III. Deccani Seals and Scribal Notations

**SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF INDO-PERSIAN BOOK ARTS AND COLLECTING (C. 1400–1680)**

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Visitors to the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s groundbreaking 2015 exhibition— *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy*—were probably struck by the technical sophistication, enigma, and seemingly “one of a kind” status of many of the artworks on view.¹ In terms of single-page paintings, arguably one of the Deccan’s most famous artistic products, most of the examples in the show were framed on the wall as individual objects and presented through the eye of Mark Zebrowski, whose *Deccani Painting* established the foundation for the field.² Encountering hundreds of paintings ruptured from their original context in a bound album and bearing little or no evidence of production, such as a date or signature, Zebrowski pursued a formal approach based in exhaustive connoisseurship. The result was the grouping of paintings according to the hands of anonymous artists: for example, the “The Bodleian Painter,” so-called after his masterpiece in Oxford’s Bodleian Library depicting a Bijapuri hilltop shrine (*dargah*).³ The Metropolitan exhibition also included a number of manuscripts, and in some cases, basic details of production were likewise ambiguous. In the case of a lavishly illuminated, mid-sixteenth century Qur’an manuscript now in Kuwait, for example, the calligrapher ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Husayni is known from his signature in the concluding *fālnama* (lit., book of divination, here in reference to an illuminated finispiece), but where exactly the potentially peripatetic scribe copied the manuscript—Iran or India, Shiraz or Golconda—remains debatable.⁴

The above enigmas surrounding production, combined with bold color combinations, lyrical landscapes, and perplexing shifts in scale, is largely responsible for
the classification of Deccani art as a thing of “opulence and fantasy,” as emphasized in the Metropolitan’s tagline. The popular press has seized on this formula of luxury and otherworldliness, concluding, “The sultans [of the Deccan] had a greater interest in culture and leisure than governing.”⁵ Such an observation builds on a long-standing perceived binary between Mughal (1526–1857) and Deccani (c. 1347–1687) art. The conventional contrast is that the former rulers were empire-builders who patronized naturalistic painting informed by European techniques, whereas the latter were diamond-rich tributaries whose escapist tendencies materialized in their fantastical arts.

Although comparison, taxonomy, and connoisseurship are integral to the study of Deccani painting and book arts, important questions remain: What is the concrete evidence for art historical analysis? Have we sourced all available material? Although several notable paintings have come to light since Zebrowski’s canonical 1983 publication, the contextual evidence fostering internal (emic) understanding appears sparse.⁶ Whereas students of Timurid (c. 1370–1507), Safavid (1501–1722), and Mughal painting and book arts benefit from iconic texts such as Ja’far al-Baysunghuri’s arzadasht (workshop report), Qazi Ahmad’s Gulistan-i Hunar (Rosegarden of Art), Sadiqi Beg’s Qanun al-Suvar (Canons of Painting), Abu’l Fazl’s A’in-i Akbari (Institutes of Akbar), and Jahangir’s own Tuzuk-i Jahangiri (Memoirs of Jahangir), Deccani sources are either limited in their discussion of the arts or have yet to reach the scholarly mainstream due to a lack of critical editions and English translations.⁷ Only a handful of painters and calligraphers are known, and we have little to no sense of workshop practices. Fewer than a dozen illustrated manuscripts have been studied in any significant depth,⁸ and no monographs comparable to those on the Hamzanamah (Tales of Hamzah) or Ibrahim Mirza’s Haft Awrang (Seven Thrones) have been published.⁹

The above limitations and the dearth of material acknowledged, some of the most iconic manuscripts of the late medieval and early modern Indo-Persian world—the Timurid Khamsah (Quintet) of Nizami,¹⁰ the Qur’an manuscript typically associated with Abu Sa’id (r. 1451–1469) (St Andrews), the Shirazi “Peck Shahnamah” (The Book of Kings),¹¹ and the early Mughal Khamsah of Nizami (figure 11.9)—enjoyed vibrant afterlives in Deccani hands and libraries. Such circulation patterns may come as a surprise given the Deccan’s frequent positioning as a peripheral sidebar within the tripartite (Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal) “Gunpowder Empires” narrative, and the Mughal emperors’ luster as the leading bibliophiles on the subcontinent.¹² If and when we nuance the conversation to Indian Ocean worlds and “connected histories,” the Deccan quickly emerges as a key entrepôt within the maritime and overland networks linking a variety of Islamic and European courts and interests.¹³

The contributions and collections of the Mughal emperors notwithstanding, the luxury codices noted above introduce new perspectives and players to the Indo-Persian narrative while their ownership marks function as critical primary source “documents” for the study of Deccani painting and visual culture at large.¹⁴
Whether foreign imports or local products, these collected books shift the art historical narrative from one of original production (Bijapur or Ahmadnagar? Golconda or Shiraz?) to an intraregional (Deccan sultanates, that is, Bahmani, ‘Adil Shah, Qutb Shah) and transregional (Deccan, Hindustan, Central Asia, Greater Iran) exploration of circulation, taste, and intellectualism. The peripatetic biographies of the books in question exemplify the Deccan’s fluid geopolitical and cultural borders. From the early fifteenth century onward, the region served as a pole of attraction for foreigners (ghariban) from western Islamic lands, particularly Iran, and cities such as Shiraz and Bidar were linked by shared patterns of knowledge and religiosity (see Bahmani Dynasty below). In the 1590s, Akbar (r. 1556–1605) initiated Mughal encroachment into the Deccan, and the sultanates in turn strengthened their internal alliances while cultivating brotherhood with Shi‘i Safavid Iran. The result of this Mughal-Safavid-Deccani web was the continual flow of talent (calligraphers, poets, painters, scholars) and luxuries (jewels, manuscripts, objects, elephants) between Isfahan, Mashhad, Agra, Bijapur, and Golconda, to name but a few key cities. It was during the seventeenth century that many Deccani owned or produced books entered the Mughal imperial library (see Appendix, no. 5a, figure 11.7B; and no. 12a, figure 11.9B).

Like virtually all bibliophile rulers of the day, Deccani sultans were expected to amass sizable collections of books mined from local and foreign sources and considered fundamental to both the princely curriculum and luxury enterprises in the visual arts. With the exception of a portion of Bijapur’s Asar Mahal library now preserved in the British Library, codices once populating Deccani repositories are dispersed across the globe, and locating them can be a tedious task rooted in arbitrary luck, such as the rare reproduction of colophons or flyleaves (the opening or closing folios of a volume). The reconstructive exercise is further hindered by a lack of understanding of the Deccani marks of ownership that typically populate such pages, including seal impressions, ex libris, and scribal notations written by librarians and other individuals. The largest seal of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) of Bijapur (Appendix, no. 10), for example, has been erroneously associated with other Ibrahims, including Ibrahim I of Bijapur (r. 1535–1558) and the more famous Ibrahim Mirza (d. 1577) of Mashhad. The ownership marks in question illuminate the intellectual prerogatives of many Deccani rulers, while also giving voice to a broader cast of characters—ministers, librarians, poets, ambassadors, Sufi saints—thereby advancing the study of Deccani material culture beyond the “genius” ruler-centric paradigm.

BAHMANI DYNASTY (1347–1548, GULBARGA AND BIDAR)

Although the Bahmani built environment has received considerable scholarly attention since the mid-twentieth century, the dynasty’s book culture remains
relatively understudied, especially in comparison to contemporary Timurid and Turkmen traditions. This formative period of Deccani history is generally framed around two interrelated narratives: saints and migrants. Beginning with the premonition of the Chishti saint Nizam al-Din Awliya (d. 1325) that the general Zafar Khan would one day be king (indeed, he was crowned the first Bahmani sultan: Ala’ al-Din Hasan, r. 1347–1358), Sufism had a profound impact on Bahmani kingship. A watershed occurred in 1430, when Ahmad I (r. 1422–1436) moved the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar and switched his affiliation from descendants of the local Chishti saint Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz (d. 1422) to that of the Ni’mat Allahis of southern Iran (Mahan, Taft, Kirman). Although Shah Ni’mat Allah Wali (d. 1431) declined Ahmad’s request to relocate to the Deccan, his son Khalil Allah (d. c. 1442–1454) and grandsons, including Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah (d. c. 1506) (Appendix, no. 2, figure 11.5), eventually migrated and married into the Bahmani royal family. This influx of Iranian spiritual authority coincided with a broader trend of migration from Iran and Central Asia. Arguably the most famous of these foreigners was the horse merchant turned general and prime minister of Bidar, Mahmud Gavan (d. 1481) (Appendix, no. 1, figure 11.4).

Given the historical circumstances outlined above, it is unsurprising that both saints and migrants played a significant role in Bahmani book culture and knowledge systems. The physical migration of Iranians to the Deccan coincided with the intellectual transmission of the Shiraz school of philosophy. In some cases, the conduits were leading thinkers of the day. Mir Fazlullah Inju Shirazi (fl. late fourteenth–early fifteenth century), for example, was a student of the Khorasani polymath Sa’d al-Din Taftazani (d. 1389) and subsequently served under both Muhammad II (r. 1378–1397) and Firuz Shah (r. 1397–1422) Bahmani.

Timurid and Turkmen paradigms were also transmitted to the Deccan in the form of books. Although it can be difficult to pinpoint the place of production of some manuscripts (Iran or India? Shiraz or Bidar?), marks of ownership provide concrete evidence of legacy and circulation within the Deccan, often over the course of centuries. A mid-fifteenth-century copy of a commentary on the Mughni al-Labib of Ibn Hisham (d. 1360) (Appendix, no. 1a), for example, was impressed with two seals of Mahmud Gavan (no. 1 and a second example dated 876/1471–72), entered the collection of the Shirazi prime minister of Bijapur Shah Navaz Khan (d. c. 1611), and was ultimately presented as a gift (pishkash) to Bijapur’s royal library (kitabkhanah-’i ‘amirah) in 1617. Yet another manuscript once in Mahmud Gavan’s collection—a copy of the first half of Burhan al-Din Marghinani’s (d. 1196) Hidaya (Guidance) dated 9 Shawwal 861/August 30, 1457 (Appendix, no. 1b, figure 11.4)—was likely transcribed in Mamluk Egypt (1250–1517), entered Bijapur’s library as booty from the conquest of Bidar in 1618, and was eventually acquired by Tipu Sultan of Mysore (r. 1782–1799).
Following the rise of the Bahmani successor states at the turn of the sixteenth century, the evidence for Deccani collecting increases. Fittingly, one of the earliest known impressions of an ‘Adil Shahi seal remains an enigma while confirming the dynasty’s ability to acquire luxury codices from its inception. The seal in question appears below the final colophon of an illustrated, two-volume Anthology dated 838–40/1435–36 that has been attributed to both Iran and Bidar (Appendix, no. 6). Its orthography and content are complex and distinct, but its prominent central knotting lends comparison to Timurid and Turkmen examples. Directly below the seal impression is a large, four-lined notation dated 24 Ramadan 920/November 12, 1514. Combined with the epithet ‘Adil Shah in the seal and notation, this date has prompted an association with the second ruler of Bijapur, Isma’il (r. 1510–1534).

The seals of subsequent ‘Adil Shahi bibliophiles are anything but codified and redundant. Their legends rarely conform to traditional formulae including the ruler’s name, lineage, titulature, and/or a date, but are instead personal to each sultan and reflective of the dynasty’s vacillation between various forms of Islam. The Twelver-Shi’ism espoused by ‘Ali I (r. 1558–1580), for example, is explicit in his two known circular seals (Appendix, nos. 7–8). The smaller example (figure 11.7) includes a visual allusion to Dhu-l-Fiqar (the double-bladed sword of ‘Ali, d. 661), whereas the larger one features a circle enclosed by a radiating inscription naming the Twelve Imams, an arrangement paralleling some roughly contemporary examples of Deccani metalwork. The formal refinement of both seals hints at the sophistication of ‘Ali’s library bureaucracy, a reality borne out by the contemporary observation that his kitabkhanah (lit., library-workshop) “comprised sixty men, calligraphists, gilders of books, book-binders and illuminators.” Conveniently, two administrative documents survive that record the appointment and salary of the head librarian, one Waman Pandit. Impressed with numerous seals, they facilitate the “repopulation” of Ali’s court, including the officer of the wardrobe (mir push) and the prime minister (vakil-i saltanat).

Although the full extent of ‘Ali’s library can only be imagined, a handful of his books bear ownership marks that prove their absorption into the library of his nephew and successor Ibrahim II. At present, approximately eighty volumes can be linked to Ibrahim directly or to libraries under his reign, rendering his reconstructed collection the largest Deccani example to date, albeit at a fraction of its original size. Upon the marriage of his daughter Sultan Begum Sahibah to Prince Daniyal, Ibrahim is recorded to have gifted two thousand books alone to Akbar. Regardless of some inevitable exaggeration, the size of Ibrahim’s library seems to have been considerable.

The evidence for the reconstruction of Ibrahim’s library falls into five categories: his seals (two main examples: Appendix, nos. 9–10), ex libris (two examples:
figure 11.5B, figure 11.6B), an elaborate binding stamp based on one of his seals (no. 10), scribal notations penned by his librarians (figure 11.5B, figure 11.7B), and the seals of his chief interlocutors, including the aforementioned prime minister Shah Navaz Khan (Appendix, no. 11). This raw data confirms the existence of several repositories during Ibrahim's reign, including the city's royal library (kitabkhanah-yi 'amirah), the ruler's wardrobe (jamadarkhanah), and a collection personal to Ibrahim that preserved luxurious volumes (kitabkhanah-yi huzur).

Ibrahim's two most common seals are radically distinct from one another and from those of his predecessors and contemporaries. The first is a small, oval example inscribed Ibrahim nawras (Appendix, no. 9, figure 11.8). The use of the latter term leaves no doubt of the individual in question, for this word was ubiquitous at Ibrahim's court and used to designate everything from buildings (Qasr-i Nawras Bihisht) to cities (Nawraspur) to the ruler's collection of songs (Kitab-i Nawras). The second seal is a far larger, circular example bearing a single Qur'anic verse (2:130) that simultaneously honors the ruler's namesake and casts him as a repentant hanif on the pure path (millat-i Ibrahim) (Appendix, no. 10). This seal was probably developed as part of a larger program to broadcast Ibrahim's repentance (tawbah), which had been spearheaded by some of Bijapur's Sufis in reaction to his syncretic Hindu-Muslim spirituality, including devotion to the Hindu goddess Saraswati. Stylistically, the seal is closely related to examples of Deccani metalwork that feature thuluth inscriptions in clear registers created by the horizontal extension (kashidah) of individual letters, all upon a delicate spiral ground with floral accents.

The scribal notations in Ibrahim's manuscripts occur in a variety of forms and can be categorized as key “documents” for the study of Bijapuri book arts and courtly culture at large. Some are short monetary valuations or inspection notices (ʿarzdidah), but others are lengthy descriptions that record the book's author, scribe, script, binding, impression with a particular seal, provenance (babat or pishkash), transfer from a different library (typically the jamadarkhanah), date of accession into the royal library, ranking (first, second, or third class), and presence in a subcollection (figure 11.5B, figure 11.7B). Most of the volumes have lost their bindings, whether original or a Bijapuri refurbishment, but glimpses of the latter can be gleaned from vivid scribal notations. The example in Ibrahim's Yusuf va Zulaykha transcribed by the renowned Shah Mahmud Nishapuri (d. c. 1564–65), for example, reads, “Newly bound with yellow lining and red binding” (astar-i zard jild-i surkh naw bastah).

Only one extant binding—the example sheathing the Qur'an manuscript preserved in the University of St Andrews, which has been associated with the Timurid Abu Sa'id since its inclusion in the 1989 Timur exhibition—can be confidently linked to Ibrahim. Each of the binding's doublures features a large (H: 9.5 cm), diamond-shaped stamp with scalloped edges whose central circle is a nearly exact replica of Ibrahim's Qur'anic seal (Appendix, no. 10). This intriguing dual purposing of a single epigraphic design—as a seal impressed on paper and a stamp pressure-tooled into leather—remains a confounding unicum.
Although Muhammad ‘Adil Shah’s reign (r. 1627–1656) witnessed the height-
ened fracturing of the Deccan under Mughal hegemony, luxury foreign volumes
continued to enter Bijapuri collections. The renowned 1555 Mughal Khams-
sah (Quintet) of Nizami bears Muhammad’s large circular seal—distinguished
by a sunburst design on the perimeter—in the middle of the final page of text
(Appendix, no. 12, figure 11.9). Immediately below is a notation in nasta’liq read-
ing kitāb-i Khamsah-i Nizami khas-i humayun-i ashrāf-i aqdas-i arfa’ Muham-
mad ‘Adil Shah Ghazi (Book of the Quintet of Nizami [belonging to] the most
royal . . . Muhammad ‘Adil Shah Ghazi). This titulature echoes that of his pre-
decessor Ibrahim, and the notation itself closely resembles Ibrahim-period exam-
pies in both content and execution.44 Viewed together, these similarities imply
considerable continuity between the libraries of father and son, with the lat-
ter absorbing both the books and perhaps even the staff of the former. Of addi-
tional interest is the fact that this early Mughal Khamsah made its way to Bijapur,
entered Muhammad’s library, and was then (re)purchased by ‘Alamgir in 1678 for
the high price of 3,500 rupees.45 It was likely via Mughal intermediaries based in
cities like Burhanpur—consider the general-patron-poet ‘Abd al-Rahim Khan-i
Khanan (d. 1626–27)46—or the many itinerant poets, ambassadors, and artists that
traversed the Mughal-Deccan corridor from Akbar’s reign onward that the volume
traveled south in the first place.

QUTB SHAHI DYNASTY (1496–1687,
GOLCONDA AND HYDERABAD)

Like their ‘Adil Shahi contemporaries, the rulers of Qutb Shahi Golconda and
Hyderabad were avid collectors steeped in the Persian literary tradition who
enjoyed the resources to acquire universally cherished volumes (their owner-
ship of the 1431–32 Timurid Khamsah of Nizami being a case in point).47 In
comparison to the diversity of ‘Adil Shahi royal seals, Qutb Shahi examples
conform to a codified paradigm.48 The preferred form, employed for at least
four rulers, was probably inspired by Safavid models and comprised of a cir-
cle topped by an arched headpiece (Appendix, nos. 16–20, figures 11.12–11.14).49
This codification of shape did not transfer to the inscriptions, which vary dra-
matically in content. Several are dated and appear to correspond to the given
ruler’s accession.

Qutb Shahi conventions of indicating ownership—via seal impressions, ex
libris, and scribal notations—can be compared variously to Safavid, ‘Adil Shahi,
and Mughal paradigms. Like Mughal manuscripts, Qutb Shahi books were often
impressed with the seals of multiple rulers in close proximity on a single folio
(figure 11.12, figure 11.13).50 Sultan Muhammad (r. 1612–1626) was also inclined to
inscribe his books in his own hand, a direct intervention recalling those of Jahangir
deccani seals and scribal notations

Unlike these Mughal notations, however, Sultan Muhammad’s inscriptions were generally framed in an illuminated rectangle with a gold floral background, rendering them a veritable ex libris. These inscriptions vary in length and detail, and the example in his Ziyaratnamah (Book of Visitation) reproduced here is on the shorter end of the spectrum (“Ziyaratnamah, a gift of Malik al-Tujjar, as noted by Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah on the date of the start of the month of Blessed Ramazan, mid-October 1615”) (Appendix, no. 19g, figure 11.13). In its combination of illumination and documentary details specific to the codex in question, Sultan Muhammad’s autograph ex libris can be compared to the illuminated ex libris of Ibrahim II of Bijapur (for example, figure 11.6), with a key difference being that the latter was not written by the ruler himself.

A final parallel can be drawn between the Qutb Shah, ‘Adil Shah, and Safavid imperative to mark esteemed volumes with multiple impressions of a single seal. The most famous Safavid examples of such repetition occur in manuscripts endowed (waqf) to the ancestral shrine at Ardabil. The best known Qutb Shahi example is the St. Petersburg Khamsah, where the seal of Sultan Muhammad dated 1020/1612 appears on each of the five illuminated title pages (Appendix, no. 18a). In Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II’s Divan of Jami, his Qur’anic seal marks all but one of the volume’s eighteen illustrated folios (Appendix, no. 10b).

Two final peripatetic manuscripts associated with the Qutb Shahs attest to the court’s diplomatic and religious relations with Safavid Iran. The last folio of the Shirazi Shahnamah dated 998/1589–90 (so-called Peck Shahnamah) contains an inscription by Khayrat Khan (d. 1655), ambassador of ‘Abd Allah (r. 1626–1672) to Shah Safi (r. 1629–1642), recording his purchase of the manuscript in Isfahan in Rajab 1040/September 1631 from the daughter of the ruler of Gilan (also the widow of Shah ‘Abbas, r. 1587–1629). The same envoy patronized architectural refurbishments at the Shrine of Imam Riza (d. 818) in Mashhad, and this complex (Astan-i Quds-i Razavi) also preserves a magnificent Qur’an manuscript copied by ’Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, the same Shirazi calligrapher responsible for the Kuwait Qur’an mentioned at the beginning of this essay. As with the Kuwait example, scholars vacillate on attributing the Mashhad mushaf (a Qur’an manuscript) to Iran or India, Shiraz or Golconda. Although the manuscript’s production remains ambiguous, its terminus ante quem and afterlife are refreshingly clear, thanks to its double-page waqfnamah (endowment deed) dated 970/1562 in the name of Ibrahim Qutb Shah (r. 1550–1580). Along with its notable peripatetic “mates”—the St. Petersburg Khamsah, the St Andrews Qur’an, the Ahmedabad Khamsah, the Princeton Shahnamah—the Mashhad Qur’an (or truly the Shiraz-Golconda-Mashhad Qur’an) further confirms that the study of Deccani book culture is anything but a peripheral sidebar. Rather, it is an integral component of connected histories between Greater Iran and the subcontinent.
OVERVIEW OF DECCANI SEALS: FORM, FUNCTION, AND LANGUAGE

Deccani seals follow established precedents set by earlier Muslim rulers. The wording of the legends, as well as their shapes, scripts, and formats, frequently follow Timurid and Safavid examples. Written in Arabic, Persian, or a combination of the two, all of the seals presented here were carved in intaglio matrices, probably of metal or semi-precious stone such as carnelian. Most inscriptions are rendered in stacked thuluth, naskh, or nastaʿliq, and a few are ringed around the center. Their exact orthography is ambiguous at times given that the inscriptions were often modified to fit within a restricted surface area. The scripts often veer from accepted standards, and variant letterforms are also frequently seen, including consonants with or without dots, as well as clustered, disconnected, redistributed, or even completely displaced groupings of letters.

The inscriptions do not merely indicate ownership of a manuscript but can also signify both temporal and divine authority through the citation of Qurʾanic verses or expressions of traditional Islamic piety. Some are explicit, and others are inferred. Qurʾanic scripture on no. 10 and no. 20 (figure 11.13), for example, allude to the namesakes of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) and ‘Abd Allah Qutb Shah (r. 1626–1672), respectively. The overtly Shiʿi inscriptions on the seals of ‘Ali ‘Adil Shah I (r. 1558–1580) invoke ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (d. 661), the Prophet Muhammad, and all twelve of the Alid imams (Appendix, nos. 7–8, figure 11.7). The format of no. 8—a double circle with an exterior radiating inscription—was probably modeled on earlier Safavid seals, including those of Shah Tahmasb (r. 1524–1576). In contrast, a couplet inscribed on the circumference of the seal of an official under ‘Ali II (r. 1656–1672) (Appendix, no. 15, figure 11.11) exclusively invokes the Prophet Muhammad. It not only references his role as the “Seal of the Prophets,” the last of all the prophets according to the Islamic faith, but also the hadith (prophetic tradition) that he wore a silver seal ring inscribed “Muhammad is the Prophet of God,” a practice subsequently emulated by pious male Muslims. In comparison to the Shiʿi examples discussed above (nos. 7–8), this seal intentionally asserts an orthodox Sunni identity coinciding with the period of increasing Mughal hegemony in the Deccan.

Another inscription alluding to the earlier prophet Solomon is designed to recall traditions praising him as the wisest of kings, as well as his supernatural abilities. The legend of no. 19 (figure 11.12 and figure 11.13), one of two seals of Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–1626) (also see no. 18), mentions the muhriʾ Sulayman (seal of Solomon), which, according to Islamic tradition, was engraved with the divine Ism al-ʿAzm, or “Greatest Name” of God. By means of this talisman, Solomon was miraculously able to control nature and subdue the jinn. Sultan Muhammad probably borrowed this association from his predecessor Muhammad Quli (r. 1580–1612) (no. 17, figure 11.12), who was declared as his
“Solomonic royal highness” in the title of a luxury manuscript of his poetry completed circa 1590–1605.\textsuperscript{63}

Deccani seal inscriptions also reflect the Persianate literary imagination via the use of rhyming prose or couplets, metaphors, and puns.\textsuperscript{64} No. 16 (figure 11.12) and no. 19 (figure 11.11 and figure 11.13) bear the phrase \textit{naqsh u nigin} (design and sealstone), which refers to both the carved “seal” matrix and the resultant “design” or impression. Many Persian poems and associated illustrations frequently play upon this trope as a metaphor for the emotional impact impressed by the beloved upon the lover.\textsuperscript{65} Similarly, some legends are cleverly polysemic. In no. 15 (figure 11.11), for example, the words \textit{mihr} (light, grace, or compassion) and \textit{muhr} (seal) share identical unvocalized spelling in Persian, which can be read and interpreted in several different ways.

Several seals bear distinct visual elements beyond their inscriptions. No. 9 (figure 11.8) and no. 10 have purely decorative arabesque scrollwork in the background, whereas no. 2 (figure 11.5), no. 4 (figure 11.6), and no. 6 feature a prominent central plaited knot recalling earlier Timurid and Turkmen exemplars that may have served either a talismanic or purely decorative purpose.\textsuperscript{66} No. 7 (figure 11.7) depicts the legendary sword Dhu-l-Fiqar of Ali ibn Abi Talib, and no. 12 (figure 11.9) is surrounded by a sunburst emblematic of divine favor and solar kingship. The trefoil-shaped headpieces of Qutb Shahi examples probably conjured multiple referents. When framing a holy name (as in no. 20, figure 11.13), an association with the mihrab (the niche directing prayer toward Mecca) was possible. Alternatively, it could have evoked a ubiquitous form of kingship, the parasol (\textit{chatra} in the Indian context).\textsuperscript{67} Finally, the seal as whole might have symbolized the political alliance of the Qutb Shahs with Safavid Iran, where their Shi’i brethren employed similarly shaped seals.\textsuperscript{68}

One of the more enigmatic seals surveyed here is a hexagonal example bearing a simple Arabic aphorism: “Perpetual diligence; everlasting contentment” (no. 4, figure 11.6). Although no particular person or institution is mentioned, a likely Bahmani-period provenance of the manuscript may indicate an association with the Ni’mat Allahi Sufi order. Regardless of precise attribution, the sentiment of the aphorism clearly serves to remind the viewer of life’s greater pursuits.

\textbf{APPENDIX:}

\textbf{CATALOG OF DECCANI SEALS AND IMPRESSIONS}

The seals presented here are a representative sample and by no means comprehensive. Many more will come to light with time, as will their impressions. Each entry is ordered as follows: name of individual (with brief description); seal details (most measurements are in diameter); description of the inscription’s layout and orthography; transliteration and English translation; some notable impressions, generally favoring unpublished examples; provenance (when known); and bibliography (preference is given to reproductions and most recent publications).\textsuperscript{69}
Bahmani (1347–1538, Bidar)

1. (figure 11.4) Mahmud Gavan (d. 1481): horse merchant, general, prime minister of Bidar

   Circular, 22 mm, double-ruled, Arabic and Persian, *thuluth*
   The horizontal extension (*kashidah*) of the letter *ha* in the name *Mahmud* divides the inscription into upper and lower registers.
   
   *bi-Khvajah-i Jahan min al-Mukhatib al-Hazrat al-ʿAliyah Mahmud ila Allah al-Mustaʾan al-Mubtahil*

   By the Master of the World, the Interlocutor of his most Excellent Praiseworthy (Mahmud) Highness, to God, the Entreated of the Supplicant

   Notable impressions:
   a. Commentary by Muhammad b. Abi Bakr al-Damamini (d. 1424) on the *Mughni al-Labib* (a compendium of Arabic grammar) of Ibn Hisham (d. 1360),
dated 4 Rabi’ I 824/March 8, 1421 (London, British Library, Loth 367/B 7).
Provenance: Mahmud Gavan (this seal and a second example dated 876/1471–72);
Shah Navaz Khan (prime minister of Bijapur under Ibrahim II; seal no. 11);
Bijapur royal library (gift from the former’s son; accessioned in 1617 during
the reign of Ibrahim II). Bibliography: Loth, A Catalogue of the Arabic Manu-
scripts, 1877, 268; Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, 115.

b. (figure 11.4) First half of the Hidayah (Guidance) of Burhan al-Din Marghi-
nani (d. 1196), a commentary on his own Bidayah al-Mubtadi (Start for the
Beginner) on Hanafite law, transcribed by ‘Ali b. Hasan al-Azhari, probably in
Egypt, dated 9 Shawwal 861/August 30, 1457 (London, British Library, Loth
211/IO Islamic 605). Provenance: Mahmud Gavan; probably the Nim‘at Allahi
Sufi order of Bidar (fol. 6v bears seal no. 4); Bijapur royal library (accessioned
upon the conquest of Bidar in 1618, reign of Ibrahim II); ‘Abd al-Majid Khan
(seal dated 1145/1732–33); and Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–1799). Bibliography: Loth,
A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 54; Overton, “Book Culture,”
2016, 116.

c. Anthology, including the work of Taftazani, transcribed by Muhammad b.
Shihab Siraji, one of Taftazani’s pupils (London, British Library, Loth 426/B
203, 234). Provenance: Mahmud Gavan; Bijapur royal library (accessioned
upon the conquest of Bidar in 1618, reign of Ibrahim II). Bibliography: Loth,
A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 110.

d. Taj al-Masadir (Crown of Sources) of Abu Ja‘far Bayhaqi (Bu Ja‘farak;
d. 1150), a dictionary of Arabic infinitives (London, British Library, Loth 994/B
38). Provenance: Mahmud Gavan; Bijapur royal library (accessioned upon
the conquest of Bidar in 1618, reign of Ibrahim II). Bibliography: Loth,
A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 277.

2. (figure 11.5) Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah (d. c. 1506): son of Shah Khalil Allah
(d. c. 1442–1454) and a leading shaykh of the Ni‘mat Allahi Sufi family based
in Bidar

Circular, 21 mm, double-ruled, Arabic, rayhani
Three prominent kashidah (the sin and final ya in the name of al-Husayni,
and the final ya in al-Ghani) divide the inscription into upper and lower
registers.

Top: al-Musta‘in li-Ghani, al-‘Inayat al-Mulk
Bottom: Muhibb Allah bin Khalil Allah ibn Ni‘mat Allah al-Husayni
Entreator of the Prosperous, Custodian of the Kingdom, Muhibb Allah, son of
Khalil Allah, son of Ni‘mat Allah al-Husayni

Notable impressions:

a. (figure 11.5) Commentary by Shams al-Din Mahmud Isfahani (d. 1345) on
the Tawali’ al-Anwar of Abdallah b. ‘Umar Baydawi (d. 1286), transcribed by
Ja‘far b. Ja‘far al-Riza al-Urayzi al-Husayni, dated 31 Rabi’ I 861/February 25,
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Figures 11.5a–b  Seal impressions of Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah (d. c. 1506) (circular, second from top; no. 2) and his son Wali Allah (octagonal, third from top; no. 3) of Bidar. Also visible is the incomplete illuminated ex libris of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) of Bijapur and scribal notations dating to his reign. Commentary by Shams al-Din Mahmud Isfahani on the Tawali’ al-Anwar of Baydawi, transcribed by Ja’far b. Ja’far al-Riza al-Urayzi al-Husayni.

Source: British Library, Loth 428/B 223A, fol. 37 (appendix, no. 2a)
Date: 31 Rabi’ I 861/February 25, 1457
Credit: © British Library Board

1457 (London, British Library, Loth 428/B 223A, fol. 31). Provenance: Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah; the former’s son Wali Allah; Shah Abu’l Hasan Qadiri (leading Sufi shaykh of Bijapur, d. 1635); Bijapur royal library (acquired on 4 Rajab 1003/March 15, 1595, reign of Ibrahim II). Bibliography: Loth, A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 111; Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, 116.
3. (figure 11.5) Wali Allah: apparently a son of Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah (d. c. 1506) (no. 2)
   Octagonal, 25 mm, double-ruled, Arabic, *thuluth*
   A prominent, plaited knot in the center of the inscription connects to the outer rulings and creates distinct upper and lower registers that are read from top to bottom.
   Top: *al-Malik al-Qawi al-Ghani al-Musta’ in bi-Nasr Allah*
   Bottom: *Wali Allah ibn Muhibb Allah ibn Khalil Allah al-Husayni*
   The powerful and prosperous King, seeking the aid of God, Wali Allah son of Muhibb Allah son of Khalil Allah al-Husayni

**Figures 11.6 A–B** Unknown seal impression, probably affiliated with the Ni’mat Allahi order of fifteenth-century Bidar (no. 4). Visible above is the illuminated ex libris of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) of Bijapur. Commentary by ‘Adud al-Din Iji on his *Mukhtasar al-Muntaha*.
*Source:* British Library, Loth 428/B 223A, fol. iv (appendix, no. 4b)
*Credit:* © British Library Board
Notable impressions:

a. (figure 11.5) Commentary by Isfahani on the *Tawali al-Amwar* of Baydawi: no. 2a

4. (figure 11.6) Individual unknown: probably affiliated with the Ni’mat Allahi Sufi order of Bidar

   Hexagonal, 26 mm, double-ruled, Arabic, *muhaqqaq*

   A prominent, plaited knot in the center of the inscription connects to the outer rulings and creates distinct upper and lower registers that could be read from top to bottom, or vice versa.

   *Kifayat al-Abadiyah; ’Inayat al-Azaliyah*

   Perpetual diligence; everlasting contentment

   Notable impressions:

   a. *Hidayah* of Marghinani: no. 1b (figure 11.4). This impression is on fol. 6v.

   b. (figure 11.6) Commentary by ’Adud al-Din Iji (d. 1355–56) on his *Mukhtasasr al-Muntaha* (London, British Library, Loth 299/B323, fol. 1v). Provenance: Ni’mat Allahi Sufi order of Bidar; Bijapur royal library (accessioned on 12 Shawal 1027/August 4, 1618, upon the conquest of Bidar, reign of Ibrahim II).

   Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 1877, 74.

5. (figure 11.7) Sadr Jahan: one Sadr Jahan initially served as tutor to Muhammad Shah III (r. 1463–1482) and was later appointed Chief Magistrate.72 A missive of Mahmud Gavan addressed to this figure survives.73

   Circular, 22 mm, double-ruled, Arabic, *naskh*

   Reading of the stacked inscription begins under the *kashidah* of the letter *mim* in *Malik*, continues upward, and concludes on the bottom.

   *Qazi al-Quzzat Malik al-‘Ulama’ al-Musta’ in ilà Allah al-Manan, Sadr Jahan ibn Jalal al-Din Muhammad Jahan [‘Abd?] Allah(?)*

   Judge of judges, King of religious scholars, Supplicant to God the Beneficent, Sadr Jahan, son of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Jahan(?) ‘Abd Allah(?).

   Notable impressions:

   a. (figure 11.7) *Sharh al-Maqasid* of Sa’d al-Din Mas’ud b. ‘Umar al-‘Taftazani (d. 1390) (London, British Library, Loth 463/B 185, fol. 3r). Provenance: Sadr Jahan; brought from Bidar by ‘Ata Allah; ‘Ali ‘Adil Shah I (seal no. 7); Bijapur royal library (accessioned on 1 Rabi’I 992/March 13, 1584, reign of Ibrahim II; *’arzdidah* dated 6 Shawal 1003/April 16, 1595); Mughal library (probably the seal of Qabil Khan inscribed *khanazada-yi Alamgir Padshah*, dated 1097/1685–8675; oval seal of Muhammad Akram al-Madani inscribed *al-‘Abd Muhammad Akram al-Madani*, dated 1136/1723–24). Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 1877, 119.

   ’Adil Shah (1490–1686, Bijapur)

6. Isma’il ’Adil Shah (r. 1510–1534), or a high official in his court

   Circular, 28 mm, triple-ruled, Persian, *naskh*
The kashidah of the letter sin in asaman, which divides the inscription into upper and lower registers, is embellished with a central, quadripartite knot. Reading begins at the top and then proceeds to the bottom.

Ta charkh-i asaman pur az nigin-i mah khatim bad
Sikka-yi badshah-i humayun-bakht Shah-i ʿAdil bad

So long as the Wheel of Heaven (fate) shall be sealed with the seal-stone of the moon
May the royal fortune of the just king (Shah-i ʿAdil) be like the Emperor’s seal

Notable impressions:
a. Anthology, in two volumes, possibly Bidar, dated 838–40/1435–36, multiple scribes (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. Per 124 II, fol. 264v). Directly below the impression is a large four-lined notation dated 24 Ramazan 920/
November 12, 1514 that mentions the “Sultan ʿAdil Shah.” This date corresponds to the reign of Ismaʿil ʿAdil Shah, which led E. Blochet and M. Minovi to attribute the seal to this ruler (his name is not explicitly mentioned). Bibliography: Arberry, Minovi, and Blochet, The Chester Beatty Library, 1959, no. 124; Barbara Brend, Perspectives on Persian Painting: Illustrations to Amir Khusrau’s Khamsah (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 79; Keelan Overton, “A Collector and His Portrait: Book Arts and Painting for Ibrahim ʿAdil Shah II of Bijapur (r. 1580–1627)” (PhD diss., University of California, 2011), fig. 24; Islamic Seals Database, Chester Beatty Library, http://www.cbl.ie/islamicseals/View-Seals/346.aspx.

7. (figure 11.7) ‘Ali ʿAdil Shah I (r. 1558–79)

Circular, 40 mm, quadruple-ruled, Arabic, thuluth
The inscription is a popular motto referencing ʿAli and his legendary double-bladed sword Dhu-l-Fiqar. It is stacked and set within quadrants divided vertically by the sword and horizontally by the kashidah in the twice-repeated name of ʿAli. Unusually, the sword is not named explicitly at the end but is depicted prominently. The association with ʿAli ʿAdil Shah is inferred by allusion to his namesake.

Top: La fata ila ʿAli; la sayf ila [Dhu-l-Fiqar]
Bottom: al-Ghalib Asad Allah ʿAli ibn Abi Talib

Top: There is no brave youth other than ʿAli and there is no sword other than [Dhu-l-Fiqar]
Bottom: The Conquering Lion of God, ʿAli, son of the father of Talib

Notable impressions:
a. (figure 11.7) Sharh al-Maqasid of Taftazani: no. 5a.77

8. ʿAli ʿAdil Shah I (r. 1558–1580)

Circular, 36 mm, triple-ruled, Arabic, thuluth
The inscription is comprised of two circles: the inner one is stacked, read from bottom to top, and divided by two prominent kashidah of the ʿayn and ya in the name of ʿAli. The outer circle includes two registers: the inner one repeats the phrase wa-l-Imam, and the outer one names the Prophet Muhammad and the twelve Alid Imams.

Outer: Allahuma salli ʿala Mustafa Muhammad wa-l-Imam al-Murtada wa-l-Imam al-Mujtaba wa-l-Imam al-Shahid Husayn wa-l-Imam ʿAli Zayn al-ʿAdibin wa-l-Imam Muhammad Baqir wa-l-Imam Jaʿfar al-Sadiq wa-l-Imam Musa al-Kazim wa-l-Imam ʿAli Rida wa-l-Imam Muhammad Taqi wa-l-Imam ʿAli Naqi wa-l-Imam Hasan al-ʿAskari wa-l-Imam Mahdi.

Inner: ʿAbduhum Shah ʿAli Adil Shah, khadim-i ʿatra Rasul Allah.

Outer: God bless Mustafa Muhammad; and the Imam al-Murtada [ʿAli]; and the Imam al-Mujtaba [Hasan]; and the Martyred Imam Husayn; and the Imam ʿAli
Zayn al-Adibin; and the Imam Muhammad; and the Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq; and the Imam Musa al-Kazim; and the Imam ‘Ali Rida; and the Imam Muhammad ‘Taqi; and the Imam ‘Ali Naqi; and the Imam Hasan al-Askari; and the Imam Mahdi.

Inner: Their servant ‘Ali ‘Adil Shah, custodian of the progeny of the Prophet.

Notable impressions:

a. Khamsah of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi, Yazd (?), c. 1430, illustrated (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS. 302). Provenance: ‘Ali I; Ibrahim II (seal no. 10); Mughal library (purchased in Aurangabad on 1 Rabi’ I 1107/10 October 1695, reign of ‘Alamgir [r. 1658–1707]; seal of Muhammad Shah [r. 1719–48] dated 1156/1743). Bibliography: Black and Saidi, Islamic Manuscripts, no. 27; Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, fig. 16.

9. (figure 11.8) Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627)
   Oval, 13.5 x 20 mm, double-ruled, riq’a
   The background is accented with a delicate spiral, small leaves, and floral blossoms.
   *Ibrahim nawras* (or *nawras-i Ibrahim*)

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**Figure 11.8** Left: impression of a circular seal possibly belonging to ‘Ali ‘Adil Shah I of Bijapur (r. 1558–1580). Right: impression of the *nawras* seal of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II of Bijapur (r. 1580–1627) (no. 9).

*Source:* Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 76.851, MS. 1

*Date:* c. 1570

*Place of origin:* Shiraz, Iran

*Credit:* Photograph courtesy of the Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, Hyderabad
Based on the reading of the initial syllable as naw (new) or nuh (nine), as well as the presence or absence of an izafet, several translations and interpretations are possible: “Ibrahim nine moods/Nine moods of Ibrahim” (based on the rasas of Indian aesthetic theory); “Ibrahim nine juices/Nine juices of Ibrahim” (alluding to a wine recipe combining nine flavors); “Ibrahim newly arrived/New arrival of Ibrahim” (from the Persian “new,” naw, and “to arrive,” rasidan). The latter is generally used to reference a fresh garden or something innovative. Given the seal’s circulation as early as 1584 (the regency period, when Ibrahim was just fifteen), it could memorialize his accession (“Ibrahim newly arrived,” into kingship) or maturity (“Ibrahim freshly sprouted,” as a nawjavan).78

Notable impressions:79

a. (figure 11.8) Qur’an manuscript, Shiraz, late sixteenth century (Hyderabad, Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 76.851, MS.1). Provenance: the single-ruled, circular seal (40 mm) to the left of Ibrahim’s nawras example may indicate ownership by his predecessor ‘Ali I (r. 1558–1580).80 It bears an Arabic Shi‘i slogan in nasta‘liq—‘Ali sirat-i Haqq numsikuhu (‘Ali is the path of Truth to which we cling)—formed by a combination of fourteen detached letters (huruf muqatta‘at) found at the start of various Qur’anic suras. This legend invokes the namesake of ‘Ali I, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (d. 661), and could suggest the mushaf’s transfer from ‘Ali I to Ibrahim II. It was certainly in the latter’s possession by 14 Safar 1003/October 28, 1594, as recorded in a typical Ibrahim-period inspection notice on the same folio. Bibliography: Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, fig. 6.

10. Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627)
Circular, 41mm, double-ruled, Arabic, thuluth

The background features an even spiral with small leaves and blossoms. The kashidah in the words millat, fi, and istafaynahu divide the inscription into four horizontal registers that are read from top to bottom. The Qur’anic verse (2:130) alludes to the Bijapuri ruler by way of his namesake, the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). The selection of this verse, which was highlighted in other artistic contexts, must be contextualized in light of Ibrahim’s repentance (tawbah).81 Through it, the ruler was presented as a repentant hanif, an appellation applied to those who considered themselves to have “reverted” to the religion of Ibrahim/Abraham, before and during the prophethood of Muhammad.

wa man yarghabu ‘an millat-i Ibrahim illa man safiha nafsuhu wa laqad istafaynahu fi al-dunyà wa innahu fi’l-akhirati lamin al-salihin

Who therefore shrinks from the religion of Abraham, except he be foolish-minded? Indeed, We chose him in the present world, and in the world to come he shall be among the righteous.82

Notable impressions:83

a. Khamsah of Amir Khusraw: no. 8a. Here, the seal impression is integrated into the ruler’s tripartite ex libris. Provenance: ‘Ali I ‘Adil Shah (seal no. 8). Bibliography: Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, fig. 16.
b. *Divan* of Jami, transcribed by Shah Muhammad al-Katib al-Shirazi, probably Shiraz, dated 971–2/1563–65, illustrated (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, Ms. 260). The seal is impressed on all but one of the manuscript’s eighteen illustrated folios. It also once adorned the opening flyleaf (fol. 1r), with a notation below, but both have been vigorously effaced. Bibliography: Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, fig. 19; Overton, “From an Enigmatic Binding Stamp,” fig. 3.

c. Opening leaf from a heavily repaired album assembled from at least three different earlier Deccani volumes containing specimens of calligraphy and painting with vividly marbled borders (Delhi, National Museum, MS 55.45, p. 61, fol. 31r). The impression appears beneath the *basmala*, and the word *nawras* is written in a thin peach-colored border. Bibliography: Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, appendix no. 18; Benson, forthcoming.

11. Shah Navaz Khan (Sa’d al-Din ‘Inayat Allah Shirazi; d. c. 1611): prime minister of Bijapur during the reign of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627)

- Circular, 23 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *thuluth*

  The *kashidah* in the words *shah* and *shud* divide this stacked inscription into three registers. Reading begins in the center, followed by the top, then upward from the bottom.

  *Falak-i janabam az dawlat-i shah khatabam shud; Shah Navaz Khan*

  The firmament of my majesty was by my decree of the imperial kingdom; Shah Navaz Khan

  Notable impressions:

  Glosses by Sayyid Sharif Jurjani (d. 1413) on the commentary of Qutb al-Din al-Tahtani al-Razi (d. 1364) on the *Matali al-Anwar* (Ascendancy of Lights) of Siraj al-Din ‘Urmawi (d. 1283), transcribed by Nasr Allah Muhammad b. Ahmad, dated 3 Rabi’ II 984/June 30, 1576 (London, British Library, Loth 526 /B 181A5, fol. 1r). Provenance: Shah Navaz Khan; Bijapur royal library (gift from the former’s son; accessioned on 14 Ramadan 1026/September 15, 1617, during the reign of Ibrahim II). Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 1877, 144; Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, 113–14.

12. (figure 11.9) Muhammad ‘Adil Shah (r. 1627–1656)

- Circular, 44 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *thuluth*

  The perimeter features a sunburst pattern set off from the internal circle by double rulings. Delicate tendrils of flora and foliage embellish the background of the central circle. The *kashidah* of the letter *shin* in *Shah* and the final *yu* in *Sarafaazi* and *Ghazi* divide the inscription into four clear registers that are read from bottom to top.

  *Darad az lutf-i Haqq sar-afrazi, Sultan Muhammad Shah ghazi*

  By the grace of God (lit., truth), he is exalted, Sultan Muhammad Shah the Conqueror
Figures 11.9a–b Final page of text with the seal impression of Muhammad Adil Shah (r. 1627–1656) of Bijapur (no. 12). Below is a contemporary Bijapuri librarian’s two-lined notation in nasta’liq. Khamsa of Nizami, transcribed by Yar Muhammad Harawi.

Source: Appendix, no. 12a
Date: c. 1555
Place of origin: Attributed to India
Credit: Kasturbhai Lalbhai Museum, Ahmedabad. Photograph courtesy of the museum

Notable impressions:
a. (figure 11.9) Khamsah of Nizami, transcribed by Yar Muhammad Harawi, Hindustan, c. 1555, illustrated (Ahmedabad, Kasturbhai Lalbhai Museum). Provenance: Muhammad Adil Shah (below this seal impression is a contemporary two-lined notation in nasta’liq recording the ruler’s titulature); Mughal library (purchased in regnal year 20 [1678] of Alamgir’s reign [r. 1658–1707]; seal of Fazā’il Khan dated 1140/1727–28); many other impressions require reading. Bibliography: Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 1997, 31; Kumar, “Deccan as Dominion in Nineteenth-Century Photographs,” 2015.
b. Sharh al-Wiqayah (Commentary of Precaution) of ʿUbayd Allah b. Masʿud (d. 1344/47), a legal commentary on the Burhan al-Shariʿah (Proof of Sacred Law) of his grandfather Taj al-Shariʿa b. Sadr al-Shariʿa, Burhanpur, dated
17 Dhu’l-Qa’dah 1029/October 14, 1620 (London, British Library, Loth 232/B 350, fol. 3r). Provenance: Qazi Khush-hal (seal no. 13); Muhammad ‘Adil Shah (below this seal impression is a notation recording accession into the royal library in Ramadan 1054/November 1644, from Khush-hal); Mughal library (seal of Qabil Khan inscribed khanazada-yi ‘Alamgir Padshah, dated 1097/1685–86; oval seal of Muhammad Akram al-Madani inscribed al-‘Abd Muhammad Akram al-Madani, dated 1136/1723–24). Bibliography: Loth, A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 58.

c. Tabsir al-Rahman wa Taysir al-Manan (Enlightener of the Merciful and Aid to the Beneficent), a Qur’anic commentary spuriously ascribed to Zayn al-Din ‘Ali ‘Umawi Hanbali (d. 1310–11) but likely the work of ‘Ala’ al-Din ‘Ali b. Ahmad al-Mahā’imi (d. 1432), multiple scribes, sixteenth century (London, British Library, Loth 97/B 299, fol. 1r.). Provenance: Ibrahim b. Da’ud al-Wassali (see his seal dated 981/1573–74 on fol. 690v); Qazi Khush-hal (a very faint impression of his seal no. 13 appears to the lower left of Muhammad’s); Muhammad ‘Adil Shah (below this seal impression is a notation in nastaliq recording the ruler’s titulature and accession into the royal library); Mughal library (oval seal of Muhammad Akram al-Madani inscribed al-‘Abd Muhammad Akram al-Madani, dated 1136/1723–24); three other seals are on the folio in question. Bibliography: Loth, A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts, 1877, 20–21.

d. Ni‘matnamah-i Nasirshahi (Nasir Shah’s Book of Delights), an early illustrated Urdu treatise containing gastronomic, medicinal, and olfactory recipes. Initially written for Sultan Ghiyas al-Din Khalji (r. 1469–1500) and completed during the reign of his son Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1500–1510) (London, British Library, IO Islamic 149, fol. 1r). Provenance: Sultan Ghiyas al-Din Khalji (r. 1469–1500); Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1500–1510); unidentified library inspection notation dated 24 Sha‘ban 978/January 21, 1571 (see fol. 196v); Muhammad ‘Adil Shah (below this seal impression is a notation in naskh recording accession into the royal library on 22 Rabi’ I 1044/September 15, 1634, from Malik Almas, along with a similar inscription dated eight days later on the flyleaf); and Tipu Sultan (r. 1782–1799). Bibliography: Ursula Sims-Williams, “Nasir Shah’s Book of Delights,” Asian and African studies (blog), British Library, November 21, 2016, http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2016/11/nasir-shahs-book-of-delights.html.88

13. Qazi Khush-hal (d. 1620–21): judge and bibliophile during the reigns of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627) and Muhammad ‘Adil Shah (r. 1627–1656)

Oval, 16 × 14 mm, single-ruled, Persian, nastaliq

The background features a well-proportioned spiral tendril radiating from the center and accented with small leaves and floral blossoms. The date of 1018/1609–10 is prominently rendered on the lower edge.

Khush-hal 1018

Khush-hal literally means “happy” in Persian.
Notable impressions:
a. *Sharh al-Wiqayah* of ʿUbayd Allah b. Masʿud: no. 12b
b. *Tabsir al-Rahman wa Taysir al-Manan*: no. 12c

14. (figure 11.10)
Muhammad Ikhlas Khan (d. 1656): prime minister during the reign of Muhammad ʿAdil Shah (r. 1627–1656)
Dodecahedral, 21 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *nastaʿliq*

This seal is comprised of an inscription in two parts. It begins in the surrounding outer ring and concludes with the stacked inscription read from bottom to top in the central circle.

Exterior: *Az Lutf-i Haqq Muhammad Khattab Ikhlas Khan* . . .
Interior: . . . *Dar zaman-i harv-i ʿAdil Shah Sahib-qiran*
Exterior: From the Grace of Truth, Muhammad Khattab Ikhlas Khan . . .
Interior: . . . at the time of the Hero of ʿAdil Shah, Lord of the Conjunction.

**Figures 11.10a–b** Seal impression of Muhammad Ikhlas Khan (d. 1656) of Bijapur (no. 14). *Al-Fara'id* (*al-Sirajiya*) of Siraj al-Din Sajavandi, with a commentary by Jurjani, transcribed by Muhammad b. Khalid Walidi Hanafi.

Source: British Library, Loth 239/B 56, fol. 108r (appendix, no. 14a)
Date: Shaʿban 995/July–August 1587 and 14 Jamada II 1003/March 1593
Credit: © British Library Board
Notable impressions:

a. (figure 11.10) *al-Fara'id* of Siraj al-Din Sajavandi (fl. c. 1203–04), a work on inheritance law popularly called *al-Sirajiya* (in the author’s honor), accompanied by a commentary on the same by Sayyid Sharif Jurjani (d. 1413), transcribed by Muhammad b. Khalid Walidi Hanafi, dated Sha’ban 995/July-August 1587 and 14 Jumada II 1001/March 18, 1593 (London British Library, Loth 239/B 56, fol. 108r). Provenance: Muhammad Ikhlas Khan; library of the Qadiri Sufi order of Bijapur (see the notation on fol. 1r dated 27 Rajab 1075/February 13, 1665, and recording accession into the “Qadiri library” from one Taj Muhammad); Mughal library (seal of Qabil Khan inscribed *khanazada-yi ‘Alamgir Padshah*, unclear if dated; oval seal of Muhammad Akram al-Madani inscribed *al-ʿAbd Muhammad Akram al-Madani*, dated 1136/1723–24; see 12b). Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 1877, 60.

15. (figure 11.11)

Muhammad: a servant of Shah ‘Ali, likely in reference to Ali II (r. 1656–1672)

Circular, 21 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *riq’a*

This seal features a central *turunj va sar-turunj* (a lobed lozenge with attached tri-lobed finials) with a stacked inscription read from top to bottom containing the owner’s name. The outer rim includes a radiating Persian couplet, and the two distiches are divided by the two finials.

**Interior:** Muhammad *ʿAbd-i Shah ‘Ali

**Exterior:** Mihr Nabi mubur-i nigin-i dilam

*Hal shudah az mihr-i Nabi mushkilam*

**Interior:** Muhammad, the servant of Shah ‘Ali

**Exterior:** The light of the Prophet is the seal of the signet of my heart

The light of the Prophet solved my problem

Notable impressions:

a. (figure 11.11) Notes by Sayyid ‘Ali ‘Ajami (d. 1456) on the glosses by Sayyid Sharif Jurjani (d. 1413) on the commentary of Qutb al-Din al-Tahtani al-Razi (d. 1364) on the *Matali‘ al-Anwar* of Siraj al-Din ‘Urmawi (d. 1283), transcribed by Fakhir al-Din ‘Ali b. Darwish Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah (London, British Library Loth 528/B 210, fol. 1r). Provenance: Shah Navaz Khan (prime minister of Bijapur under Ibrahim II; Bijapur royal library (gift of the former’s son; accessioned on 29 Shawwal 1026/October 29, 1617, during the reign of Ibrahim II); Muhammad, a servant of Shah ‘Ali (likely in reference to ‘Ali II); Mughal library (seal of Qabil Khan inscribed *khanazada-yi ‘Alamgir Padshah*, dated 1097/1685–86; oval seal of Muhammad Akram al-Madani inscribed *al-ʿAbd Muhammad Akram al-Madani*, dated 1136/1723–24). Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 145; Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016, 115.
Qutb Shah (1496–1687, Golconda and Hyderabad)

For more on Qutb Shahi seals, see the notes.89

16. (Figure 11.12)
Ibrahim Qutb Shah (r. 1550–80)
Circular with a triple-lobed arched headpiece, 38 × 29 mm, double-ruled, Persian, nastaʿliq
The inscription is read from bottom to top. The word sakht is divided. The first two letters (sin-alif) appear at the top of the finial, and the last two (kha-ta) are in the middle with the latter elongated as a kashidah.

Shahi kih naqsh-i nigin sakht mihr Al-i Muqim
Bud sipihir-i karam-i Qutb Shah-i Ibrahim89
A king who made the seal of the signet of light the Enduring House89
Was the heaven of honor of Ibrahim Qutb Shah

Figure 11.11 Seal impression of Muhammad, a servant of Shah ‘Ali, probably in reference to Ali ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1656–1672) of Bijapur (no. 15). Notes by Sayyid ‘Ali ‘Ajami on the glosses by Jurjani on the commentary of Qutb al-Din on ‘Urmawi’s Matali’ al-Anwar.
Source: British Library, Loth 528/IO Bijapur 210, fol. 11 (appendix, no. 15a)
Credit: © British Library Board
Notable impressions:

a. (figure 11.12) *Khusus al-Ni’am fi Sharh Fusus al-Hikam* (Matters of Refinement, upon a commentary of the Bezels of Wisdom) of Muhyi al-Din Ibn ʿArabi (d. 1240), multiple scribes (London, British Library, Loth 650/B 401, fol. 1r). Provenance: Ibrahim Qutb Shah; Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah; Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah. The seals of all three rulers appear on the folio in question. Bibliography: Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 1877, 176.
b. Persian translation of the *Anwar al-ʿUqul min Ashʿar Wasi al-Rasul* (Lights of the Intellect from the Poems of the Custodians of the Prophet) of Muhammad Bayhaqi, dated 25 Safar 918/May 12, 1512 (Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, MS. 2564/H.I. 47, M. Nos. 208). Provenance: Ibrahim Qutb Shah; Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah; Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (the seals of all three rulers appear on the folio in question); Mughal library (valuation dated 1086/1675–76). Bibliography: Ashraf, *A Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, vol. 7, 1980, no. 2564 and illustration facing page 105; Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 1997, 324; Aq’al‘ah, “Muhr‘ha va Yaddash‘ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, fig. 1.

c. *Arba‘a* of Hatifi (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library Persian, Ms. 261). Provenance: Ibrahim Qutb Shah; Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah; Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah. Bibliography: Arberry, Minovi, and Blochet, *The Chester Beatty Library*, 1959, 3:35–36; Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 2011, 80–81.

17. (figure 11.12 and figure 11.13) Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (r. 1580–1612)

Circular with a triple-loped arched headpiece, 44 × 36 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *thuluth*

This inscription is divided horizontally twice by the *kashidah* of the word *shuda*, forming three registers. Reading begins at the top, jumps to the bottom, and concludes in the middle.

*Mulk-i Jahan mara bizir-i nigin shuda
Az hukm-i Bad Shah-i Jahan afarin shuda
al-ʿAbd Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*

The kingdom of the world has come under the seal
That was created by the rule of the Emperor
The servant Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah

Notable extant impressions:

a. (figure 11.12) *Khusus al-Ni’am* of Ibn ‘Arabi: no. 16a
b. Persian translation of the *Anwar al-ʿUqul* of Bayhaqi: no. 16b
c. *Arba‘a* of Hatifi: no. 16c
d. *Yusuf va Zulaykha* of Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), copied by Muhammad Qivam al-Shirazi, Shiraz, c. 1550–1560, illustrated (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.228.8.1, opening flyleaf). This is the only seal impression on the folio (a large notation is in the upper left). Provenance: Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (a notation on the second flyleaf records that it was “brought by Dervish Beg” and accessioned into the “Dad Mahal” library on 7 Ramazan 1017/December 15, 1608); Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (seal no. 19); seal of Zayn al-ʿAbidin dated 1190/1776. Bibliography: Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 2011, 48n87; Simpson and Marlow, *Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings*, 2015, 46n102; and Metropolitan Museum of Art, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/446544?sortBy=Relevance&amp;ft=13.228.8.8&amp;pg=1&amp;rrp=20&amp;pos=5 (find the flyleaf under “Additional Images”).
Seal impressions of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (r. 1580–1612) (top; no. 17); Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–1627) (middle; no. 19); and ʿAbd Allah Qutb Shah (r. 1626–1672) (bottom; no. 20) of Golconda. On the upper left is an illuminated inscription/ex libris written by Sultan Muhammad. Ziyaratnamah, transcribed by Muhammad Husayn. Source: Reg. p. 2721, page 3/fol. 2r (appendix, no. 19g)
Credit: Telangana State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad. Photograph by Jake Benson, reproduced with the permission of the museum.

e. *Zakhirah-ʿi Khwarazmshahi* (The Treasury of the Khwarazm Shah) of Zayn al-Din Jurjani (d. 1136), copied by Baba Mirak Herati, Golconda, 22 Shaʾban 980/December 28, 1572, illustrated (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, In. 30, fol. 445). Bibliography: Weinstein in Haidar and Sardar, eds. *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700*, 2015, cat. no. 96, 202–3.
f. *Khamsah* of Nizami, Golconda, c. 1575, illustrated (Hyderabad, Telangana [formerly Andhra Pradesh] State Archaeological Museum, MS P 1432, fol. 1r). A partial impression of this seal is visible above the illuminated title page. Bibliography: Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 2011, fig. 4.59 and 143–64.

g. (figure 11.13) *Ziyaratnamah*: no. 19g

18. (figure 11.14) Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–1627)
Circular with a triple-lobed arched headpiece, ~40 × 31 mm, double-ruled, Persian, *nastaʿliq*
The stacked inscription reads from bottom to top and features prominent horizontal extensions (*kashidah*) in the words *Shah*, *bandah* and *Najaf*.

*Sultan Muhammad Qutb-Shah, Bandah-i Shah-i Najaf 1020*

Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah, Servant of the King of Najaf [that is, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib] 1020 [1611–12, the latter year per the ruler’s accession]

Notable impressions:

a. *Khamsah* of Nizami Ganajavi (d. 1209), copied by Mahmud for Shah Rukh, Herat, dated 10 Rabi’ II 835/December 16, 1431, illustrated (St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museums, VR-1000, fols. 40r, 154r, 238r, 327r, and 441r).

Provenance: Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (five impressions of this seal;
one impression of the same ruler’s seal no. 19; and a purchase note dated Rajab 1024/July-August 1615 noting the book’s acquisition in Hyderabad; ʿAbd Allah Qutb Shah (seal no. 20). Bibliography: Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, 2012, no. 1 and 63, 66–67, 68; Aqʿalʾah, “Muhrʾha va Yaddashʾha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, fig. 11.

b. (figure 11.14) Qurʾan manuscript attributed to Yaqt al-Mustaʿsimi (d. 1298) (Hyderabad, Telangana State Oriental Manuscripts Library & Research Institute, Mushaf 169, fol. 1r). Provenance: Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah; Mughal library (seal of Muzaffar Khan Muhammad Shah Padshah Ghazi, dated regnal year 3, 1133/1720–21); eight additional seal impressions on the folio require analysis.

d. (figure 11.12 and figure 11.13) Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612–1627)

Circular with a triple-lobed arched headpiece, 39 × 29 mm, double-ruled, Persian, thuluth

The main circular portion of this inscription is divided into four registers by the kashidah of individual letters in sana, Sulayman, Sultan, and dilast. The kashidah in safdar at the very top further differentiates the finial portion.

Naqsh-i nigin-i dilast safdar-i Haydar mara
Muḥr-i Sulayman za Haqq gashtā muyassir mara
al-ʿAbd Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shāh, sana 1021

The design of the seal is the heart, given by Haydar to us
The seal of Solomon is from the Truth, for our success
The servant, Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah, year 1021 [1612–13] 95

Notable impressions:96

a. (figure 11.12) Khusus al-Niʿam of Ibn ʿArabi: no. 16a
b. Persian translation of the Anwar al-ʿUqul of Bayhaqi: no. 16b
c. Arbaʿa of Hatifi: no. 16c
d. Yusuf va Zulaykha of Jami: no. 17d (second flyleaf). At least seven other impressions are visible on the flyleaf in question, as well as the Muhammad Quli-period notation.
e. Khamsah of Nizami: no. 18a. This impression is one of two Qutb Shāhi seals on fol. 1r (the upper example, the lower one being no. 20). Although it is partially effaced and somewhat difficult to read, the four kashidah described above, as well as the date in the lower left, can be discerned. Bibliography: Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, 2012, 45; Aqʿalʾah, “Muhrʾha va Yaddashʾha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, fig. 10; Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 2011, fig. 2.9; Simpson and Marlow, Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings, 2015, 46n101.
f. Jahangirnama of Jahangir, Hyderabad, dated Wednesday [26] Dhuʾl-Qaʿdah 1020/ January 29, 1612,98 copied by Muhammad Muʿmin “known as” (mashḥur biḥ) ʿArab Shirazi (Patna, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, HL no. 43, fol. 1r). Provenance: Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shāh; ʿAbd Allah
Qutb Shah (seal no. 20); Mughal library (acquired during the conquest of Golconda by Prince Muhammad Sultan [d. 1676], the eldest son of ‘Alamgir; see his seal dated 1653/1654–55 and the large three-lined notation on the folio in question). Bibliography: Abdul Muqtadir, *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts*, 1921, no. 557; Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 1997, 328; Aq’al’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddash’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, figs. 15–16; for a digitized version of the manuscript, visit http://kblibrary.bih.nic.in/Digitization/Jahangirnamah.pdf.

g. (figure 11.13) Ziyaratnamah, transcribed by Muhammad Husayn (Hyderabad, Telangana [formerly Andhra Pradesh] State Archaeological Museum, Reg. p. 2721, page 3/fol. 2r). Provenance: Lutf al-Husayni al-Shirazi, aka Malik al-Tujjar; ‘Abd Allah bin Lutf al-Husayni al-Shirazi, aka Malik al-Tujjar (see the inscriptions on fols. 1r and 14v and the effaced oval seal on fol. 1r); Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (seal no. 17; also see the notation dated 8 Muharram 1003/September 22, 1594, on fol. 14v stating it was a gift of ‘Abd Allah bin Malik al-Tujjar); Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (this seal and an illuminated notation/ex libris written by the ruler and dated to the start of Ramadan 1022/mid-October 1613); ‘Abd Allah Qutb Shah (seal no. 20); four other seal impressions are present on fol. 2r, and a notation on fol. 1r mentions that it was part of the library of the Dad Mahal (also see 19d). Bibliography: Ghause, *Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts*, 1953, 94–95.

h. Shahnamah, place of production unknown, terminus ante quem of 1021/1612–13 (per this seal), illustrated (Cambridge University Library, Ms. Add. 269, fol. 1r). The impression appears next to a notation dated 1019/1610–11 and a valuation (*qimat*) of 300 hun, a substantial sum. Provenance: Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah; East India Company (inscription by librarian Charles Wilkins dated August 15, 1806). Bibliography: Aq’al’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddash’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, fig. 8; University of Cambridge Digital Library, http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-00269/1

i. Masnavi of Jalal al-Din Rumi, Iran, c. 1400–1500, illustrated (London, British Library, ms. Or. 7603). Bibliography: Simpson and Marlow, *Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings*, 2015, 461n101.

j. Risalah-‘i Miqdariyah, a treatise on weights and measures by Mir Muhammad Mu’min Astarabadi (d. 1625), holograph copy by the author (Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, MS. 1757/Tibb 127). Bibliography: Ashraf, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, vol. 10, 1983, no. 3868.

20. (figure 11.13) ‘Abd Allah Qutb Shah (r. 1626–1672)

Circular with triple-lobed arched headpiece, ~40 × 29 mm, double-ruled, Arabic and Persian, *thuluth*

The extended lines (*kashidah*) of the words *banda* and *inni*, as well as the final *ya* of *’atana*, divide the circle into four distinct registers. Reading proceeds from top to middle, then bottom to middle.
Inni ‘Abd Allah ‘atana al-Kitab, bandah-i Shah-i Vilayat-i Qutb Shah 1037

Indeed, I am the servant of God; he has given me the Book; Servant of the King of Authority [that is, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib], Qutb Shah 1037 [1628–29]

Notable impressions:

a. Khamsah of Nizami: no. 18a. This impression is the lower example on fol. 1r. 

Notable impressions:

b. Jahangirnamah: no. 19f.

c. Jawharnamah, a miscellany containing three treatises on gemology, copied by Hasan Katib, dated 10 Dhu’l-Qa’dah 1032/August 14, 1645 (Tehran, Majlis library, Sana Library Ms. No. 793, fol. 205r). This seal impression is effaced. 

Provenance: Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (also see the ruler’s seven-lined illuminated notation/ex libris dated 1034/1624–25). Bibliography: Aq’al’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015, fig. 14. 

d. (figure 11.13) Ziyaratnamah: no. 19g

NOTES

This essay is a general introduction to Deccani book culture and collecting, a subject that remains in its infancy and whose preliminary conclusions favor the ‘Adil Shahs (1490–1686, Bijapur) and Qutb Shahs (1496–1687, Golconda and Hyderabad). Knowledge of Bahmani (1347–1548, Gulbarga and Bidar) book arts is steadily blossoming, but the Nizam Shahs (1496–1636, Ahmadnagar) remain a glaring omission due to a current dearth of material. For a complete list of the region’s Islamic dynasties (hereafter “sultanates”), see Navina Haidar and Marika Sardar, eds., Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 346.

The opening essay is by Overton, the section titled “Overview of Deccani Seals: Form, Function, and Language” is by Benson, and the Appendix, “Catalog of Deccani Seals and Impressions” is a joint effort (Overton expresses her thanks to Benson for enthusiastically joining the project). Unless otherwise noted, all transliterations and translations are the work of Benson, expanding upon prior research conducted by Overton in 2009–2011. Figure reproductions appear in the chronological order of the Appendix (Bahmani, ‘Adil Shah, Qutb Shah), and we have generally favored the reproduction of unpublished material.

Acknowledgments: The study of library collections is rooted in patience, collaboration, practicality, and luck. We have benefited from the expertise and generosity of many scholars. We are grateful to Subah Dayal for helping us to decipher no. 19 through her sharing of impressions g and j; Peyvand Firouzeh for her insights on Ni’mat Allahi examples; Abdullah Ghouchani for reading nos. 6 and 8; Saqib Baburi for assistance with nos. 5, 6, 11, and 15; and Muhammad Javad Jiddi for invaluable help with nos. 16, 17, 18, and 20. Elaine Wright, Amélie Couvrat Desvergnes, Mahmood Alam, and John Seyller kindly provided measurements of impressions. Seyller’s work on the Mughal
library has been a long-standing inspiration, and we further thank Ada Adamova, Ahab Bdaiwi, Hamidreza Ghelichkhani, Francis Richard, Marianna Shreve Simpson, and Elaine Wright for important exchanges. Special thanks to Jan Just Witkam for help with secondary sources; ‘Ali Safari Aq’al’ah for providing a copy of his recent exemplary article on Qutb Shahi seals; and Ursula Sims-Williams for providing photographs of British Library manuscripts, facilitating viewings, sharing her transcription and translation of no. 12 (and bringing d and e to our attention), and advancing knowledge of BL volumes through her excellent blogs. Finally, we thank all repositories, collectors, and scholars who have allowed reproduction herein.

1. Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*. For a review of this exhibition and catalog, see Marianna Shreve Simpson, “Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy*. xi, 384. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015,” Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 79, no. 1 (February 2016): 201–3.

2. Mark Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983).

3. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, fig. 54; Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. no. 38.

4. Kuwait, Al-Sabah Collection, Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyya, LNS 277 MS; Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. no. 98.

5. Roberta Smith, “‘Sultans of Deccan India,’ Unearthly Treasures of a Golden Age at the Met,” review of the exhibition “Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York Times, April 23, 2015, http://nyti.ms/1PnDJ7S.

6. For some notable examples, see Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. nos. 45, 52, 104–95, and fig. 49.

7. For excerpts from these sources, as well as their relevant bibliographies, see D. Fairchild Ruggles, ed., *Islamic Art & Visual Culture: An Anthology of Sources* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 3.5, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17, and 3.18, respectively. In the field of Deccani painting, the narrative is generally dominated by the following three sources: the *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi* (Rose Garden of Ibrahim) of Muhammad Qasim Hindushah Astarabadi (known as Firishta, d. 1611), the *Kitab-i Nawras* (Book of Nawras) of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II (r. 1580–1627), and the *Sih Nasr* (Three Essays) of Nur al-Din Muhammad Zuhuri (d. 1616), with Malik Qummi (d. 1616). For a recent assessment of Firishta, see Sanjay Subrahmanymam, *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 46, where he concludes the following about the chronicle’s motivation: “Incapable of challenging the Mughals in terms of their military might, the sultan [Ibrahim II of Bijapur] seems to have chosen instead to rival parts of their cultural production.”

8. Among others, see Emma Flatt, “The Authorship and Significance of the *Nujum al-Ulum*: A Sixteenth-Century Astrological Encyclopedia from Bijapur,” Journal of the American Oriental Society 131, no. 2 (2011): 223–44; Navina Haidar, “The *Kitab-i Nawras*: Key to Bijapur’s Golden Age,” in *Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan...
Courts, 1323–1687, ed. Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 26–43; Laura Weinstein, “The Shahnama in the Deccan: A Dispersed Bijapur Shahnama of ca. 1610,” in Shahnama Studies III, ed. Charles Melville and G. R. van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming); and Deborah Hutton, “The Pem Nem: A Sixteenth-Century Illustrated Romance from Bijapur,” in Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan Courts, 1323–1687, ed. Navina Haidar and Marika Sardar (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 44–63. Six Qutb Shahi manuscripts are addressed in Laura Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme: Adaptation and Innovation in Early Manuscripts from Golconda” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2011).

9. John W. Seyller and W. M. Thackston, The Adventures of Hamza: Painting and Storytelling in Mughal India (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, 2002); and Marianna Shreve Simpson, Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Haft Awrang: A Princely Manuscript from Sixteenth-Century Iran (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1997).

10. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, VR-1000.

11. Princeton University Library, Islamic MSS, third series, no. 310.

12. See John Seyller’s seminal “The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts in the Imperial Mughal Library,” Artibus Asiae 57, nos. 3–4 (1997), 243–349.

13. On “connected histories,” see Sanjay Subrahmanya, “Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” Modern Asian Studies 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–62.

14. I borrow this term from Robert Skelton, who early on observed that Deccani painting “presented something of an enigma” due to a scarcity of both textual and visual “documents.” Robert Skelton, “Documents for the Study of Painting at Bijapur in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” Arts Asiatiques 5, no. 2 (1958): 113.

15. Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” Appendix A (“Manuscripts with Mughal Valuations”), is a critical resource for locating volumes with a Deccan-Mughal provenance (approximately eight are identified). For three volumes that entered the Mughal library as military booty during the Deccan campaigns, see 252n37. By 1687, all of the Deccan sultanates had fallen to the Mughals.

16. Otto Loth, A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office (London, 1877). Volumes identified with a “B” were discovered in the Asar Mahal in 1853. For a summary of this collection, see Saleemuddin Qureshi, “The Royal Library of Bijapur,” Pakistan Library Bulletin 11, nos. 3–4 (September–December 1980): 1–16.

17. An excellent model is Adel T. Adamova and Manijeh Bayani, Persian Painting: The Arts of the Book and Portraiture (London: Thames & Hudson, 2015), cat. no. 29, esp. 435–41 (with the assistance of John Seyller). For excellent reproductions of Qutb Shahi seals, see Ursula Sims-Williams, “Revisiting the Provenance of the Sindbadnamah (IO Islamic 3214),” Asian and African studies blog, British Library, June 27, 2016, http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/asian-and-african/; and “A Mughal Shahnama,” June 21, 2016, http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/asian-and-african/2016/06/a-mughal-shahnamah.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+a-sian-and-african+%28Asia+and+Africa%29.
18. To date, no original Deccani seal matrices have been identified.
19. Francis Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France,” in The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Françoise ‘Nalini’ Delvoye, and Marc Gaborieau (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), fig. 6; Keelan Overton, “Book Culture, Royal Libraries, and Persianate Painting in Bijapur, circa 1580–1630,” Muqarnas 33 (2016), fig. 10; Keelan Overton, “From an Enigmatic Binding Stamp to a Holistic Reassessment: The St Andrews Qur’an,” Echoes from the Vault (blog), University of St Andrews Library, December 2016, fig. 3, https://standrewsrarebooks.wordpress.com/2016/12/20/from-an-enigmatic-binding-stamp-to-a-holistic-reassessment-the-st-andrews-quran/. For previous misattributions, see Christie’s, Islamic Art and Manuscripts, London, April 11, 2000, lot 79, 52–53; Crofton Black and Nabil Saidi, Islamic Manuscripts (Catalogue 22) (London: Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts), 2005, no. 27, 72–73.

20. For a seminal study on Bidar’s built environment, see Ghulam Yazdani, Bidar: Its History and Monuments (London: Oxford University Press, 1947). The record of portable Bahmani material culture is currently limited to coins (Haidar and Sardar, eds., Sultans of Deccan India, cat. no. 1), metalwork (cat. nos. 2–3, 5–6), and a handful of examples of book arts (cat. no. 4 and p. 32). Also see Sims-Williams, “Revisiting the Provenance of the Sindbadnamah” on the Sinbadnamah dedicated to Muhammad Bahmani (r. 1358–1375) in 1374.
21. Keelan Overton, s.v. “Bahmani Dynasty,” in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 3rd ed., ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Kramer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_COM_25147.
22. On Gisu Daraz, see chapter 2 in Richard Eaton, The New Cambridge History of India I, 8: A Social History of the Deccan, 1300–1761: Eight Indian Lives (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For the Nimat ‘Allahis between Iran and the Deccan, see Peyvand Firouzeh, “Architecture, Sanctity, and Power; Ne’matollāhī shrines and khānaqāhs in Fifteenth-Century Iran and India” (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 2015).
23. On Mahmud Gavan, see Eaton, The New Cambridge History of India, chap. 3.
24. Ali Anooshahr, “Shirazi Scholars and the Political Culture of the Sixteenth Century Indo-Persian World,” Indian Economic and Social History Review 55, no. 3 (2014): 331–52. See, also, Ahab Bda’iwi’s essay in chapter 7 of this volume.
25. London, British Library, Loth 967 (B 7).
26. The style of illumination in figure 11.4B, combined with the nisba suffix al-Azhari appended to the name of the scribe (indicating a possible association with al-Azhar University in Cairo), suggest a Mamluk origin.
27. This manuscript was not found in Bijapur’s Asar Mahal. As a result, it does not carry the “B” preface and is identified simply as IO Islamic 605.
28. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. 124. For an image of the folio (fol. 294v), visit the Chester Beatty Library’s Islamic Seals Database, http://www.cbl.ie/islamiceseals/View-Seals/346.aspx.
29. For seals with comparable central knotting, see Venetia Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 2011), 97 (no. 434); and Muhammad Javad Jiddi, *Danishnamah-yi Muhr va Hakkaki dar Iran* (1392; Tehran: Kitabkhana, Muzih va Markaz-i Asnad-i Majlis-i Shura-yi Islami, 2013), 192 (nos. 23 and 40), among many others.

30. A translation of the notation is published in A. J. Arberry, M. Minovi, and E. Blochet, *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures. Vol. 1. MSS. 101–150*, ed. J. V. S. Wilkinson (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1959), 53.

31. A summary of Safavid and Mughal seals is provided in Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets*, 7–11.

32. For the larger seal naming the Twelve Imams, see Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 16. For metalwork comparanda, see Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. nos. 154–55.

33. *Tadhkirat al-Muluk* (History of Kings, c. 1608–1612) of Rafiʿ al-Din Shirazi (d. 1620), quoted from P. M. Joshi, “ʿAli ʿAdil Shah of Bijapur (1558–1580) and His Royal Librarian: Two Ruqʿas,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* (New Series) 31 & 32 (1956–57): 97.

34. Joshi, “ʿAli ʿAdil Shah of Bijapur.” Unfortunately, Joshi does not reproduce the documents (in Persian, with Modi transcription) and only describes some of the seals, including a *Nad-iʿAliyan* example and that of Mustafa Khan (inscribed *Mustafa Khan Ghulam-i Shah*), presumably in reference to Mustafa Khan Ardistani (d. 1580), who had migrated from Golconda to Bijapur in 1565. It is unclear if the former seal is the same example published in Ravinder Lonkar, *ʿAdil Shahi Farmans* (Pune: Diamond, 2007), 223, and visible on several *farmans* dating to the reign of Ibrahim II (pp. 2–7).

35. Mughal collecting can be described as a dynastic enterprise—upon the death of an emperor, his books passed to his successor/son—but any comparable conclusions about ʿAdil Shahi collecting would be premature at this stage.

36. Approximately fifty volumes were part of the collection discovered in Bijapur’s Asar Mahal and now preserved in the British Library. See Loth, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts*; and Qureshi, “The Royal Library of Bijapur.” Overton, “Book Culture,” further identifies nineteen books or album folios once owned by Ibrahim II but now dispersed across the globe (see the Appendix, 131–37).

37. Robert Skelton, “The Mughal Artist Farrokh Beg,” *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957): 398.

38. For additional reproductions, see Overton, “Book Culture.”

39. See the examples included in Abdullah Ghouchani, Marika Sardar, and Navina Najat Haidar, “Inscribed Sacred Vessels,” in *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fancy*, ed. Navina Naja Haidar and Marika Sardar (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 259–67.

40. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, SP 1919, discussed in Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 297; Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts,” figs. 9–12; Overton, “Book Culture,” Appendix no. 5 and fig. 17.

41. For a reevaluation and reattribution of this manuscript, see Keelan Overton and Kristine Rose-Beers, with contributions by Bruce Wannell, “Indo-Persian Histories from the
Object Out: The St Andrews Qur’an Between Timurid, Safavid, Mughal, and Deccani Worlds,” in Iran and the Deccan: Persianate Art, Culture, and Talent in Circulation, ca. 1400–1700, ed. Keelan Overton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, forthcoming). Also see Overton, “Book Culture,” Appendix no. 12 and figs. 22–24; Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), cat. no. 141.

42. Francis Richard was the first to draw a comparison between Ibrahim’s seal and this binding stamp. See Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts,” 244. For reproductions, see Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 22; Overton, “From an Enigmatic Binding Stamp,” figs. 1–2.

43. On the minimal comparanda and precedent, see Overton, “Book Culture,” 112–13.

44. See the top margin of Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 21.

45. The origin of this manuscript has been debated, but the consensus is that it dates to the reign of Humayun (r. 1530–1556). I (Overton) first learned of Muhammad’s ownership of this book during Pramod Kumar’s illuminating conference presentation titled “Deccan as Dominion in Nineteenth-Century Photographs of South India” (Metropolitan Museum of Art, May 12, 2015), and I sincerely thank him for sharing information. For an assessment of the folio in question (fol. 345r), see Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 311. The notation on the lower left may be Bijapuri. It includes the common phrase “collected into the royal library” (jam’ kitabkhanah-i ‘amirah [. . .]) and a valuation of 500 huns (gold coins used in the Deccan). On the manuscript in general, see Stuart Cary Welch, “Appendix E: A Mughal Manuscript of the Reign of Humayun,” in Tales of a Parrot = The Cleveland Museum of Art’s Tuti namah (Cleveland: The Museum, 1978), 188–90.

46. On Asad Beg’s stay in the Khan-i Khānān’s camp during his 1603 delegation to Bijapur, see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Witnessing Transition: Views on the End of the Akbari Dispensation,” in The Making of History: Essays Presented to Irfan Habib, ed. N. Panikkar et al. (New Delhi: Tulika, 2000), 104–40. Also see Corinne Lefèvre, “The Court of ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān as a Bridge Between Iranian and Indian Cultural Traditions,” in Culture and Circulation: Literature in Motion in Early Modern India, ed. Thomas de Bruijn and Allison Busch (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 75–106.

47. Adel Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, Paintings and Drawings from the 15th to the Early 20th Century in the Hermitage Collection (London: Azimuth Editions, 2012), no. 1.

48. The most comprehensive and important study of Qutb Shahi seals to date is ‘Ali Safari Aq’qal-ah, “Muh‘ra va Yaddash’t’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah va Muh‘-i Sultan ‘Abd Allah Qutbshah dar barkhi nuskhah’ha-yi Kitabkhanah-yi Qutbshahiyān,” Awraq-i ‘Atiq 4 (2015): 221–50. Notable codices bearing Qutb Shahi impressions are also recorded in Marianna Shreve Simpson and Louise Marlow, Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings: The Peck Shahnama (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Art Museum, 2015), 39, 45n101–103. The findings of Aq’qal-ah and Simpson overlap in just one instance (the Hermitage Khamsah). For our part, we have tried to introduce “new” material in this Appendix, nos. 16–20.
49. For the example belonging to Shah Isma’il I (r. 1501–1524), see Muhammad ‘Ali Karimzadah Tabrizi, Muhr’ha, Tughr’ha va Farman’ha-yi Padshahan-Iran: az Shah Isma’il-i Safavi ta Ahmad Shah Qajar (London: M. A. Karimzadah Tabrizi, 2006), 4–9.

50. For a Kimiya al-Sa’dat (Alchemy of Happiness) of Muhammad al-Ghazzali (d. 1111) dated 10 Sha’ban 902/April 13, 1497 and bearing the seals of four Qutb Shahs (Ibrahim, Muhammad Quli, Sultan Muhammad, and ‘Abd Allah), see Muhammad Ashraf, A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library, vol. 8, Concerning 462 Manuscripts in Islamic Theology (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Museum, 1985), no. 3206 (fols. 255–259).

51. Ziyaratnamah, tuhfah-i Malik al-Tujjar raqqim Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah bi tarikh ghurah-i mah-i Ramazan al-Mubarak sana 1022 (we have slightly modified the transcription in Mohammad Ghause, Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts in the Hyderabad Museum [Hyderabad: Government Press, 1953], 95). For additional examples of Sultan Muhammad’s illuminated inscription/ex libris, see Aq’al’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” fig. 5 (Rawzat al-Safa’, Berlin, Staatsbibliotek, MS. Or. Fol. 169; 4 lines) and fig. 14 (Jawahirnamah, Tehran, Majlis Library; 7 lines) (no. 20c here); Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts,” fig. 4 (BN, MS Suppl. Persan 151B; 5 lines).

52. For example, the Timurid-Safavid Mantiq al-Tayr (Conference of the Birds) (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 63,210).

53. One impression of Sultan Muhammad’s slightly later, and apparently more common, seal dated 1021/1612–13 (Appendix, no. 19) also adorns the opening frontispiece (fol. 1r). Adjacent to it is the seal of ‘Abd Allah dated 1037/1627–28 (Appendix, no. 20). For a reproduction, see Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, 45.

54. Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 19.

55. For the most recent reproduction and analysis of this inscription (fol. 475r), see Simpson and Marlow, Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings, 180–81. The entire manuscript is available for viewing online at http://pudl.princeton.edu/objects/bg257f817. Also see the earlier Louise Marlow, “The Peck Shahnameh: Manuscript Production in Late Sixteenth-Century Shiraz,” in Intellectual Studies on Islam: Essays Written in Honor of Martin B. Dickson, ed. Michel M. Mazzaoui and Vera B. Moreen (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), 229–43.

56. Mashhad, Astan-i Quds-i Razavi, no. 106. See Maryam Habibi, “Qur’an-i khatti shumarah-yi 106 bi khatt-i ‘Abd al-Qadir Husayni Shirazi dar muzih-yi Astan-i Quds-i Razavi,” Art Quarterly 8 (2014): 20–27. This article is forthcoming as a modified English translation by Arash Khazeni in Overton, ed., Iran and the Deccan.

57. Jake Benson’s English translation of this waqfnamah is forthcoming in Overton, ed., Iran and the Deccan.

58. All of the Deccani seals discussed in this section are identified by their number in the Appendix. For a general overview of seals in Islamic culture, see Porter, Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets and Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions. On “Khatam” and “Muhr,” see Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), 4:1102–5;
literature and the arts

5:472–73. For Iranian seals specifically, see Hyacinthe Louise Rabino di Borgomale, Coins, Medals, and Seals of the Shahs of Iran, 1500–1941 (Hertford, UK: S. Austin and Sons, 1945); Karimzadah Tabrizi, Muhr’ha, Tughra’ha va Farman’ha-yi Padshahan-Iran; and, most recently, Muhammad Javad Jiddi, Danish’namah-yi Muhr va Hakkaki dar Iran.

59. Saqib Baburi, “Persian Palaeography: A Millenium of Writing,” Traces of the Hand from Africa to Asia: A Symposium on the Palaeography of the Arabic-Script Languages (public lecture at King’s College, London, August 24, 2015).

60. For “Dhu al-faqar on Islamic Seals” and “Seals of the Imams,” see Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 176–77, 132–34.

61. Karimzadah Tabrizi, Muhr’ha, Tughra’ha va Farman’ha-yi Padshahan-i Iran, 23–30.

62. Porter, Arabic and Persian Seals, 1–2.

63. Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms 153, discussed recently in Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 175. In addition, fol. 29v features an illustration of Solomon enthroned attended by a court of men, beasts, and jinn, with an unusual application of a combed-patterned marbled papercut depicting a mythical simurgh flying among other birds overhead (189–92).

64. On the terms khatam and muhr as tropes in Persian poetry, see Sayyid Ja’far Saijadi, Farhang-i Istalahat va Ta’birat-i ‘Irānī (1370; repr., Tehran: Intisharat-i Tahuri, 1991–92), 335, 751. For muhr-i nigin, see Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd. ed., 5:557.

65. This is a central theme of the illustrated Bijapuri Pem Nem (Laws of Love) (London, British Library, Add. 16880), in which the image of the beloved Mahji is literally depicted as engraved upon the heart of her lover Shahji. On this manuscript, see Hutton, “The Pem Nem.”

66. For a similar central plaited knot, see Vladimir Grigorevich Lukonin and Anatoly Ivanov, The Lost Treasure: Persian Art (New York: Parkstone Press International, 2013), cat. no. 139. Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 129 (above, E), includes a series of plaited knots intermingled with the phrase “My trust is in my creator” (tawakkuli ‘ala khaliqi). Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 133 (above, C), features a single central knot evolving into, and dividing, the names of the Twelve Imams (the ‘ayn of ‘Ali, for example, is part of the knot). On the relationship between seals and amulets, see Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 96–98.

67. For an intriguing mid-eighteenth century parallel between a seal and parasol (the latter framing the former as an illumination), see Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 164.

68. On the Safavid use of this form, see Gallop and Porter, Lasting Impressions, 162.

69. Readers are encouraged to cross-reference against Seyller, “The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts,” 1997; Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts,” 2000; Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 2011; Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddash’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 2015; and Overton, “Book Culture,” 2016; among others.

70. The term kashidah derives from the Persian root kashidan (to draw out, to extend).
71. For a Bijapuri notation explicitly referencing the “Qadiri library,” presumably that of the Sufi lodge, see Appendix, no. 144.

72. Haroon Khan Sherwani, Mahmud Gawan, the Great Bahmani Wazir (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1942), 115, 135.

73. Mahmud Gawan, Riyaz al-Insha’, ed. Chand bin Husayn (Hyderabad: Sarkar-i ‘Ali, 1948), no. 90, 272–76.

74. Due to the poor quality of the impression in question, a complete reading is difficult.

75. Qabil Khan inspected the Asar Mahal collection during ‘Alamgir’s reign. His seal is documented throughout Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation.” Also see Overton, “Book Culture,” Appendix nos. 5, 9, and 10.

76. This analysis is tentative and inconclusive, being based upon a single poor-quality impression with problematic orthography. It is the most difficult and confusing of the samples presented here, but we nonetheless include it because it is both the earliest known ‘Adil Shahi seal and is impressed in an illustrious manuscript. We thank the following scholars for their slightly differing readings: Abdullah Ghouchani, Yaser Atar, Mahmood Alam, and Saqib Baburi. What is presented here is a hybrid chosen by Benson based on these interpretations and also considering tropes and rhyming schemes.

77. The volume’s lengthy Ibrahim II-period notation in the form of an inverted triangle (figure 11.7B) mentions this “large” (buzurg) seal of ‘Ali I but references it with the phrase wa man yarghabu. This is the opening of Qur’an 2:130, the verse selected for the largest seal of Ibrahim II (Appendix, no. 10). A later scribe appears to have recognized the erroneous association between this Qur’anic verse and ‘Ali’s seal, crossed out both the description and false attribution, and more appropriately described the seal in question with the phrase Dhu’l-Fiqar.

78. Overton “Book Culture,” 97–98, based on Deborah Hutton, Art of the Court of Bijapur (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 110–11, and insights shared by Wheeler Thackston.

79. Many other impressions of this seal can be found in the British Library Asar Mahal volumes.

80. Because the significance of this seal impression was realized in the late stages of this essay, it could not be included in the Appendix. Various readings are documented, but the one given here is reported in the Matla’ al-Irfan fi Tafsir al-Qur’an (Commencement of Gnosis in the Commentary of the Qur’an) by the Shirazi Shi‘i scholar Ghiyath al-Din Dashtaki (d. 1542). See the critical edition published in Ghiyath al-Din Dashtaki, “Matla’ al-Irfan fi Tafsir al-Qur’an,” in Musannafat Ghiyath al-Din, ed. ’Abdullah Nurani (1386; Tehran: Anjuman-i Asar va Mafakhiri Farhangi, 2006–7), vol. 1, 353.

81. For additional iterations of this verse and seal design in Ibrahim-era art, see Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 12 (his tomb complex, the Ibrahim Rauza), figs. 14–16 (his tripartite ex libris), and fig. 22 (his binding stamp). On Ibrahim’s tawbah, see Bruce Wannell, “The Epigraphic Program of the Ibrahim Rauza in Bijapur,” in Sultans of the South, ed. Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 255–56, 259, 266.
82. A. J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 16. Note that Arberry mistakenly assigns this translation to verse 124.

83. For the most recent list of manuscripts and album folios bearing this impression, see Overton, “Book Culture,” Appendix, 131–37, developing the earlier work of Richard, “Some Sixteenth-Century Deccani Persian Manuscripts” (for example, fig. 6) and Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” in particular.

84. A different bifolium from the same album is published in Haidar and Sardar, eds., *Sultans of Deccan India*, cat. no. 77, 166.

85. Loth originally cataloged 526 as B 181B (p. 144), but this has since been changed to B 181A and is not to be confused with Loth 525/B 181 (originally B 181A). For the latter, see Overton, “Book Culture,” fig. 5.

86. Saqib Baburi suggests that the displaced letter nun at the top-right may refer to one of the alternative letter-names of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic tradition.

87. It is unclear if this is the same Faza’i Khan who received a copy of the *Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabitah* (Book of the Fixed Stars) of ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Sufi in 1104/1692–93 “at the place of Gulkala in the region of Bijapur” (Seyller, “Inspection and Valuation,” 304).

88. In this blog, Ursula Sims-Williams also discusses another impression of this seal in a copy of the *Sharh al-Qadim* (London, British Library, Loth 406/B 207, fol. 17): Ursula Sims-Williams, “Nasir Shah’s Book of Delights,” Asian and African Studies blog, British Library, November 21, 2016, http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2016/11/nasir-shahs-book-of-delights.html.

89. Aq’al’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yad’dash’t’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” discusses and/or reproduces the following manuscripts bearing Qutb Shahi seals: Translation of the *Anwar al-ʿUqul min Ashʿar Wasi al-Rasul* (Lights of the Intellect from the Poems of the Custodians of the Prophet) of Muhammad Bayhaqi (Hyderabad, Salar Jung Museum, MS. 2564), fig. 1 (no. 16b here); *Kimiya al-Saadat* (Alchemy of Happiness) of Muhammad al-Ghazzali (Tehran, Majles Library No. 581), fig. 2; *Rawzat al-Safa’* (Garden of Purity) of Mir Khwand (Berlin, Staatsbibliotek, MS. Or. Fol. 169), fig. 5; *Shahnamah* of Firdawsi (Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 269), fig. 8 (no. 16b here); *Divan* of Hafiz (Tehran, Majlis Library, no. 870), fig. 9; *Khamsa* of Nizami (St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, VR-1000), fig. 10–11 (no. 18a here); *al-Tafhim li-Awa’l Sin’a at al-Tanjim* (Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology) (Dushanbe: Farhangistan-i Ulum Library, no. 385), fig. 12; *Jawahirnamah* (miscellany of three texts on gemology) (Tehran, Majlis Library), figs. 13–14 (no. 20c here); *Jahangir-namah* Patna, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library), fig. 15–16 (no. 19f here); *Divan* of Falaki Shirvani (Qum, Ayatullah Ma’ashi Najafi Library, no. 14355), fig. 17; *Divan* of Pur Bahai Jami (London, British Library, Ms. Add. Or. 9213), fig. 18; *Divan* of Zil Allah Deccani (Tehran, Majlis Library), fig. 19. In order not to replicate efforts, our “Notable impressions” generally focuses on other manuscripts, with some exceptions.

90. A transcription is published in Ashraf, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, vol. 8, no. 3206, 107; Muhammad Ashraf, *A Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian
Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library, vol. 7, Concerning 627 Manuscripts of Islamic Theology (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Museum and Library, 1980), no. 2564, 105; Weinstein, “Variations on a Persian Theme,” 59n28; and Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yad’dash’t’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 223.

Meaning here the family of the Prophet Muhammad.

The accession number is given as acc. 4374.

A transcription is published in Ashraf, A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts, vol. 8, no. 3206, 107; idem, A Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts, vol. 7, no. 2564, 105 (incomplete).

A transcription is published in Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 224 (the date is read as 1020); also see Ashraf, A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts, vol. 8, no. 3206, 107 (incomplete); and Ashraf, A Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts, vol. 7, no. 2564, 106 (incomplete).

The apparent numbers in the date literally read “10121,” which has stimulated a great deal of confusion. The date has been read as 1012/1603–4, 1020/1611–12, and 1021/1612–13, which would variously assign it to Muhammad Quli or Sultan Muhammad. We favor the last option (1021), per the inscription’s clear naming of Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah, who attained the throne on 17 Dhu’l-Qa’dah 1020/January 11, 1612. Because he was crowned late in the hijri year, the additional number 1 inserted in the midst of the year 1021 probably indicates Sultan Muhammad’s first regnal year. See H. K. Sherwani, History of the Qutb Shāhi Dynasty (New Dehli: Munshiram Manohar Lal, 1974), 295, 385; Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 224, also assigns the seal to Sultan Muhammad but reads the date as 1020. For a seal of Muhammad Quli in which he is explicitly named as such (Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah), see no. 17.

Jiddi, Danishnamah-yi Muhr va Hakkaki dar Iran, 392, reproduces an impression of this seal, but the exact manuscript and folio is not provided.

Adamova’s attribution to Abu’l Hasan Qutb Shah (r. 1672–1687) in Adamova, Persian Manuscripts, 44; and Simpson’s to Muhammad Quli in Simpson and Marlow, Princeton’s Great Persian Book of Kings, 46n110, require correction.

Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” reads the date of the manuscript as 1029, but it is in fact 1020. See Bahadur Khan Abdul Muqtadir, ed., Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library at Patna, vol. 7, Indian History (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 1921), 58.

For the transcription, see note 51 above.

As elsewhere, the website attributes the seal to Muhammad Quli.

We thank Shreve Simpson for sharing a photograph of this impression, earlier provided by Ursula Sims-Williams.

A transcription is published in Aq’qal’ah, “Muhr’ha va Yaddasht’ha-yi Sultan Muhammad Qutbshah,” 230; also see Ashraf, A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts, vol. 8, no. 3206, 107.
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