, a detail that might have been part of the flying-figure type in the visual repertoire, but may have special meaning here. In his right hand, he holds a weapon, a *zupin*, a short spear best known as a traditional weapon of the Daylamis and Gilanis.[14] His disheveled hair and heavy beard also may have been intended as a sign of identity or distress.[15] Immediately below his body, at the foot of the castle wall, crouch four members (three large and one smaller) of the defending army, carrying bow, spear, sword, and shield, while the ground in front is strewn with dismembered and disrobed bodies (fig. 10).[16] Empty suits of armor, shields, and bows in cases line the castle battlements.[17] On top of the castle, shown in birds' eye view, a mangonel/catapult is attended by two turbaned figures and three other helpers.[18] Archers shoot from a lower gallery (fig. 9).

The victors are shown on the right in three-quarter view with bodies fully controlled, forever riding in their moment of victory. At the same time, the arrangement and the attention to detail on the left develops the story of the besieged's defeat in several discrete moments. Placing armor on the walls as a ruse to replace actual soldiers/defenders can be read as one moment.[19] Another is the foray outside the castle walls, whose immediate motive may have been the retrieval of the despoiled bodies shown in front of the sortie party. The besieged leader's dramatic end can be understood as the last, decisive event of the battle.

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10
The sortie of the besieged.

The two parts of the plate play different roles in the presentation of the entire event. The right side shows the attacking army converging on the fortress and crystallized in a single, continuous, and final moment of victory. The left side summarizes the progress of the battle. The concerted attack from the right scatters the defenders on the left just as the attackers prevent their separate attempts to break the siege. The massive bulk of the fortress fills the left side and stays the visual thrust of the attack. Together, the two sides complete the narrative of the battle. The placement of the vanquished to the left and the victorious to the right must also have been significant, though for the moment there are no specific studies on this directional coding in the early and middle Islamic/Iranian visual culture context.[20]

While some members of the besieged army have been differentiated visually, it is writing rather than pictorial details that ultimately identifies the key individuals of the victorious attacking army. In other words, the victors deserve to be named. The expressive force of the visual means, as well as the coherence and signifying capacity of the formal elements available to the decorator of the plate, were apparently deemed insufficient to circumvent reliance on the written word for a full identification of the scene. In fact, depictions of actual historical events rarely occur without direct association with text, unless these are otherwise constructed in a narrow cultural context.[21]

In the Realm of Heroes

The inscription band of customary good wishes on the reverse rim is decorated in a style similar to those on other *haft rang/mina'i* vessels.[22] A frieze of hunters

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11
Siege Scene Plate, reverse.

fills the plate's sloping sides (figs. 3, 11). Four individual feats are shown: the slaying of a dragon, the shooting of a quadruped, the clubbing of a feline (?), and the shooting of a griffin. Based on these legendary creatures, it is clear that these are no ordinary hunters, but epic heroes such as Bahram Gūr, Faridūn, Rustam, and others.[23] A pair of hunters completes the circle; one leads a cheetah and carries a bovine-headed mace, the marker for Faridūn.[24] The events and people depicted on the rim do not correspond in number to all the individuals named on the front of the plate. Yet four of the named warriors are singled out by size and dress: Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn, Amīr Sābiq al-Dīn, Shams al-Dīn Ilyās, and Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīr Berīg/Barīk. So while direct parallels between hunter and warrior cannot necessarily be drawn, the hunting scenes complete the plate's decorative program and draw a comparison between the legendary heroes on the back of the plate and the main warriors on the front. By juxtaposition, the deeds of the latter group are accorded the renown of the former. The epic and legendary validates the specific and historic; the distanced metaphor of rhetoric and poetics has been translated into physical reality.

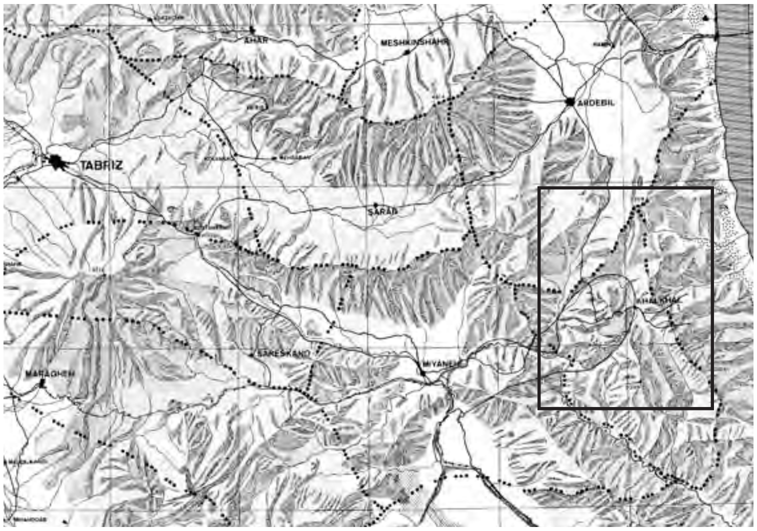
The Location and Time of the Siege: Shifting Allegiances in Atabeg Realms

While the names of the warriors on the front of the plate have been deciphered and known for some time, as a group they are not found in any of the major historical sources of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The mixed Arabic, Persian, and Turkic elements of their names, however, indicate that they are members of the military class; the honorific title (*laqab*) is followed by the name (*ism*), and then the epithet (*nisba* or *kunya*). Furthermore, the Persian title of the leader, *khudāvand* (lord), points to an Iranian setting for the event.[25] The fragmentary inscription on the rim mentions Khalkhāl; therefore, in the absence of any other written indication, we may assume that this location is the place of the siege.

Khalkhāl was the name given to both a town and a region in southeastern Azerbaijan, on the western border of Gilan and Daylam (figs. 12 and 13). A mountainous borderland region, its medieval, local history has proven difficult to reconstruct in great detail.[26] According to the AH seventh-century/thirteenth-century CE geographer Yaqut, the Khalkhāl region had several fortresses, among them Balak and Firuzabad, while the town and fortress of Khalkhāl itself lay between two mountains and was seven days ride from Qazvin and two from Zanjan. Yaqut's is an eyewitness report, as he crossed the area while fleeing from the Mongols. Passing through the region a century later, Qazwīni found the town of Khalkhāl in ruins.[27] Geographical and historical information is very sparse about this region, particularly during the last years of the twelfth century and the early thirteenth, although by assembling what is known about Azerbaijan in general, one may be able to understand the general outlines of its history.

In the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries CE, three significant forces emerged in the region: the Great Seljuq atabegs ("tutors"), the Isma'ilis, and the Khwarazmshahs. The Seljuk atabeg dynasty of the Eldegüzids controlled Azerbaijan and, at times, large parts of Jibāl (the Uplands). The Eldegüzids took their name from Shams al-Dīn Eldegüz/Īldegöz (circa AH 530–571/1136–1175 CE), who maintained all of Azerbaijan as his own domain from about AH 540/1146 CE, and extended it through the province of Iraq. He served as atabeg to the Seljuk princes, Arslān-Shāh b. Toghril and Malik-Shah b. Saljuq, and added greatly to his prestige by marrying Mu'mina Khatun, the mother of Arslān-Shāh (and widow of the Great Seljuk sultan Tughril b. Muḥammad b. Malikshah). Eldegüz's sons were thus closely connected to the main Seljuk line, which gave them sufficient status to develop a court culture as well as the power and license to interfere in succession disputes and deflect any moves against their control of western Iran. Those sons, Nusrat al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān (died 1187 CE) and Muẓaffar al-Dīn Qizil Arslān 'Uthman (died 1191 CE), served as atabegs to the last of the Great Seljuk sultans of Iran, Tughril (reigned 1176–94 CE).[28] Jahān Pahlavān expanded and maintained his own corps of mamluks, the Pahlavanian, whom he deployed for various administrative and military purposes. These mamluks, no longer ordinary Turkoman slaves (*ghulams*) but emirs, were raised to positions of considerable power.[29]

The historian Rāvandī noted that Jahān Pahlavān appointed some sixty of the mamluks as governors of towns and provinces. Rāvandī also listed twenty of their



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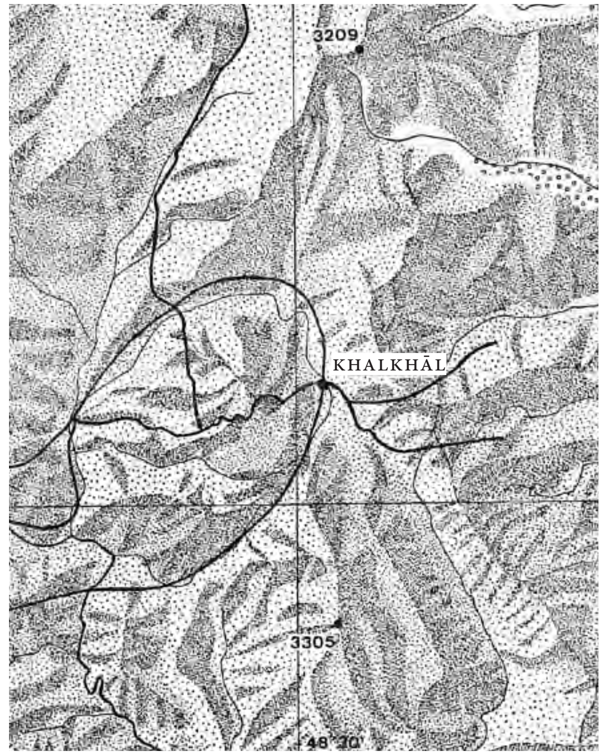

13

12
Map eastern Azerbayjan, Dailam and Gilan, with the region of Khalkhāl indicated. After Stephan Kroll

13
Map of the Khalkhāl region. After Stephan Kroll

names,[30] which are similar in titulature and composition to those on the Freer plate, with an Arabic title and a Turkish and/or Persian name. The course of these lives is difficult to trace, and only painstaking detective work results in the detailed history of a single individual.[31] From gleanings of biographical details, it is evident that the Pahlavanian and similar mamluk cohorts were active in central Iran and Azerbaijan through the second half of the twelfth century and into the first part of the thirteenth. Always ready to serve the strongest master, they shifted allegiance as their situations required. They formed the active military, administrative, and political class of the time and wielded considerable power. Their role and impact as patrons and tastemakers can only be surmised, although as former mamluks of the Eldegüzids, their culture, taste, and behavior would have been shaped by their training and formation at the atabegs' courts.[32]

The second power group in the borderlands between Daylam/Gilan and Azerbaijan were the Isma'ilis.[33] During this period, Daylam was being absorbed into the territorial holdings of Rudbar and Alamut, the western Iranian Isma'ili strongholds.[34] With the accession of Hasan III[35] to the Isma'ili imamate in 1210, there occurred a further expansion to the west. Hasan's policy of an overt shift to Sunni practices and allegiance to the Abbasid caliph led to a useful local alliance with his neighbor, an Eldegüzid of the third generation, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Özbeg (died AH 622/1225 CE). As partial payment for his help in the campaigns against the Khwarazmians, Hasan received the territories of Zanjan and Abhar from Özbeg.[36] Thus, there is indirect evidence that by the second decade of the thirteenth century, Isma'ili territorial expansion had reached the Tarom Mountains and could have included Khalkhāl as a tribute-paying territory.[37] What is certain is that the alliance with the Eldegüzids was enough cause for the renewal of hostilities between the Isma'ilis and the Khwarazmians.

These long-standing hostilities went back to 1194, when Tekesh Khwarazmshah displaced the Eldegüzids from a large part of eastern Azerbaijan, and took the side of the inhabitants of the city of Qazvin against the Isma'ilis. Except for a brief interlude of quiescence in 1210, animosities simmered for several years until Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Mingburnu Khwarazmshah instituted a more aggressive policy in the 1220s. The major and final encounter occurred in 1226–27 when Jalāl al-Dīn attacked Isma'ili strongholds in eastern Azerbaijan.[38] Al-Nasawī (died 1241), the sultan's biographer, does not list these strongholds, but Khalkhāl could have been among them. The biographer also is silent about the details of the campaign, although he states that after 1226, Jalāl al-Dīn appointed Husam al-Dīn Tekin Tash ruler (*malik*) of Khalkhāl and its dependencies.[39] The latter remained at Khalkhāl until he was killed during the Mongol invasion in AH 628–29/1230–31 CE.[40] Apparently then, the region of Khalkhāl was in the Khwarazmshah's hands for only a short while. Sometime in the intervening months, one of Özbeg's mamluks, 'Izz al-Dīn Balban (or Balaban) al-Khalkhāli, took control of the region and its fortresses, particularly of Khalkhāl, Firuzabad, and Balak, using them as a base of operations to plunder and attack areas in Azerbaijan and Iraq-i 'Ajam. He was so notorious in his robberies and exactions that Jalāl al-Dīn was forced to respond with a siege of Firuzabad. After only a few days, Balban came out of the fortress, holding his sword and shield, and asking for mercy.[41] This incident seems a more typical negotiation of surrender between one holder of a fortress and another, and not an occasion for a dramatic siege and a disastrous outcome. Al-Nasawī did not report on major battles and sieges in Khalkhāl.

Individuals or cohorts of emirs were active participants in all the actions pursued by the atabegs and the Khwarazmshahs. Apparently they followed the pattern of changing allegiances documented above, moving easily into and out of the Khwarazmshahs' camp after their formative years in Eldegüzid service. It is likely that members of this group are depicted on the plate, and that the ones who are named belonged to the same class of emirs and would have behaved in similar fashion. The appellation (*kunya*) of Beg Arslan Ūshi indicates his origin in the Ferghana Valley. A Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad does appear in al-Nasawī's biography of Jalāl al-Dīn.[42] The name Mengli (similar to Menglibeh on the plate) appears twice in other versions in the historical record but in neither case is the identification certain.[43] In the end, the final identification of the named emirs remains elusive.

The victorious leader on the plate, Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn, might be more specifically identified, however. Two alternative identifications can be proposed: one a Salghurid of Fars, the other an Eldigüzid of Azerbaijan. The first possibility is that he was Jalāl al-Dīn's brother-in-law—the Salghurid Muẓaffar al-Dīn Abū Bakr, atabeg of Fars after 1227. The history of relations between the atabegs of Fars and the Khwarazmians is a rather tangled one. Although there had been animosity in the previous generations, by 1224 Jalal al-Dīn had married Mu'mina (Malika) Khatun, the daughter of Sa'd, the reigning Salghurid atabeg. Sa'd's son and successor, Abū Bakr, joined the sultan's forces shortly afterward and remained with him on campaigns throughout northwestern Iran until the end of 1226.[44]

There is little evidence that there were any hostilities between the Eldegüzids and the Isma'ilis in the thirteenth century, especially after 1210, the year of the accession of Hasan III. However, all indications point to a continuing and indeed escalating animosity between the Isma'ilis and the Khwarazmians, dating from the latter's first appearance in western Iran in 1194. The area of the Tarom Mountains, Semiran (and probably Khalkhāl), could have become Isma'ili territory by 1210, if not earlier.[45] It is thus likely that a conflict at Khalkhāl after that date and before 1227 would have involved a confrontation between the Khwarazmians and the Isma'ilis.

Based on this admittedly sketchy historical chronology, the siege of Isma'ili Khalkhāl by the Khwarazmshah's troops could have happened any time between 1210 and 1227, though probably more aggressive action should be associated with Jalāl al-Dīn. And if Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn can be identified as Abū Bakr, then the years 1224–27 are the only possible period for the battle itself. If, however, the conflict at Khalkhāl is placed prior to this period, that is between 1185 and 1210—the years traditionally associated with the dating of *haft rang/mina'i* pieces—then the identity of the battling forces is not as certain, since even less is known about Khalkhāl of these years.

The second possibility is that Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn was an Eldegüzid. While it is true that two Eldegüzid scions bear the title of Muẓaffar al-Dīn, we can discount Muẓaffar al-Dīn Özbeg for two reasons: First, he did not accede to the atabegate until AH 606/1210 CE. Second, Özbeg granted his friend and ally, the Isma'ili Hassan III, territories in the northeastern areas of his realm, including, possibly, Khalkhāl. Therefore, it is unlikely that a battle between these two parties and depicting this Muẓaffar al-Dīn's victory over the fortress would have occurred after 1210.

The earlier Muẓaffar al-Dīn of the dynasty was Qizil Arslān, the brother of Jahān Pahlavān, who had a seat at Tabriz. He reigned as the head of the dynasty only from his brother's death until AH 586/1191 CE, but nonetheless was active as a power broker and cultural patron. He spent his short reign as atabeg attempting to assert himself over the next generation and the Pahlavanian mamluks and to manage the succession of the Seljuk sultanate. Sources say nothing about his contesting the Isma'ili westward expansion or in fact about any engagements on the northeastern frontiers of his domains. Thus, from a purely political point of view, there seems to be no compelling evidence to assume that the battle for Khalkhāl depicted on the Freer Siege Scene Plate was an Eldegüzid–Isma‘ili encounter.

From the point of view of cultural history, however, the Eldegüzids were particularly well known as patrons of literature and architecture. Of these, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Qizil Arslān is best remembered for his support of poets and scholars even before he became an atabeg. Panegyric references to him in terms of epic heroes abound in the poems created under his patronage. Both Khaqānī and Niẓāmī compared him to Farīdūn and Bahram Gūr.[46] Thus, it is tempting to see that same type of metaphoric mode operating in the plate's pictorial program, where the actual event is complemented by the depiction of heroes on the back, one of whom holds the bovine-headed mace, the mark of Farīdūn, and another slays a dragon, one of Bahram Gūr's many feats. For those reasons alone, Qizil Arslān would be an attractive candidate as the Muẓaffar al-Dīn of the plate and as its audience or patron.

The Agency of the Artisan-Artist: The Place of Kashan

The compelling specificity of the main scene seems to require a fuller and perhaps even a different explanation. The scarcity of sources on the regional and local history of western Iran makes further dependence on written sources less promising. It now becomes a matter of visual decoding. The details of the battle's progress indicate that a specific siege was portrayed, no matter that retreating to a castle, holding out there, and then suing for peace is an oft-repeated chain of events in the chronicles of the period. Here, there is a full array of drama. First is the falling or leaping figure of the defeated leader; second is the ruse of armor in the walls; third is the inclusion of the catapult and its keepers; fourth is the sortie out of the castle; fifth are the half-naked and naked bodies strewn on the battlefield. Given the commission for portraying such a specific battle and campaign, how would an artisan-artist have been able to assemble the image? And on what particular models could he have relied upon to create it?

This discussion began by stating that this object is unique in its visual program, its size, and in its specific use of epigraphy. It is also alone among the extant images of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in portraying a (presumably) contemporary event. While what others have termed an explosion of the visual culture may have occurred during this period, no other siege scenes are known to have survived.[47] This expanded visual culture was created in several well-known categories, including: illustrations of scientific manuscripts[48] and of *belles-lettres* in Arabic or in Persian, as evidenced by the Persian romance *Varqah ve Gulshah* and the popular Arabic text of the *Maqamat* of al-Hariri[49]; the depiction of heroes from the Iranian national epic and related epics, found mostly on ceramics and metalwork[50]; images of planets and other astrological symbols as well as of the pleasures and pastimes of the court, which may have been a metaphor for paradisiacal themes[51]; and finally images with overt Shiʿi iconography.[52] No mode of depiction or style was exclusive to one iconographic category alone. The mass of visual motifs and components migrated from one category to another, in a "meta-pictorial" space, and were used to enrich and elaborate the resulting image. The process was fluid and by no means set. The expansion of images encouraged innovation and the creation of new visual ensembles. These all took time to gain visual currency and, therefore, are not easily legible without their texts. It was in this climate of innovation, formation, and visual ambiguity that the plate was created.

The main scene on the plate seems precocious. Only a century later, battle and siege scenes would appear regularly throughout the illustrated histories of Rashid al-Dīn, and almost contemporaneously in the epic history of the *Shahnama,* particularly in the so-called small *Shahnama* manuscripts. In many ways, the siege scene prefigured these scenes, and introduced a genre developed by the later schools of Persian and Mughal painting in such historical manuscripts as the *Zafarnama* or the *Baburnama*.[53]

The assumptions about the identity of the scene and of the *dramatis personae* are valid in their generalities, if disputable in their particulars. What can be identified are the time (the first quarter of the thirteenth century) and the place of the depicted action (Khalkhāl). The individuals named are clearly members of the Turkish military emir class. What remains now is to propose the manner in which this class would desire and use this object. Closely tied to its purpose is the problem of patronage: who did the actual ordering and who contributed to the scene's creation? The final set of questions pertains to the status and dating of the *haft rang/mina'i* technique*,* particularly when compared to the related technique of luster painting.

Because this plate commemorates victory in battle, it is natural to assume that it was made for the victorious leader, Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn. That would mean that he or someone in his court circle ordered the commemoration of the victory and instructed the makers in the details of the image. In the Islamic world prior to the thirteenth century, specific battles, though often mentioned in annals, were infrequently commemorated with monuments (or images) of lasting memory.[54] The closest contemporaneous examples that come to mind are both Western and Byzantine. A long, narrow band forms the depiction of the Norman victory on the Bayeux Tapestry, creating a continuous narrative with labels and smaller scenes running above and below. In Byzantine practice, murals of battle scenes bore labels or poetic descriptions but have not survived.[55] Significantly, it too uses inscriptions to identify the main *dramatis personae* and the major incidents of the story.

Another possibility is that the piece was made by an artisan-artist to commemorate the event and sell to its participants. If this were so, then the amount of guidance and interference the maker received from the intended audience would have been less direct, and other concerns specific to the ethos of the workshop could have been included in the program. The appearance of the names for identification would strengthen the argument that the piece was made on speculation. Much like works of prose or poetry presented by their writers at atabeg courts, a well-known practice in this period, the plate's maker(s) would have constructed its program for presentation in the hopes of remuneration or pension. The use of writing to ensure the correct identification of the victors, therefore, was necessary, while the entire available visual vocabulary and culture was activated for the other people depicted on the plate.

The attribution to a Kashan workshop has been accepted, if only because of its capacity to throw plates of such size using artificial paste.[56] It is even more feasible if the victory in question were over the Isma'ilis. The history of Kashan in the twelfth through the fourteenth century reveals a very zealous Shi'i Imami populace, and one that was not averse to including a rich Shi'i repertoire in its manufacture of decorated and pictorial luster tiles and bowls.[57] Given the opportunity to depict a victory over the Isma'ilis, the Shi'i artisan-artist could have developed his own iconography, showing the vanquished heretics with special inflection. This may be a possible explanation for the significant appearance of denuded bodies, already commented upon by Ettinghausen.[58]

The Shi'i Imami stronghold of Kashan held great animosity toward the Isma'ilis, who in their eyes were worse heretics than the Sunnis and had been the target of Shi'i invective during the entire preceding century.[59] Such a climate of opinion would have supported the depiction of the vanquished in such detail. Short of written identification, every visual device in the artisan-artist's vocabulary was marshaled to make the vanquished as visually clear as possible. The defeated leader is shown in the same scale and detail as the victor. As much, if not more, space is given to the defeated as to the victors.[60] Other members of the defeated army, particularly the sortie group, have also been singled out, much like the named victors and unlike the more miniaturized ranks of attacking infantry and cavalry.

A certain attitude toward the depiction of the enemy is apparent, similar to the most literal and best-developed depiction of the enemy in the Shi'i context, the Umayyad Yazid in the *ta'ziya* plays.[61] That a specifically *ta'ziya* iconography may have existed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is suggested by the decoration of the luster-painted plate from Ghazni as well as by smaller *haft rang/mina'i* plates.[62] Thus, the well-developed visual code for enemies may fit very well into a Kashan pictorial tradition, both because of the manner in which the defeated leader is depicted and because of a specific Kashani designation of Isma'ilis as heretics. This Kashan context is only significant, however, if one assumes that the creation of the image was original to the plate.

Matters would be different if the plate were not the commemoration of an event, but rather a copy of a preexisting image. In other words, the original and compelling creation of an image made for Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn could have occurred in another medium, likely a wall or book painting. Such an assumption is supported by the rather unusual composition of the plate's central field, which could have been devised for a flat surface, monumental or otherwise. The conflation of the narrative, in particular, may have resulted from the transfer from a monumental format (with a sequential narrative) to a miniature format (with a collapsed narrative). The key aspect, however, is that the existence of an image without a text is more likely in a unique composition—for example, a wall painting in a specific palace or one on paper with an accompanying text—than in a medium such as ceramics where most iconographically recognizable images are closely connected to an already circulating story.[63] The copies of the image would have been appropriate as trophies, but the invention of the image itself would have taken place in a medium other than decorated ceramics. In addition, the underdrawing discovered in the microscopic examination of the surface is suggestive of a prepared set of drawings.

The mindful juxtaposition of that specific, historical image on the front of plate with the generalized metaphor of the heroes and heroic feats on its reverse still would have been the decision of the ceramic decorator, considering the extensive epic-like imagery within the *haft rang/mina'i* (and lusterware) repertory produced in or attributed to Kashan workshops. The hypothesis of a preexisting image would relegate an atelier of Kashan to the more minor role of copying, rather than one of generating a totally new composition and iconography. The agency of the artisan-artist in the creation of the image then would be considerably diminished. Also, the Shi'i leanings of Kashan would not be directly reflected, and much of that visual complexity would be inaccessible.

Further arguments for a Kashan-invented image are nested within the practice of ceramic decoration. Despite the exigencies of composition for the historic image with its insistently centrifugal action centering on the two opposing figures, victor and vanquished, the format of main field and decorated rim common on large plates perseveres. The subject matter between rim and field is continuous. Yet, the combination of vignettes on the rim—groups of horsemen alternating with battling pairs—maintains the insistent rhythm of the type of epigraphic border used on every one of the series of large plates to which the Freer object belongs.[64] The ceramic workshop habits of rim decoration are further demonstrated by the explanatory, identifying inscription, which was written upside-down in relationship to the image (fig. 8). Were such a text part of a preexisting image, then surely it would have appeared as a label within the image itself or in the same orientation as the image, and not as a circular rim decoration where inscriptions can face either way.[65] Finally, the converging radial composition of the victorious army and the empty field at the center supports the idea that the first assembly of the siege image happened at Kashan during the production of a ceramic plate.[66]

The intensive study of the plate raises other implications about the dating and status of *haft rang/mina'i*. First, why make a commemorative plate in this technique? Second, what does the existence of the plate with a possible date of 1210–27 mean to the accepted chronology of *haft rang/mina'i* production? If one accepts the supposition that the Freer plate copied a preexisting image, either on paper or on a wall, then it follows that the enamel technique, particularly with the full color range seen on this plate, is more suitable than luster painting for the demands of the careful depiction of a specific battle.

Extant *haft rang/mina'i* vessels dated by inscription, such as those signed by Abu Zayd, were made in the late 1180s and display excellent draftsman's skills. So, it is tempting to place the Freer plate within Abu Zayd's circle and the time he worked as a painter and decorator using this technique. Yet, the very manner of decorative technique differs between his group and the plate. In the former case, the enameling colors were all applied on top of the already baked white opaque base glaze and affixed on top of this surface in the second smoky (reduction) kiln firing. The resulting colors emerged matte and grayish in tone.

In the case of the siege plate, the blue, turquoise, if not magenta, and pink-flesh colors were applied in glaze prior to the first firing, and only the red and black were added during the second firing. The resulting colors are shinier and brighter, that is, more enamel-like. The process of applying the finishing black lines might have been prolonged and laborious because several details of the victors' weapons remain unfinished. For example, lances are missing from the hands of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīr Berīg, Shams al-Dīn Ilyas, and Amīr Sābiq al-Dīn, and bow strings and arrows have not been drawn in for Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn, Beg Arslan Ūshi, or the sortie party. The differences in color and sequence may reflect varied work habits and perhaps even different workshop groups. Could they also be chronologically separated, with the "grayer" group sorted around the workshop of Abu Zayd of the 1180–90s and the "bluer" one around a later one, of the 1200–20s?

Looking at the plate, one ponders the possible uses of such a trophy, given the mobile lives led by the depicted and named *dramatis personae*. In which treasury of equipment, armaments, matched sets of dishes and metalwork, or instruments was it deposited? Was it ever displayed? And why should the Pahlavanian court inflection with its preoccupation with heroic metaphor be so completely carried out on both front and back? Was the back ever seen? Given the constantly shifting allegiances, frenetic movements, and countless attacks and sieges chronicled in contemporary histories, was there any real point in remembering this particular siege? Perhaps, it was only in hindsight, following his return to home base in peaceful Fars after 1227, that the Salghurid Abū Bakr, the Lord Muẓaffar al-Dawla wa'l-Dīn of the plate, got the chance to relive his victorious adventure.[67]

As referred to by Ettinghausen and Grabar, the "flowering of Seljuk art," therefore, can be seen not only as a rise of an urban and artisanal taste and visual culture, but as a multidimensional and longer-lasting dynamic that had the potential to reimagine the immediate past in epic strokes. Atabegs and mamluks as well as artisans and literati fashioned the memory of an event, relying on a visual code of event recounting and re-presentation.[68] They extended and expanded this code for future use in the great, illustrated epics and histories of the fourteenth century. If an Isma'ili–Khwarazmian conflict was indeed depicted, then both the iconography and composition were informed by the Pahlavanian/Salghurid context of atabeg courts[69] and by the Kashan ethos and practice of production.[70]

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NOTES

1 The initial discussion of this plate, F1943.3, was presented at the Freer Gallery of Art symposium, "Ceramics from the World of Islam," held in 1974. My initial findings have since been referred to by E. J. Grube, *Islamic Pottery of the Eighth to the Fifteenth century in the Keir Collection* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), p. 195; M. S. Rogers, "Review of Geza Fehervari, *Islamic Pottery: A Comprehensive Study Based on the Barlow Collection,* 1973, and E. Atil, *Ceramics from the World of Islam*, 1973," in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 33, nos. 1–2 (1976), pp. 91–93; D. Nicolle, *Arms and Armour of the Crusading Era, 1050–1350* (White Plains, NY: Kraus International Publications, 1988), p. 144; and M. S. Rogers, "Ceramics," in *Arts of Persia*, ed. R. W. Ferrier (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 255. The plate's most complete presentation to date has been in E. Atil, *Ceramics from the World of Islam* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 1973), cat. 50. It has been reproduced in all major manuals on Islamic art and civilization, and was most recently discussed in R. Ettinghausen, O. Grabar, and M. Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art And Architecture, 650–1250* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), and in E. Sims, with B. I. Marshak and E. J. Grube, *Peerless Images: Persian painting and its sources* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 92–93. The terms *haft rang* and *mina'i* have been used in this study to describe the same overglaze enamel technique of decoration. While both terms are Persian, *haft rang* (seven-color) is the more descriptive term; and the second is a modern collectors' term whose best explanation is in O. Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands. The Kuwait National Museum The Al-Sabah Collection,* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004) pp. 364–65.

2 For a detailed discussion of the fabric and surface of the plate as well as the complex repairs, reassembly, and inlay carried out on it, see the study by Blythe McCarthy and Renata Holod, "Under a microscope: The examination of the Freer Siege Scene Plate," on the Freer|Sackler website, http://asia.si.edu/research/articles/minai-battle-plate.asp.

3 The reading of "Khurasan" in place of "Khalkhāl" proposed in E. Atil's article, "The Freer Bowl and the Legacy of the *Shahname*," in the *in memoriam* volume for Michael Meinecke, *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 11 (1999), pp. 7–12, as read by Abdullah Ghouchani, was based on a photograph of the plate before it was cleaned. Ghouchani, therefore, could not see the full remaining original strokes of the letters. I thank him for discussing his reading with me. I am grateful to William Hanaway for discussing my reading and offering his opinion about the nature of the text.

4 On the rhetoric of historical texts, see M. R. Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980); E. Poliakova, "The Development of a Literary Canon in Medieval Persian Chronicles: The Triumph of Etiquette," *Iranian Studies* 17 (1984), pp. 237–56; D. S. Richards, "Ibn al-Athīr and the Later Parts of the *Kamil*: A Study of Aims and Methods," ed. D. O. Morgan, *Medieval History Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds* (London, 1982), pp. 76–108, and most notably, J. Meisami, "The Historian and the Poet: Rāvandī, Nizami and the Rhetoric of History," ed. K. Talatoff and J. Clinton, *The Poetry of Nizami Ganjavi: Knowledge, Love and Rhetoric* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 98–128.

5 See, for example, *haft rang/mina'i* and luster vessels with dates and/or poetic

inscriptions in O. Watson, "Documentary Mina'i and Abu Zaid's Bowls," ed. R. Hillenbrand, *Art of the Saljuqs in Iran and Anatolia* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1994) pp. 170–80; O. Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), pp. 347–63; O. Pancaroğlu, *Perpetual Glory* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2007), pp. 108–49; and S. Blair, "A Brief Biography of Abu Zayd," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008), pp. 155–77. On the other hand, Sims in *Peerless Images*, p. 93, notes that the *haft rang/mina'i* and luster tile at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (31.495) has a simple declarative inscription: "Iranians leaving the fortress of Farũd" and no verse, even though the depicted event is an episode from the *Shahnama*.

6 Flowering branches, trees, and pools are the most frequently appearing elements of landscape on portable objects—both ceramic and metalwork vessels—and are utilized as much for motifs dividing scene from scene as for indicating a setting. For a discussion of this feature connected to the Mosul school, see H. al-Harithy, "The Ewer of Ibn Jaldak (623/1226) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: The Inquiry into the Origin of the Mawṣilī School of Metalwork Revisited," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64, no. 3 (2001), pp. 355–68.

7 On locations of castles, W. Kleiss, "Fortifications" (1999) and "Castles" (1990) in *Encyclopedia Iranica Online*, accessed September 10, 2011, www.iranicaonline.org/articles.

8 This geometric ornament also appears in the main field on a series of *haft rang/mina'i* vessels. Examples of bowls or sherds with interlocking figures include: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 12.49.1, 20.120.124; Musée Nationale de Céramique, Sèvres, 21822; Detroit Institute of Art, 30-461. J. Soustiel, *La Céramique Islamique Guide de Connoisseur* (Fribourg: Office du Livre, 1985), p. 98. See also the website http://asia.si.edu/research/articles/minai-battle-plate.asp accompanying this study, where a sherd with a geometric ornament in the Freer|Sackler collection is discussed.

9 M. S. Simpson, "The Narrative Structure of a Medieval Iranian Beaker," *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981), pp. 15–24; A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Trois manuscripts de l'Iran Seljoukide," *Arts Asiatiques* 16 (1967), pp. 3–51; A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Le Roman de Varqeh et Golŝâh," *Arts Asiatiques* 22 (1970); for example, see figs. 34, 35.

10 On the development of brick and tile decoration, see D. Wilber, "The Development of Mosaic Faience in Islamic Architecture in Iran," *Ars Islamica* 6, no. 1 (1939), pp. 16–47; L. S. Bretanitskii, *Zodchestvo Azerbayjana i Ego Mesto v Arkhitekture Perednego Vostoka* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), pp. 69–210; L. I. Rempel, *Arkhitekturnyi Ornament Uzbekistana* (Tashkent, 1961); R. Hillenbrand, "The Use of Glazed Tilework in Iranian Islamic Architecture," *Akten des VII Internationale Kongresses für Iranische Kunst und Archäologie. München 7–10 September 1976, Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 6 (Berlin, 1979), pp. 545–54; also V. Minorsky, "Nakḥčuwān, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1st ed. *(EI1)*, vol. 3, pp. 839–40.

11 On Sultaniyya, see S. Blair, "The Mongol Capital of Sultaniyya, 'The Imperial,'" *Iran* 24 (1986), pp. 139–51.

12 For example, a favorite motif in the *Kitab al-Diryaq* manuscripts and inlaid metalwork is a peasant with a mattock. On the plate's reverse, he has become an incidental inclusion with a tree in the expanded landscape.

13 For examples of such flying figures, see the *Kitab al-Aghāni* frontispieces, in particular those of volumes 17 and 19, Millet Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, Feyzullah Efendi 1566, dated 1216–20. Also note the Seljuk reliefs of flying victories on the now-disappeared gate at Konya, cf. F. Sarre, *Konya Köşkü* (Istanbul: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1987).

14 Nicolle, *Arms and Armour,* p. 126.

15 Typical descriptions of Daylamis come from the tenth century, where they are noted as being particularly hairy. See Muḥammad Ibn Hawqal*, Kitab surat al-ʿard* (Beirut: Dar Maktabat al-Hayah, 1964) p. 253. It is possible that such regional typing continued into the thirteenth century, and was conveyed here visually. Furthermore, it should also be noted that disheveled hair suggests a body out of control. Thus, distraught mourners rendered with disheveled hair appear in the painting *The Bier of Alexander* from the great Ilkhanid *Shahanama*, Freer Gallery of Art, F1938.3.

16 Grace Guest and Richard Ettinghausen noted the appearance of these denuded bodies in their article, "Iconography of a Luster Plate," *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961), pp. 25–64, particularly pp. 43–45. The depiction of nude or seminude bodies, unless specifically meant to connote the exotic, fairy world, actually indicated the lower classes, such as laborers and peasants, or those with a loss of status, such as a prisoner. Despoliation of corpses can be taken as normal behavior on battlefields. Note similar details depicted in Melikian-Chirvani, "Le Roman de Varqeh et Golŝāh," figs. 5, 8, and 9. On the conduct of war, see Fakhr-i Modabber, *Adab al-Harb*, ed. Soheyli Khonsari (Tehran, 1967).

17 J. W. Allan, "Armor," *Encyclopedia Iranica Online*, accessed September 15, 2011, takes these lamellar and chainmail suits of armor as having fallen to the ground. I see them in birds' eye view, set up as part of a ruse; see n. 19.

18 The specialist technician shown next to the catapult/mangonel machine wears the robes and turban of a scholar rather than a warrior. This machine may be the *manjanik* mentioned in the sources. It was best used against an army rather than as a siege machine against walls, and became a feature of battles toward the end of the twelfth century. See C. Cahen, "Un Traité d'armerie composé pour Saladin," *Bulletin des* Études *Orientales* 12 (1947/48), pp. 16–18; A. M. Belenitskii, and B. I. Marshak, "Drevneishee Izobrazenie Osadnoi Mashiny v Srednei Azii" [The oldest depiction of a siege machine in Central Asia], *Gosudarstvenniy Ermitazh, Kultura Vostoka* (Leningrad, 1978), pp. 215–21; V. J. Parry, and X. Yapp, eds., *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1975); and D. R. Hill, "Man̲d̲janīḳ," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W. P. Heinrichs (Brill, 2011), accessed November 29, 2011. A similar paring of machine and technician is reflected later in the depiction of the history of Maḥmūd of Ghazna as it appears in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jami' al-Tawārīkh*, Edinburgh University Library, Arab 20, f. 54; see D. T. Rice, *The Illustrations to the "World History" of Rashīd al-Dīn* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976) p. 147.

19 Such a ruse is mentioned in Ibn al-Athīr's description of the siege of Shahdiz Castle commanded by Ibn 'Attāsh in the environs of Isfahan for the year AH 500/1107 CE; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, vol. 10 (AH 500), after B. Lewis, *The Assassins* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), pp. 54–55.

20 Right-handedness and left-handedness have been investigated in other cultures; for example, see R. Needham, ed., *Right and Left: Essay on Dual Symbolic Classification* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973). It could be that the direction of the Arabic script from right to left underlined the supremacy of right over left. I thank Christiane Gruber for this suggestion.

21 It is notoriously difficult to portray a historical event without recourse to an already existing allegorical and developed visual language, and without use of text. In this context, see the work of I. Winter, "Royal Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative in Neo-Assyrian Reliefs," S*tudies in Visual Communication* 7 (1981), pp. 1–38; R. Brilliant, "The Column of Trajan and Its Heirs: Helical Tales, Ambiguous Trails," *Visual Narratives: Storytelling in Etruscan and Roman Art* (Ithaca, NY, 1984), pp. 90–123; J. Russell, "Sennacherib's Lachish Narratives," *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art*, ed. P. J. Holliday (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 55–73; and H. Pittman, "The White Obelisk and the Problem of Historical Narrative in the Art of Assyria," *The Art Bulletin* 78, no. 2 (June 1996), pp. 334–55. For the portrayal of the Norman invasion in the Bayeux tapestry, O. K. Werckmeister, "The Political Ideology of the Bayeux Tapestry," *Studi Medievali*, 3rd. ser., vol. 17, no. 2 (Spoleto: Centro italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1976), pp. 535–95; R. Brilliant, "The Bayeux Tapestry: A stripped narrative for their eyes and ears," *Word and Image* 7, no. 2 (April–June 1991), pp. 98–116; and S. Lewis, *The Rhetoric Power in the Bayeux Tapestry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Regionally closer examples include the numerous wall paintings of Sogdiana excavated at Panjikent and Afrasiyab. While mainly connected to the depiction of known tales, some cycles have been identified as historical events, most with identifying inscriptions. An exception without an extant identifying tag may be the siege and storming of the city of Samarkand by Muslim armies in 714 CE as painted in the rebuilt palace of the Dewastich of Panjikent; see G. Azarpay et al., *Sogdian Painting: Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981) pp. 64–66; and B. Marshak, *Legends, Tales and Fables in the Art of Sogdiana* (New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2002), pp. 19–21.

22 As found, for example, on bowls in Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, p. 368, cat. P.3; Pancaroğlu, *Perpetual Glory*, p. 110, cat. 69; also on a bowl in the Freer Gallery of Art, F1945.8.

23 On the use of imagery found in the written and oral traditions of the *Shahnama*, see M. S. Simpson, "Narrative Allusion and Metaphor in the Decoration of Medieval Islamic Objects," *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. M. Simpson and H. Kessler (Washington, DC: CASVA, Studies in the History of Art 16, 1985), pp. 131–49; S. M. Shukurov, *"Shakh-name" Firdousi i rannyaya illustratyvna traditsiya* [The "Shahnama" of Firdawsi and the early illustrative tradition] (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), pp. 53–108. For a summary of work on images of the *Shahnama*, see M. S. Simpson "S*hahnama* as Text and *Shahnama* as Image," in *Shahnama: The Visual Language of the Persian Book of Kings*, ed. R. Hillenbrand (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 9–24. I thank Shreve Simpson for her careful reading of this article and for her helpful comments.

24 For a list of depictions of the heroes Faridūn and Bahram Gūr, see Simpson, "Narrative Allusion," pp. 143–44. Also see B. Schmitz, "A Fragmentary Mina'i bowl with Scene from the *Shahnama*," *Art of the Saljuqs*, pp. 156–61. An actual mace similar to the one depicted on the Freer plate is now in the collection of the Dar al-Athar, Kuwait. I thank the curator, Salam Koukji, for bringing this weapon to my attention.

25 F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch* (Marburg, 1895); J. H. Kramers, "Les noms Musalmans composes avec Dīn," *Acta Orientalia* 5 (1927), pp. 53–67; A. Dietrich, "Zu den mit ad-din zusamengesetzen islamischen Personnennamen," *Zeitschrift Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 110 (1960), pp. 43–54; *The History of the Seljuk Turks from the Jami' al-Tawārīkh,* trans. K. A. Luther, ed. C. E. Bosworth (Richmond: Routledge, 2010).

26 For a detailed archaeological survey with excellent detailed maps, see Stephan Kroll "Archaeologische Fundplatze in Iranisch-Ost-Azarbaijdjan," *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 17 (1984), pp. 13–134.

27 Yaqut, *Mu'jam al-buldan,* ed. F. Wustenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73) after P. Schwarz, *Iran im Mittelalter* (Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969) p. 1173; Hamdullah Mustawfi Qazwini, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulūb composed by Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazwin in 740(1340)*, ed. and trans. G. Le Strange (London, 1915–19), pp. 85 and 93.

28 On the Eldegüzids/Īldegozids, see K. A. Luther, "Atābakān-e Aḏarbāyjān" and "Atābakān-e Marāĝa" *Encyclopedia Iranica Online*, accessed September 16, 2011, www.iranicaonline.org/articles. Also Z. M. Buniiatov, *Gosudarstvo Atabekov Azerbayjana (1136–1225)* [The Realm of the Atabegs of Azerbaijan (1126–1225)] (Baku, Azerbaijan: Elm, 1978). The vocalization of the dynasty's name is a problem. Buniiatov gives Ildenizids, Bosworth follows with Ildeñizid; Luther with Eldegüzids, and Richards with Ildikiz. I follow Luther.

29 K. A. Luther, "Rāvandī's report on the administrative changes of Muḥammad Jahan Pahlavan," *Iran and Islam,* ed. C. E. Bosworth (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 393–406; A. Zaryab," Saugand-nama-i Jahān Pahlavān," *Ayande* 9, nos. 8–9(AH 1362/1983 CE), pp. 613–17; I. Afshar, "Ahdname'e az Atabeg Muḥammad Ildeguzi," *Tarīkh* (AH 2536/1976–77 CE), pp. 82–90; A. Lambton, *Change and Continuity in Medieval Persia* (New York: Bibliotheka Persica, 1988), pp. 221–47; for a general overview, see K. A. Luther, "Atābakān-e Aḏarbāyjān" and "Atābakān-e Marāĝa."

30 Muḥammad b. ʿAli Rāvandī, *Raḥat al-sudūr wa ayat al-surūr dar ta'rīkh-i al-i Saljuq*, ed. M. M. Iqbāl (London: GMS, 1912), pp. 233–403. Thus, for example, in AH 540/1146 CE, Khalkhāl had been (for a time) an *iqta'* of ʿAbd al-Raḥman Yurek, apparently as a *mamluk* of the father, Atabek Shams al-Dīn Eldegüz (pp. 237–38).

31 Melikian-Chirvani traces the career of one such emir, Badr ad-Dīn Qaragöz. He first appears in the group of Jahān Pahlavān's emirs in 1188, and then as governor of Isfahan. In 1194, when Khwarazmshah Tekesh took Hamadan from the Eldegüzids, he confirmed Qaragöz as governor of Hamadan, as great chamberlain (*hājib-i kabīr)* and his *nāyib*; see "Essais sur la sociologie de l'art Islamique I. Argenterie et feodalité dans l'Iran medieval," *Art et Société dans le Monde Iranien*, ed. C. Adle (Paris: Institut Français d'Iranologie, 1982), pp. 143–75.

32 Rāvandī and Jarfadhaqānī tend to have a very low opinion of these emirs, calling them rapacious and constantly fighting. See Luther, "Ravandi's report," and Meisami, "The Historian and the Poet."

33 F. Daftari, *The Ismaʿili: Their History and Doctrines,* (Cambridge, 1990); F. Daftari, *Ismaʿilis in Medieval Muslim Societies* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005); M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Order of the Assassins* (The Hague, 1955), and better in the *Cambridge History of Iran* [*CHI*], vol. 5: The Saljuq and Mongol Periods, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968) pp. 422–82.

34 Daftari, *The Ismaʿili*, pp. 35–59; D. S. Richards, trans., *The Chronicle of Ibn Al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from Al-Kāmil fi'l ta'rikh,* part 3: The Years 589–629/1193–1231 (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), esp. the years AH 614/1217–18 CE and AH 623/1226–27 CE.

35 At the time of his accession, Hasan III accepted the shari'a and initially read the *khutba* in the name of the Khwarazmshah. Shortly afterward, however, he switched to the opposing camp, and had the *khutba* read in the name of Caliph al-Nāsir (reigned 1180–25).

36 K. A. Luther, "Atābakān-e Aḏarbāyjān" and "Atābakān-e Marāĝa."

37 V. Minorsky and C. E. Bosworth, "Tarum," *EI2*.

38 Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Nasawī, *Sīrat al-Sultān Jalāl-Dīn Mankburni*, ed. and trans. from Arabic by Z. M. Buniiatov (Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura, 1996); Arabic text, p. 209, Russian translation, p. 208. See Richards, *Ibn al-Athīr*, p. 283, for the years AH 624/1226–27 CE.

39 Al-Nasawī, Arabic text, p. 25; Russian translation, p. 59 and n. 11.

40 See also Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 11, p. 383, who has a very low opinion of Jalāl

al-Dīn, saying that he was only interested in other holders' lands.

41 Al-Nasawī, Arabic text, chap. 74, p. 193; Russian translation, pp. 208–10, nn. 1–11. Particularly informative on the Balban episode is a letter included in the manuscript of Muḥammad al-Hamawi, ff. 174v–176v, published in the notes by Buniiatov. The letter was sent by the vizier Sharaf al-Mulk and Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn on 12 Shawwal 625 (September 14, 1228) to the ruler of Surmara, Husam al-Dīn Khidhr who in turn sent it to the *hajib* 'Ali: "… We therefore prepared a detachment of our servants against him in the middle of the month of Ramadan (1228). Therefore, Balban withdrew into the fortress of Firuzabad, and we remained within the borders of Khalkhāl until the end of Ramadan for the pasturage of our horses. Afterward, with the end of the fast we moved to the fortress of Firuzabad, where our mamluks and our armies attacked the fortress. We surrounded it so tightly that even birds could not fly into it nor wind blow in its direction. We ordered catapults to be erected, and each cohort of our warriors to collect as many cattle hides as possible. These were delivered within two to three days as well as arms and supplies, and in innumerable quantities. When the inhabitants of the fortress saw the supplies and the preparations, Balban understood that he could only … submit.… Three days later he entered into our Mamluk corps, and we ordered a *vali* [governor] appointed to each of his fortresses."

42 However, his full name is given as Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Bashīr Yārbek in the newest and most scholarly critical edition of al-Nasawī by Buniiatov, rather than Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad-i Shīr Barīk, as proposed by Melikian-Chirvani. Al-Nasawī, Arabic text, p. 253; Russian translation, pp. 268–69. I follow Buniiatov's reading. A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "The Iranian Sun Shield," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 6 (1992), p. 17, n. 68, gives the name as Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad-i Shīr Barīk, following Minovi's Persian translation of al-Nasawī (M. Minovi, Tehran, AH 1344/1965 CE, p. 252). In any case, should the latter reading be accepted, then it may be a further indication that the activities illustrated on the plate took place in the 1220s.

43 The name Mengli appears in the version of Mengli Beg (or Mengli Tegin) for an atabeg of the Sanjar-Shah, the pretender to Khwarazm throne and a rival of Tekish. This Mengli Beg was executed in 1187 (see Ata' Malik Juvaini, *The History of the World Conqueror*, trans. and ed. J. A. Boyle [Cambridge, MA, 1958], pp. 294–97). Another Mengli was a ruler (*mutamallik)* of Iraq; Nasir al-Dīn Mengli was apparently a former member of the Pahlavanian who rebelled and was defeated by the Ismai'li Hasan III and the atabeg Muẓaffar al-Dīn Özbeg in 1214–15, see Juvaini, pp. 340, 701–2. Thus, neither name is exactly what we see on the plate: Menglibeh.

44 Abū Bakr's previous title was Nusrat al-Dīn, but he took on the title Muẓaffar al-Dīn, the title apparently used by all the Salghurid atabegs of Fars; see E. von Zambaur, *Manuel de Genéalogie et de Chronologie pour l'Historie de l' Islam* (Hanover, 1927). He was also given the title Qutlugh-khan by the Great Mongol Khan, Ögedei. When Sa'd died in late 1226, Muẓaffar ad-Dīn Abū Bakr succeeded to the throne of Shiraz and was the best of the Salghurid rulers; see Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 419, n. 27. Abū Bakr sent an embassy of submission to the Mongols immediately after taking over, thereby assuring Shiraz's role as a classic refuge for Persian culture in the tumultuous years of the mid-thirteenth century. See E. Merçil, *Fars Atabegleri: Salgurlular* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları: XIX, Dizi, Sa. 6, 1975) on the nature of Salghurid rule. Note that a marginal notation in Juvaini's manuscript (p. 459, n. 83) says that Mu'mina fled to Rum when the Kurds attacked her husband, and Abū Bakr then sent men to take his sister from Rum to Shiraz. This shows that Abū Bakr was familiar with and had access to northwest Iran. He ruled until 1270.

45 M. Kevran, "Une Fortresse D'Azerbayjan: Samiran," *Revue des* Études *Islamiques* 41, no. 1 (1973), pp. 71–93, on the takeover of Musafirid Semiran by the Isma'ilis.

46 J. Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); K. A. Luther, "Atābakān-e Aḏarbāyjān," which includes a full list of poets patronized by the dynasty. See also Buniiatov, *Gosudarstvo,* pp. 225–36, providing a list of the main cultural leaders active in the realm, first among them, the poets Khaqānī and Nizāmī. Julie Meisami in her article, "Palaces and Paradises: Palace Descriptions in Medieval Persian Poetry," *Islamic Art and Literature*, O. Grabar and C. Robinson, eds. (Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiner Publishers, 2001), pp. 21–54, discusses *quṣūriyyāt* poems with panegyric descriptions of palace grounds, domes with astrological symbolism, and some references to painted walls with images of warriors.

47 O. Grabar, "The Visual Arts," *CHI*, vol. 5, pp. 626–58; R. Ettinghausen, "The Flowering of Seljuq Art," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 3 (1970), pp. 113–31; Simpson, "Narrative"; R. Hillenbrand, "The Relationship between Book Painting and Luxury Ceramics," *Art of the Saljuqs in Iran and Anatolia*, pp. 134–45.

48 O. Pancaroğlu, "The Emergence of Turkic Dynastic Presence in the Islamic World: Cultural Experiences and Artistic Horizons, 950–1250" and cat. no. 41 in *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600–1600*, ed. David Roxburgh (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005). P. Berlekamp, *Wonder, Image, and Cosmos in Medieval Islam* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011).

49 Melikian-Chirvani, "Trois manuscripts" and "Le Roman de Varqeh et Golŝāh"; Simpson, "Narrative" and "*Shahnama* as Text." On the *Maqamat*: O. Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Shirley Guthrie, *Arab Social Life in the Middle Ages: An Illustrated Study* (London: Saqi Books, 1995); R. Hillenbrand, "The Schefer Hariri," *Arab Painting Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts*, ed. A. Contadini (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 117–34; and David J. Roxburgh, "In Pursuit of Shadows: al-Hariri's Maqamat," *Muqarnas* 29 (2012, forthcoming). I thank David Roxburgh for this citation and for his comments on this study.

50 Simpson, "*Shahnama* as Text."

51 Berlekamp, *Wonder, Image, and Cosmos*, pp. 8–9 and passim.

52 F. Bagherzadeh, "Iconographie Iranienne: Deux illustrations de Xel'at de l'année 583H/1187 apr. J. C.," *Archeologia Iranica et Orientalis: Miscellanea in Honorem Louis Vanden Berge*, ed. L. de Meyer and E. Haernick (Ghent: Peeters Press, 1989), pp. 1007–28. See also Bagherzadeh's forthcoming discussion on a newly decoded scene in the cycle of Shi'i iconography, in "The Secret of a XII–XIII Century Iranian Ceramic Bowl (presentation of the Head of Hussein to Yazid in Damascus)," *Proceedings of the 7th European Conference of Iranian Studies*, ed. K. Wasala and R. Rusek-Kowalska (Societas Iranologica Europaea, Cracow, September 7–10, 2011); see p. 47 for abstract; proceedings forthcoming. I thank Firouz Bagherzadeh for this reference.

53 On Rashid al-Dīn image cycles, see D. T. Rice, *The Illustrations*, and S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London: The Nour Foundation, 1995). On the small *Shahnama* manuscripts, see M. S. Simpson, *The Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts* (New York and London, 1979). A recent review of *Shahnama* illustrative cycles by M. S. Simpson, "*Šāh-nāma* iv. Illustrations," *Encyclopedia Iranica Online*, www.iranicaonline.org/articles, accessed November 15, 2011, gives a full survey of published studies. The Shahnama Project at Cambridge University (http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/page/) provides the fullest coverage of examples of battle and siege scenes in the illustrative cycles of the epic. On the *Zafarnama*, see E. Sims, "The Garrett Manuscript of the Zafar-name" (PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1973), and "Ibrahim Sultan's Illustrated Zafar-nameh of 839/1436," *Islamic Art* 1 (1990–91), pp. 175–217. I thank Eleanor Sims for discussing siege scenes in the *Zafarnama* with me and for her critical reading of the earlier version of this study.

54 T. Leisten, "Mashhad Al-Nasr: Monuments of War and Victory in Medieval Islamic Art," *Muqarnas* 13 (1996), pp. 7–26, has studied the construction of monuments commemorating victory, and asserts that their longer-term social memory is practically nonexistent. This opinion is contested by J. Gierlichs in "A Victory Monument in the Name of Sultan Malik-Shāh in Diyarbakir: Medieval Figural Reliefs Used for Political Propaganda?" *Islamic Art* 6, pp. 51–70, and esp. pp. 55–57. Gierlichs argues that the complex program of figural reliefs in Diyarbakr as well as in other venues from 1179 through 1233 indicates these are victory monuments and visual instruments of political propaganda.

55 On the program of the Bayeux tapestry, see Werckmeister, "The Political Ideology of the Bayeux Tapestry," pp. 535–95. On the description of twelfth century depictions of Byzantine emperors in battle, see P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the 12th Century," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982), pp. 123-183. I thank Warren T. Woodfin for his careful readng and for this citaton. Melikian-Chirvani, "Sun Shield," n. 67, proposes that several image programs found specifically on *haft rang/mina'i* bowls, particularly those with horizontal bands of figures, were, in fact, taken from narrative cycles on other media, mainly on paper. See also, Simpson, "Narrative."

56 Melikian-Chirvani, "Sun Shield," n. 66, suggests that such a program for the plate could have been painted at Rayy. Based on the materials recovered during the excavations of E. Schmidt, now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Penn Museum), one can say that, while several sherds and one bowl with rather poorly drawn decoration of *mina'i* were found, these cannot stand in for an entire school of painting or for large plate production. Of course, the excavation finds may not necessarily represent the ceramic production of entire site. Nonetheless, on the connection between painting on ceramic and other media, see C. Adle, "Un Diptique de Fondation en Céramique Lustrée, Kaŝān 711/1312," *Art et société dans le monde iranien,* ed. C. Adle (Paris: Institut Français d'Iranologie, 1982), pp. 199–218.

57 On the persistence of Shiʿi sympathies in Kashan, see Adle, "Un Diptique de Fondation"; also J. Allan, *The Art and Architecture of Twelver Shiʿism: Iraq, Iran and the Indian Sub-Continent* (London: Azimuth Editions, 2012), esp. chap. 3. For interpretations of depictions on *haft rang/mina'i* bowls in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the British Museum as *ta'ziya* events, see Bagherzadeh, "Iconographie Iranienne,"; for the connections between these pieces and Abu Zayd's signed work (dated late twelfth century), see Watson, "Documentary Mina'i." Blair, "A Brief Biography," provides a preliminary list of Abu Zayd's work, and discusses the family traditions of ceramic production and decoration. She remarks on these three or four and more generations, characterizing their scholarly character and literary engagement as well as their Shiʿi leanings.

58 Guest and Ettinghausen, "On the Iconography of a Luster Plate."

59 J. Calmard, "Le Chiisme Imamite en Iran à l'époque seldjoukide d'après le Kitab al-Naqd," *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam* 1 (1971) pp. 43–67; also "Kashan," *EI2*. I am grateful to him for discussing his work on Shi'i propaganda and commemoration in the Seljuk period.

60 Well-known battle scenes, however, show similar approaches in depiction; the importance of the victory is dramatized by the difficulty of the campaign. See n. 20.

61 On the visual representation of the *ta'ziya*, see Bagherzadeh, "Iconographie Iranienne" and his forthcoming essay in the *Proceedings of the 7th European Conference of Iranian Studies*. See also Blair, "A Brief Biography," p. 168. For subsequent development, J. Calmard, " Mécénat des representations de ta'ziye," *Le Monde Iranien et L'Islam*, vol. 2 (1974), pp. 73–126; P. Chelkowski, ed., *Ta'ziyeh: ritual and drama in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1979); and B. Rahimi, *Theater State and the Formation of Early Modern Public Sphere in Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

62 A luster-painted plate found at Ghazni (Kabul Museum, 63.2.1) now appears to be lost; it was reproduced in B. Rowland, *Ancient Arts in Afghanistan* (New York, 1966), pl. 101, and O. Watson, *Persian Lustre Ware* (Faber and Faber London, 1985), pp. 68–70, pl. 49.

63 Simpson, "Narrative" and "S*hahnama* as Text"; R. Ettinghausen, "Bahram Gur's Hunting Feats or the Problem of Identification," *Iran* 7 (1979), pp. 25–31.

64 For the list of large plates, see the website discussing the technical and conservation aspects of the plate: http://asia.si.edu/research/articles/minai-battle-plate.asp. The other epigraphic-band design tradition that may inform this composition is the floriated or more specifically animated epigraphic band best known in inlaid metalwork seen on Khurasani work, such as the "Bobrinsky" bucket at the Hermitage Museum; see R. Ettinghausen, "The 'Bobrinsky' Kettle: Patron and Style of an Islamic Bronze," *Gazette de Beaux Arts*, 6th ser., vol. 24 (October 1943), pp. 193–208. On vessels of the Mesopotamian school, D. S. Rice, "Studies in Islamic Metalwork: I–VI," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1952–58), in particular his discussion about the ewer of Ibn Mawaliya at the Louvre in part II (1953), pls. 20–32; D. S. Rice, *The Wade Cup in the Cleveland Museum of Art* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1988); and R. Ettinghausen, "The Wade Cup," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957), pp. 327–66; H. al-Harithy, "The Ewer of Ibn Jaldak," pp. 355–68; and R. Kana'an, "Patron and Craftsman of the Freer Mosul Ewer of 1232," in this volume.

65 See, for example, the luster plate in the Penn Museum (NEP19) with inscription dated AH 608/1211 CE at Kashan, diameter 49.5 cm (*Survey of Persian Art*, vol. 5, pl. 710).

66 Radially composed decoration in Kashan is well attested; see the large luster plates at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (62.226 and 32.52.2), the Penn Museum (NEP19) and elsewhere, http://asia.si.edu/research/articles/minai-battle-plate.asp. Gierlichs, "A Victory Monument," p. 53, n. 34, citing I. Goldziher, proposes that the bird depicted between the victor and the vanquished alludes to the soul of the former. I see it mainly as part of the inhabited landscape motif; see pp. 199–200 in this volume.

67 Note the opinion of historians such as Vassaf who praised the atabeg Abū Bakr (died 1270) for keeping Shiraz safe from the horrors of the times. Ayati al-Moḥammad, ed., *Tahrīr-i Tarikh-i Vassaf* (Tehran: Bonyad-i Farhang-i Iran, 1349), pp. 91–92. In parallel ways, another atabeg (one of the Zangids), Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū' safeguarded Mosul, thus providing a refuge for many cultural specialists. It is no surprise then that both centers provided a continuum of patronage for the arts. On Badr al-Dīn Lū'lū', his patronage, and Mosul as a location for the arts, see C. Cahen, "Lu'lu', Badr al-Dīn Abu 'l-Faḍā'il al-Malik al-Raḥīm," *EI2*; D. S. Rice, "The brasses of Badr al-din Lu'lu', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13 (1950), pp. 627–34"; D. S. Rice, "Inlaid Brasses from the Workshop of Aḥmad al-Dhakī al-Mawœilī," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957), pp. 283–327; N. Ben Azzouna, "La Production de manuscrits en Iraq et en Iran occidental à l'époque des dynasties mongoles (Les Ilkhanides et les Djalayirides (658–814/1256–1411)" (PhD diss., École pratique des hautes études, Paris, 2009).

68 E. Whelan, *The Public Image: Political Iconography in Medieval Mesopotamia* (London: Melisande, 2006) discusses the way in which rulers, atabegs, and their emirs represented themselves. As a useful comparison of self-fashioning within power elites, see N. Rabbat, "In Search of a Triumphant Image: The Experimental Quality of Early Mamluk Art," *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria: Evolution and Impact*, ed. D. Behrens-Abouseif (Bonn: V&R Unipress, Bonn University Press, 2012), pp. 21–36. See Grabar, "Visual," *CHI*, vol. 5, on the idea of the tastes of the bourgeoisie or an urban visual culture. For a recent study of an urban elite, see D. Durand-Guédy, "The Khujandis of Isfahan," *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society and Culture*, ed. C. Lange and S. Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), pp. 182–202; also his *Iranian elites and Turkish rulers. A history of Iṣfahān in the Saljūq period* (London: Routledge, 2010). The activation of collective social memory to make images of past events remains a topic to be explored further, particularly when the urban elites were not in particular harmony with the power holders' courts.

69 On the acculturation processes of the Turks, and the impact of Persian/Arab bureaucrats and the scholarly class on court culture, see Buniiatov, *Gosudarstvo*, ch. 8; Meisami, "The Historian and the Poet" and "The Šah-nâme as a Mirror for Princes," *Pand-o-Sokhan,* ed. C. Balay, C. Kappler, and Ziva Vesel (Tehran: Institut Français de Récherhe en Iran, 1995) pp. 265–74; C-H. de Fouchécour, *Moralia Les notions morales dans la littérature persane du 3e/9e au 7e/13e siècle* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilizations, 1986), pp. 179–356; B. Gruendler and L. Marlow, eds., *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on their relationship from Abbasid to Safavid times* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), especially J. Meisami, "Rulers and The Writing of History," pp. 73–96, and L. Marlowe, "The Way of Viziers and the Lamp of Commanders," pp. 169–94; C. Hillenbrand, "Aspects of the Court of the Great Seljuqs," *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society and Culture*, pp. 22–38; also Blair, "A Brief Biography," pp. 162–65, on shared cultural understanding of literary and visual quotations.

70 Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, and also *Persian Lustre Ware* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1985); O. Pancaroğlu, *Perpetual Glory*, and "A World unto Himself: The Rise of the New Human Image in the Late Seljuk Period (1150–1250)" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2000), chapters 3 and 4*,* and in her "Potter's Trail: An Abu Zayd Ewer in the Saint Louis Art Museum" in *Metalwork and Material Culture in the Islamic World: Art, Craft and Text.* Essays presented to James W. Allan, edited by Venetia Porter and Mariam Rosser-Owen (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012). I thank Oya Pancaroğlu for her comments and for sharing this study with me prior to publication.

LAWRENCE NEES

A SILVER “STAND” WITH EAGLES IN THE FREER GALLERY

Abstract
The Freer Gallery of Art in Washington owns an unusual and intriguing object of uncertain date, origin, provenance, and function that was published in the museum’s catalogue of Islamic metalwork as number one and termed a “stand with four eagles.” Four solid-cast silver eagles stand facing out from the four corners of this small round openwork object, which has not subsequently been addressed by scholars. This article compares it to a number of metalwork objects, especially to censers, including examples that are likely or certainly pre-Islamic, early Islamic, and late Roman, some of which are also aviform or have one or more eagles arranged on the corners. Rather than attempting to fix a specific place or date for the Freer object, the article presents it as pertaining to a fascinating group that seems to cross cultural and geographic as well as modern disciplinary borders.

THE FREER GALLERY OF ART in Washington owns an unusual and intriguing object of uncertain date, origin, provenance, and function (fig. 1), published in the museum’s catalogue of Islamic metalwork as number one and termed a “stand with four eagles.”[1] It is of solid silver, cast and chased, measuring 85 mm in height and 178 mm in width, and has four eagles equally spaced around a circular object with a broad flat ring at the bottom, on which the four eagles perch, and a tubular circle at the top resting on four vertical shafts. The object is tentatively attributed to Iran in the museum’s catalogue, with a provincial Sasanian or post-Sasanian date proposed, but there are comparisons, none of them particularly close or specific either, also in Egypt, Anatolia, and elsewhere, including the Roman world. A single silver eagle in the Brooklyn Museum,[2] also measuring 85 mm in height, is so close in style, workmanship, and scale that it is plausible to suspect that it may stem from a second object like that now in the Freer (fig. 2).

The Freer catalogue says of the object’s possible function only that it “must have been made to hold a medium-sized ovoid jar or vase,” without offering any specific comparisons.[3] In my view, the hypothesis that the silver stand was a censer, or perhaps some part of a censer, deserves to be explored and is better supported by comparison to a remarkably diverse and intriguing group of analogues. The notion first came to my mind because of the iconographic and formal and material comparisons offered by the magnificent silver censer from the Sion Treasure (fig. 3), originating in the region of southern Turkey near northwest Syria, probably datable to the sixth century, purchased in 1963, and now at Dumbarton Oaks, also in Washington.[4] Although much larger, measuring 150 mm high by 200 mm wide, the Sion Treasure censer, like the Freer stand, has solid-cast birds facing outwards, here in the form of peacocks rather than eagles, and in this case three of them rather

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1
Silver stand with eagles, 6th–8th century. Purchase, Freer Gallery of Art, F1953.92.

than four. Obviously the Freer stand cannot be a complete censer, for there is no container in which the incense could have been placed. If it was a censer, it would need to have had something set inside it, whether also of silver or possibly copper or conceivably glass or ceramic. Silver seems most likely, since much of the inner liner would be visible through the openwork decoration, although expecting such visual consistency may be an unwarranted transference of modern taste. Be that as it may, the late antique Kaper Koraon Treasure from northern Syria included a half-round silver bowl with curved base that must have had some kind of stand to hold it and might have been the inner part of a censer.[5] That particular silver bowl is a bit too small, 115 mm wide, and too shallow, 43 mm deep, to make a good fit for the Freer stand, but it represents one type that might be imagined. Another plausible comparison from the same treasure is the “Antioch Chalice” now in the Metropolitan Museum, hailed by Gustavus Eisen in 1923 as the “Holy Grail” of medieval legend, the cup used at the Last Supper.[6] It is a two-piece object, with the inner, undecorated silver “cup” set within an elaborate openwork silver frame decorated with images of the Apostles. The object dates not from the first but from the sixth century and was probably a lamp, certainly in any case not a chalice.[7] The Sion Treasure included several silver openwork vessels, used as lamps, from which the inner liner is missing, supporting the possibility that the openwork silver stand in the Freer might have been either a lamp or a censer.[8] One of the silver censers in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, from the Attarouthi Treasure, also from northern Syria and datable to the sixth or seventh century, shows just such an inner liner as the Freer example might have had, and lost, here in copper rather than silver.[9]

The possibility that the Freer stand might have served not as a part of a censer but as a stand into which a censer might be set was favored by several participants in the HIAA workshop at the Freer Gallery in 2010, where some of these ideas were

2
Silver eagle. The Brooklyn Museum, New York, acc. no. 50.91.

first presented, but no one offered an example of such an object, and I have not been able to find one from late antiquity or early Islam. Such a function might account for the degree of wear visible on the inner, but not on the outer, surfaces of the eagles, although the use of a removable inner liner might have had that effect. Use as a stand for a censer rather than as a censer itself might also be thought to account for the lack of any mechanism for either swinging or carrying the object when in use. Christian censers generally do have some means for suspension from a chain, so that they might be swung, but in fact the swinging of censers, standard in Christian usage,[10] appears not to have been the practice in non-Christian usage, whether in the Sasanian or the Islamic tradition.

We have, indeed, a significant number of censers, in varying forms and materials, if not necessarily made in the Islamic period or for a specifically Islamic function, then apparently in use during the Islamic period. The presence of the four outward-facing eagles on the Freer stand is strikingly analogous to a well-known object commonly referred to as a "brazier" excavated at an Umayyad palace site at al-Fudayn, which offers the best available comparison for the form of the rather ungainly and heavy-beaked eagles, with an expression somewhere between squawking and smirking.[11] A brazier is not a censer to be sure, or for that matter a lamp, although their functions are not so far apart as holders for slow-burning materials, but there are a number of indubitable censers likely to have been made or at least used in the early Islamic period that have some analogies with the Freer stand. For example, a stone censer from the citadel in Amman has four corner columns around a domed central chamber, with something tantalizingly unidentifiable, at least to me, atop each of the columns.[12] An eighth- or ninth-century bronze censer also in the Freer Gallery, acquired on the art market in 1952 and number two in its catalogue,[13] has a lateral handle to be used for carrying it (fig. 4) and seems never to have been swung from a chain. Like the Amman censer, its form is architectural, a dome surrounded by four smaller domes on the top; moreover, atop each of the smaller domes perch eagles, two of which survive and two of which are broken off. Thus we have an early Islamic brazier and an early Islamic censer with eagles in the four corners, as on the Freer silver stand. The association of eagles with censers is apparently common in the early Islamic period. A bronze censer from Egypt has a single eagle on the top,[14] although it is possible that this one was made for and used in a Coptic Christian, rather than an Islamic, context. Indeed, as one looks in detail, it becomes increasingly difficult to assign objects with certainty to one cultural tradition, or for that matter to one art-historical category or the other; the borders were clearly fluid, and not only between Islamic and Christian art.

It is noteworthy that the al-Fudayn brazier stems, unlike the Freer stand and the Brooklyn eagle, from an archaeological context, and its authenticity appears beyond question. As in the more complex case of the Sion Treasure censer, it became known only after the date of acquisition of the Freer stand and Brooklyn eagle, and it supports the authenticity of those works and provides, in my view, the best *terminus ad quem* for its date and place of origin. It also supports the authenticity of some other aviform vessels and censers purchased on the art market in the earlier twentieth century. An important and well-known example of such an aviform metalwork object is a bronze eagle in Berlin (fig. 5), pierced for use as a censer, acquired for the museum by Friedrich Sarre from the art market in 1929, and published by him along with a group of related objects the following year.[15] It is not certain whether, if it is indeed from Iran, as seemed most likely to Sarre and most subsequent scholars, it is Sasanian or post-Sasanian, i.e., Islamic, in date, so probably sixth to eighth century is a fair range. Date and origin and even identification as an eagle are all debatable.[16] For the date, one of the best comparisons is the best known of the entire group of aviform metal vessels from the period (including as well as eagles, vessels identified as geese, ducks, and roosters), the example now in St. Petersburg, signed by Sulayman and dated 796–797 CE, in this case a pouring vessel rather than a censer.[17] In 1987 Richard Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar compared the Berlin eagle to the massive ewer with rooster spout now in Cairo, associated rightly or wrongly with the last Umayyad caliph, Marwan II, who was buried near its supposed find-spot in the Fayum, and also to a simpler bronze ewer in the Hermitage with an inscription of 67 or 69 (circa 688–689) and the name of the city of Basra.[18] On the whole, it does not seem to me that one can be definitive about the date of the eagle censer in Berlin, but a date in roughly the seventh century is clearly plausible for it, or at least it supports the view that censers in animal forms generally, and in the form of eagles in particular, were likely in use and in circulation at that period, more or less contemporary with the Umayyad constructions on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem. It seems to me that the Berlin censer provides support for the hypothesis that the Freer silver stand might be understood as a part of a censer, or if one prefers, a stand for a censer.

Geographical boundaries seem fluid at this period in terms of such objects. The previously cited bronze ewer often connected with Marwan II's burial and now in Cairo is generally thought to have been made in Iran, but it was found in Egypt. The dated ewer in the Hermitage has an inscription associating it with Basra, and the al-Fudayn brazier was excavated in greater Syria (modern Jordan). Most metal objects in our museums today have, alas, no firm evidence for either origin or early provenance, having come from the art market without such information, and throughout the medieval period they were an important category of prestige gift or booty, with sometimes remarkable travels.[19] Objects moved, as did ideas, and may have changed in function and/or meaning as they crossed borders.[20] The stone incense

3

3
Silver censer with peacocks, from the Sion Treasure, probably 6th century. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC, acc. no. BZ.1965.1.5.T1993.

burner from the Umayyad governor's palace in Amman, domical in form, is made from basalt, a stone not found in the region. It must either have been made elsewhere and imported to Amman, or the stone itself was imported and then carved locally. Its origin and date can probably never be determined exactly; all we can say is that it was used in this early Islamic context. The same must be said for the brazier from al-Fudayn; its find-spot specifies its place of use and deposit, not its place of origin, and a general date range for its use, and a rough *terminus ante quem* for its manufacture. Image types moved across boundaries not only geographical but confessional, as can also be demonstrated in other media, for example, in stamped glass vessels.[21] Paul Balog published a group of these, from his own collection, in which iconography, likely to have been Sasanian in origin and pre-Islamic in date, was continued into the Islamic period but with added inscriptions in Arabic letters and at least in some instances with explicitly Islamic content. For example, an image of a small peacock in profile of a type commonly associated with Sasanian art was, at least in Balog's view, engraved by "a Persian brought up in the traditions of Sasanian art, but with the words *bismi* and *allāh*, for 'in the name of god' along the edge."[22]

If Julian Raby is correct, a class of objects associated specifically, although not exclusively, with Jerusalem and datable to the seventh century crosses geographic as well as confessional borders. These are glass vessels from perhaps the fifth to possibly the later seventh century that were used in connection with pilgrimages to Jerusalem, probably souvenirs of the holy places, by Muslims, Christians, and also Jews.[23] At least in some places and times Jews did have eagles in their synagogues, it seems; a notable example was found in the synagogue at Sardis. Probably the Sardis eagles were spoliated from a Roman imperial context, two plaques with eagles holding thunderbolts, perhaps from the older Roman bath on the site, and then re-employed as supports for a table in the center of the nave before the apse, likely used for readings from scripture.[24] The date at which the synagogue was founded is controversial, and Jodi Magness has recently made a strong case for the sixth rather than the late third or fourth century, but whatever its time of origin, it seems

4

4
Bronze censer with domes and eagles, 8th–9th century. Purchase, Freer Gallery of Art, F1952.1.

to have continued in use until 616 CE, when the community was dispersed, after which the building was abandoned and eventually fell into ruin.[25] As in the case of the Dome of the Rock eagle capitals,[26] these very expensive and prestigious eagles were installed intact, but in this case were never effaced, and provide further proof that Jewish aniconism even in religious buildings was not total and did not extend to eagles, or in the case of the Sardis synagogue, to lions, for a pair of sculptured lions flanked the eagle table there.

That the arrangement of the four eagles of the Freer stand, facing outward, may have a connection with monumental architecture is suggested not only by the explicitly architectural form of the bronze censer in the Freer, with its single large and four smaller domes, and by the stone censer in Amman, but by a surviving monumental building. The impressive church at Zvart'noc' in Armenia, now in ruins, likely built near the time of and related to the imperial visit by Constans II with his army to the area in 653, has four eagle capitals, executed new for the church, arranged facing outward at the four corners of this remarkable aisled tetraconch.[27] Might the Freer stand be understood as a microcosmic version of the same iconographic impulse, the king of birds, heavily laden with symbolic import of victory and ascension and related to the imagery of rulership, and a cosmic setting for that rulership? There is, however, a more specific possible connection between the Freer stand, if understood as a censer, and other early Islamic censers already cited, and the greatest surviving Islamic building of the seventh century, the Dome of the Rock.

It may surprise some readers to learn, as it certainly surprised me, that a number of reports describe the ritual anointing of the Rock in Jerusalem in the Umayyad period, with a special guild appointed to execute this rite, and associated with that

5
Bronze eagle censer. Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, Inv. Nr. I. 5623.

anointing and described in the same text is the use of gold and silver censers in the Dome of the Rock.[28] Incense was an Arabian product and commodity, both consumed and exported in large quantities, quantities so large that some scholars have suggested it was the basis of the wealth of Mecca and the Hijaz. I would definitely not claim that in the Freer stand we have one of those silver censers that were used in Jerusalem, but I would go so far as to say we may have in it something that reflects their form, and thereby one way of understanding the installation of eagle capitals in the Dome of the Rock and the presence of eagles on so many early Islamic censers. To the best of my knowledge, scholars have treated the texts concerning censing of the site without any consideration of the extant censers from the period. To be sure, we have few texts and few images, and bringing such rare survivals together can be a perilously speculative undertaking, although Ockham's razor would urge us at least to consider the possibility. Perhaps the evidence, and the question, assembled here will at least serve to stimulate other scholars to address the fascinating silver stand in the Freer and its remarkable analogues.

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NOTES

1 Esin Atil, W. T. Chase, and Paul Jett, *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1985), cat. no. 1, pp. 55–57, including the statement that the object was "purchased from Heeramaneck Galleries, New York, 1953." I am very grateful to Massumeh Farhad for permitting me to examine this object. At the second biennial conference of the Historians of Islamic Art Association, held at the Freer and Sackler Galleries in October 2010, I conducted a workshop devoted to the object, again with the kind permission of Dr. Farhad, and I would also like to thank the twenty participants in the workshop for their suggestions. I cannot name them all individually, but I particularly remember the helpful comments of Jonathan Bloom, Barry Flood, and Eva Hoffman. I am particularly grateful for the participation and comments of Paul Jett, the distinguished conservator at the Freer. In 2008 Eliza Butler wrote a seminar paper under my direction devoted to the object, and I learned much from that work.

2 Atil, *Islamic Metalwork*, p. 57, fig. 19. The accession number of the object is 50.91. I am grateful to Ladan Akbarnia for making it possible for me to examine this object. According to the Brooklyn Museum files, the object came as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Alistair B. Martin in 1950; no further information as to provenance is available.

3 Atil, *Islamic Metalwork*, p. 56.

4 See Susan Boyd and Marlia Mundell Mango, eds., *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth Century Byzantium* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), no. 18, fig. S18.1 (before restoration) and S18.2 (after restoration); for a color plate after restoration, see Gudrun Bühl, ed., *Dumbarton Oaks, The Collections* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2008), pp. 96–97, and with other objects from the same hoard, pp. 90–91.

5 Marlia Mundell Mango, *Silver from Early Byzantium: The Kaper Koraon and Related Treasures* (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 1986), no. 16, pp. 112–13, the object here suggested as perhaps for holding water used for bathing or baptism, and perhaps used in conjunction with the ewer in the same treasure.

6 Gustavus A. Eisen, *The Great Chalice of Antioch* (New York: Fahim Kouchakji, 1933). I am grateful to Francis Newton for giving me a copy of this strange and fascinating publication.

7 For discussion, see Mango, *Silver from Early Byzantium*, no. 40, pp. 183–87.

8 See Susan Boyd, "A Bishop's Gift: Openwork Lamps from the Sion Treasure," in *Argenterie romaine et byzantine, Actes de la table ronde, Paris 11–13 octobre 1983*, ed. Noël Duval and François Baratte (Paris: de Bocard, 1989), pp. 191–202. Boyd and Mango, *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate*, nos. 41–48. One of them is illustrated in color in Bühl, *Dumbarton Oaks: The Collections*, pp. 94–95.

9 Helen C. Evans, in *Mirror of the Medieval World*, ed. William D. Wixom (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999), no. 46, pp. 37–38, pl. 46. The treasure contained three such silver censers with copper interior liners. The treasure also included a silver dove, with outstretched and removable wings, which hung over the altar, as in attested in several textual sources.

10 See the classic overview by Joseph Braun, *Das christliche Altargerät in seinem Sinn and in seiner Entwicklung* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1932), pp. 598–611 and figs. 494–504 on early censers.

11 Jordan Archaeological Museum, Amman, inv. nos. J 15700, 15701, and 15705. See Jean-Baptiste Humbert, "Le surprenant brasero omeyyade trouvé à Mafraq," in *Jordanie. Sur les pas des archéologues. Expostion présentée du 13 juin au 5 octobre 1997* (Paris: Institut du monde Arabe, 1997), p. 161, and *The Umayyads. The Rise of Islamic Art*, ed. Ghazi Bisheh et al. (Amman: Ministry of Tourism, Department of Antiquities, and Vienna: Museum with no Frontiers, 2000), pp. 133–35 on the al-Fudayn site, and pp. 67–68 on the brazier, and Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), p. 17 and fig. 4. See J. B. Humbert, "El-Fedein/Mafraq. École biblique et Archéologique Française," in *Contribution Française à l'archéologie Jordanienne* (Amman: Institut Français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient, 1989), pp. 125–31, with an important series of drawings on p. 131, including details of the four nude figures and detailed views of one of the corner eagles, including a view from the back showing the hollow casting. I am grateful to Ghazi Bisheh for bringing this publication to my attention. Note here also, p. 130, a small bronze censer from the site with openwork frieze around the perimeter.

12 Amman, Jordan Archaeological Museum, inv. no. J 1663; see *The Umayyads,* pp. 69–70 (with illustration).

13 Atil, *Islamic Metalwork*, no. 2, pp. 58–61: "purchased from Mallon, New York, 1952."

14 Paris, Musée du Louvre, E 11798, reproduced in Atil, *Islamic Metalwork*, p. 59, fig. 20. On this censer see *L'Islam dans les collections nationales* (Paris: Editions des Musées nationaux, 1977), no. 19.

15 Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, inv. no. I. 5623; Friedrich Sarre, "Bronzeplastik in Vogelform. Ein Sasanidisch-Frühislamisches Räuchergefasz," *Jahrbuch der Preuszischen Kunstsammlungen* 51 (1930), pp. 159–64, and Taf. 1.

16 Sarre, "Bronzeplastik," p. 161, n. 1.

17 Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar, and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture 650–1250* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 66 and fig. 100. In a 1971 catalogue entry, Johanna Zick-Nissen suggested an eighth-century date for the Berlin eagle censer by comparison to an "in fast gleicher Weise modellierte Vogelfigur (Eremitage-Museum) mit einer Inschrift, die das Datum 105 H/723–724 n. Chr. enthält"; see *Islamische Kunst in Berlin. Katalog, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin* (Berlin: Bruno Hessling Verlag, 1971), no. 234, pl. 37, pp. 68–69, which gives the inventory number I. 5623. I do not know this vessel, and it is hard to imagine that there are two dated metalwork eagles in the Hermitage from the eighth century, so I presume Zick-Nissen is referring to the Sulayman eagle, but she based her report of its date on Michael M. Diakonoff, "Bronze Sculpture in early Muhammadan art," in *Travaux du Département Oriental*, Musée de l'Ermitage IV (Leningrad: Musée de l'Ermitage, 1947), pp. 159–79 (in Russian, with summary in English on pp. 178–79), and that the inscription has subsequently been reread and the date changed.

18 See Richard Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar, *The art and architecture of Islam, 650–1250* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 71 and fig. 47, illustrating the Berlin eagle; the dated ewer is not illustrated. For the Cairo ewer, see also Bernard O'Kane, *The Treasures of Islamic art in the Museum of Cairo* (Cairo: American University in Cairo, 2006), p. 21, fig. 11.

19 See, for example, the especially intriguing perhaps ninth-century bronze aquamanile that wound its way to S. Frediano in Lucca, for which see *Lucca e l'europa. Un idea di medioevo V–XI secolo* (Lucca: Fondazione Centro Studi Ragghianti, 2010), nos. 90–91, pp. 196–201, where in the thirteenth century it became a rooster! I am grateful to Lamia Balafrej for bringing this work to my attention and for providing material from the just-published exhibition and catalogue. See also in general on gifts the recent exhibition and accompanying catalogue, Linda Komaroff, ed., *Gifts of the Sultan: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2011).

20 On this phenomenon for a slightly later period, see Eva R. Hoffman, "Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian interchange from the tenth to the twelfth century," *Art History* 24 (2001), pp. 17–50. For more on gifts, see Komaroff, ed., *Gifts of the Sultan*.

21 Paul Balog, "Sasanian and Early Islamic Ornamental Glass Vessel-Stamps," in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History, Studies in Honor of George C. Miles,* ed. Dickran K. Kouymjian (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1974), pp. 131–40.

22 Balog, "Sasanian and Early Islamic Ornamental Glass Vessel-Stamps," no. 5, p. 137.

23 Julian Raby, "*In Vitro Veritas*. Glass pilgrim vessels from 7th-century Jerusalem," in *Bayt al-Maqdis. Jerusalem and Early Islam*, ed. Jeremy Johns, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art IX, pt. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 113–90. See E. Marianne Stern, *The Toledo Museum of Art Roman Mold-blown Glass. The First through Sixth Centuries* (Rome: L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 1995), with descriptions, photo-

graphs (some in color), and drawings of 193 examples, and an earlier dating of these objects.

24 *Sardis from Prehistoric to Roman Times. Results of the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, 1958–1975*, ed. George M. A. Hanfmann and William E. Mierse (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 168–90, for the eagle table p. 170 and figs. 256–62. The dating of the sculpture is uncertain, and the date of its installation in the synagogue is also uncertain. Hanfmann and Mierse report (p. 170) that the eagle table was a relatively late addition to the complex, since it stands atop and interrupts the mosaic floor, and thus postdates the mid-fourth-century date proposed for the mosaic.

25 Jodi Magness, "The Date of the Sardis Synagogue in Light of the Numismatic Evidence," *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005), pp. 443–75, especially p. 449 and fig. 6 on the eagle supports for the table in the nave and p. 449 n. 24 for a list of eagles (and lions) in Palestinian synagogues; the association of the eagles with doorways is striking. For a much longer list of eagles in Palestinian synagogues, see the unpublished master's thesis written under the direction of Professor Magness by Steven H. Werlin, "Eagle Imagery in Jewish Relief Sculpture of late ancient Palestine: Survey and Interpretation," University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2006 (http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/etd&CISOPTR=646) (accessed March 10, 2011).

26 These fascinating works, never heretofore studied in relation to their Islamic context and meaning, will be a major focus of my forthcoming book *Perspectives on Early Islamic Art in Jerusalem*. In the interim, the capitals are published in John Wilkinson, *Column Capitals in al Haram al Sharif (from 138 A.D. to 1118 A.D.)* (Jerusalem: The Adm. of Wakfs and Islamic Affairs, and the Islamic Museum al-Haram al-Sharif, 1987).

27 Christina Maranci, "Byzantium through Armenian Eyes. Cultural Appropriation and the Church of Zuart'noc'," *Gesta* 40 (2001), pp. 105–24.

28 Amikan Elad, "Why did ʿAbd al-Malik build the Dome of the Rock? A Re-examination of the Muslim Sources," in *Bayt al-Maqdis. ʿAbd al-Malik's Jerusalem*, ed. Julian Raby and Jeremy Johns, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art IX, pt. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 33–58. The passage is cited by Raby, *"In Vitro Veritas,"* who uses the translation by Guy Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems: A Description of Syria and the Holy Land from A.D. 650 to 1500, translated from the works of the mediaeval Arab geographers* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1890), pp. 146–47.