Variations on a Persian Theme:
Adaptation and Innovation in Early Manuscripts from Golconda

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2011

ABSTRACT

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Scholarship on the earliest known illustrated manuscripts produced in the sultanate of Golconda has tended to describe these objects as the products of the extension of a powerful influence from Iran over this small kingdom in the Deccan. While this assessment rightly acknowledges the importance of Persianate visual traditions in early Golconda manuscripts and paintings, it oversimplifies the nature of these remarkable objects and the context of their production. In addition, it misrepresents the role of the artists involved in the manuscripts' creation.

This dissertation provides a more nuanced consideration of these objects and their making. It offers the first in-depth discussion of six manuscripts produced in Golconda between 1570 and 1610, demonstrating a previously unrecognized sophistication and creativity in the process of their creation. It also presents a newly discovered manuscript, one which significantly alters prevailing understandings of early manuscript painting in the Qutb Shahi sultanate.

These studies identify several interrelated modes of engagement with Persianate forms, rather than a single stylistic progression towards local artistic "independence." In addition, they reveal how these various modes were calibrated towards different goals, sometimes using Persianate forms as a platform from which to explore various ways of constructing and illustrating narrative and poetic texts, while at other times using these forms to make claims of cultural sophistication or for the legitimating of new and local cultural phenomena.

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Acknowledgments

From the very first day that I presented the core idea for this project to my advisor, Vidya Dehejia, she supported and encouraged me. Her guidance ranged from the practical to the philosophical and more than once she helped me figure out what to do in a tight spot. It has been a real comfort to know – throughout graduate school – that I had an unflappable expert to turn to, from whom I could always expect a graceful, tactful and savvy response, no matter what the question.

Thanks also are due to Phillip Wagoner, whose long phone sessions and backyard chats filled my head with ideas and my heart with courage and optimism. His approach to research and scholarship have been a model for me, as is his enthusiastic approach to life in general. No less important as I have worked through this project have been his high standards. If I hadn't fully believed that he is both demanding and honest, I would probably not have made it to this point.

Robert Skelton was a key figure even before I had decided to work on Golconda. His excitement about Indian painting, inexhaustible mental reserves of images, facts and sources, and sincere dedication to the physical realities of the objects have inspired and helped me tremendously. I will always treasure my memories of coming downstairs at 10 Spencer Road in the morning to find scribbled notes full of ideas waiting for me, which he had generated the night before long after I'd gone to bed. Through tea breaks, walks and evening wine with cashews I also discovered a mode of working that balances the needs of the mind with those of the body.

Priscilla Soucek's comments on my chapters grounded my scholastic meanderings in the facts and theories of Persian painting. I am incredibly thankful for her guidance and generosity,

especially when they were bestowed upon me at late Friday afternoon meetings. Also important to the development of this project has been Allison Busch, whose own writing as well as her insightful comments helped me to connect my interests to those in related fields and see the potential of my research. Several afternoons with Barry Flood helped me to refine my thinking, and I'm extremely grateful for his insightful comments and challenging questions.

I must also thank the Metropolitan Museum of Art for providing me with a Theodore Rousseau Art History Fellowship to fund my dissertation research in European collections, as well as the Department of Art History and Architecture at Columbia University for providing a full year of fieldwork support so that I could spend the necessary time in Hyderabad. While in India, a number of figures helped me to maneuver past research obstacles and showed me great kindness. V.K. and Oudesh Rani Bawa welcomed me into their home and shared their immense network of contacts with me. M.A. Nayeem and Z.A. Shakeb spent long hours discussing the nitty-gritty of manuscripts, paintings and texts from Golconda. Jagdish Mittal shared his vast knowledge, incredible eye, and elevant objects from his own collection. P. Chenna Reddy at the Department of Museums and Archaeology opened the manuscript library of the Andhra Pradesh State Museum to me, and Hyderabad's Salar Jung Museum manuscript library – administered by Dr. Kausar – was virtually a home for me from several months. Thanks also to Andreas D'Souza lately of the Henry Martyn Institute for his enlightening conversations, helpful contacts and rejuvenating early-morning yoga classes.

Colleagues I met during fieldwork in London and Dublin – in particular, Eleanor Sims and Elaine Wright – broadened my knowledge of the stylistic roots of Golconda's paintings and the decoration of album pages, while back in the United States, Sunil Sharma, Katherine Kasdorf, Shakir Mustafa and Carla Petievich have all provided indispensible assistance with

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texts in Persian, Kannada and Dakani. In addition, my discussion of the Kannada notations in the *Sindbadnama* would not have been possible without Dheerendra and Sanjeev Jahagirdar's careful translations.

Finally I must thank my friends and colleagues at Columbia University and elsewhere (especially Yael Rice, Risha Lee, Ellen Hoobler, Marika Sardar) with whom I have shared moments of both elation and doubt, and my husband Steven, who is a constant source of support and love and an incomparable intellectual partner.

Chapter 1: Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several small states ruled the northern part of the Deccan plateau in central South India. The most powerful of these – Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda – were ruled by Muslim sultans, some of whom had recently immigrated to India and others of whom had a long history in the subcontinent (fig. 1.1). The populations of these sultanates were diverse, comprised largely of locals, both Hindu and Muslim, but including also a substantial group of immigrants from the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa. Exchange and interaction among these groups was a major force driving the development of elite culture, shaping the nature of their flourishing capital cities and the innovative art, architecture and literature that blossomed within them.

Among the most intriguing forms of artistic production created in these cities are illustrated and illuminated manuscripts made in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when the Deccani sultanates were experiencing an economic and cultural efflorescence after the defeat of their southerly neighbor, the state of Vijayanagara. The earliest surviving illustrated manuscripts produced in the Deccani sultanate of Golconda comprise the subject of this dissertation. These six objects include a richly illuminated medical encyclopedia, three illustrated manuscripts of Persian literary classics, one volume of Dakani (proto-Urdu) poetry containing a series of paintings, and an album of ornately inscribed Dakani, Arabic and Persian calligraphy (fig. 1.3 - 1.8). This small corpus represents the entire body of illustrated manuscripts known from Golconda in this period.[1]

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[1] A small number of other manuscripts have been tentatively attributed to this period, but without substantial evidence. Explanations of the reasons for the exclusion of these manuscripts are provided below as it becomes relevant to the larger discussion.

In many ways, these six objects share a great deal with contemporaneous manuscripts produced in the regions known today as Iran and Central Asia.[2] These similarities include not only their literary content, but also their pictorial imagery and ornamentation and their physical form. The manner in which these components are manifested in each Golconda manuscript constitutes what I will call each one's mode of engagement with the Persianate manuscript tradition, broadly conceived. Elucidation of these different modes and their significance forms the greater part of the following discussion.

Discussions of the Persianate nature of Golconda's earliest manuscripts have long dominated scholarly discussions in this field. There are, however, two important reasons that a re-assessment is due. First, these discussions have tended to rely on problematic conceptions of artistic production that negate the agency of artists in Golconda. Second, recent scholarly work on the Deccan has revealed that Persians were only one of several groups who played important roles in Golconda's courtly world and thus that it is no longer possible to posit a purely Persian cultural milieu for the manuscripts. New ways of thinking about the production of manuscripts in this period and the prominence and meaning of Persianate cultural forms in such a multi-cultural environment are sorely needed.

Re-assessing the role of Persian culture in early Golconda's manuscripts

Art historical discussions of early manuscript production in Golconda have traditionally treated the prominence and persistence of Persianate forms of art and culture in sixteenth-century Golconda as a flaw. This is at least in part due to a tendency for scholars of Indian painting to assume that it is natural for each individual locale to evolve its own unique visual style, a

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[2] These manuscripts will be generally referred to in this dissertation by the term "Persian manuscripts," the word Persian being a reference to the language of the manuscripts' text. The term "Persianate" will be used to describe the typical features of such manuscripts, or of other cultural traditions associated with Persia. Paintings made in any of the major production centers with Iran or Central Asia will be referred to as "Persian paintings."

position that reflects a larger pattern in the discourse on early modern Indian history which sees the development of vernaculars as movement away from dominating cosmopolitanisms.[3] The notion local styles, which has been a fundamental principle by which Indian painting has been studied since the field's inception, is of obvious utility. It has allowed scholars to separate a huge quantity of extant paintings into useful temporal and geographical categories. At the same time, it presents certain problems.

One significant issue is that painting studies have often assumed the presence of fixed, impermeable boundaries between cultural zones. With the emergence of globalization and "cultural flows" as foci of scholarly study in recent decades, scholars have become aware that the assumption of fixed and firm boundaries is indebted to ideas about the modern nation that are applicable neither to the early modern context nor to the postmodern world in which we live today.[4] Then as now, the fluidity of borders and permeability of border zones is matched only by the constant circulation of people and ideas. Of course, there are often readily identifiable differences in the artistic conventions of neighboring states, but these boundaries are neither natural nor absolute. Recent studies of Indian art, such as Molly Aitken's work on Mewar painting and Finbarr Barry Flood's study of cultural production in Sindh, have shown the applicability of this assertion to Indian contexts and the importance of looking at cultural exchange and interaction.[5]

Applying these insights to the study of early manuscript production in Golconda means

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[3] Sheldon Pollock, "Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History," *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (2000): 593.

[4] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992).

[5] Molly Emma Aitken, *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

situating the manuscripts within interconnected cultural spheres and viewing assertions of

connectedness (and difference) as constitutive of, not degrading to, culture. Seen thus, Golconda

appears to have been connected through language, immigration, trade, religion and diplomacy to

other parts of the Persian *ecumene* (or sphere of exchange).[6] Its material production reflects this

in different ways as these connections shift. Another relevant cultural sphere is that of

Telangana, the region of present day Andhra Pradesh in which Golconda was situated (fig. 1.2).[7]

Telangana, a predominantly Telugu-speaking region, had a strong regional identity already in the

early modern period.[8]

Another problem with the expectation that each locale should develop its own distinct

style is that it leads us to misunderstand the role played by Persianate formal conventions in the

manuscripts, seeing them as strictures limiting artists' abilities to create a local style rather than

as a framework within which to innovate. As Molly Aitken has written of Rajput painting,

scholars' propensity to see certain Indian painters as constrained by tradition "has tended to

generate a perception of conservatism, which somewhat masks the innovative aspects of the

art."[9]

This dissertation does not, then, seek to unseat Persian culture from the prominent

position it holds in the early manuscripts made in Golconda and in the historiography that

explores them. Rather, it conceptualizes this role differently, setting the ways that the

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[6] Juan Cole, "Iranian Culture and South Asia, 1500-1900," in *Iran and the Surrounding World: Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Rudolph P. Matthee (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 15.

[7] Many dimensions of pre-modern Telangana are discussed in Cynthia Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[8] So strong is the regional identity today that a powerful separatist movement has, as of 2010, made some headway towards achieving independence of Telangana from the rest of Andhra Pradesh.

[9] Aitken, *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting*, 43.

manuscripts use and thereby assert connectedness to the broader Persianate world in a larger

context and seeing these assertions not as flaws but as elements of a highly creative visual

discourse. By shifting focus in this way, it becomes possible to see the early manuscripts

produced in Golconda in a new light, as defining and occupying complex stances in relation to

both the Persian-speaking world and to multiple sectors of local society.

Literature Review

Several bodies of literature inform this study. Art historical studies of paintings from

Golconda are, naturally, the starting point, although studies of other types of Persianate painting

in India are also of great use. Historical studies of Qutb Shahi Golconda and the elite culture that

formed during this period provide the local context for this artistic production, while publications

on other aspects of Indo-Persian culture – a field which has flourished in recent years – offer a

broad historical and methodological context for this study.

Early Golconda's Manuscripts

Paintings and manuscripts from Golconda have received relatively little attention in

comparison to those from the same period produced in other parts of the Deccan or for the

Mughal emperors. One reason is that Golconda has yielded very few dated paintings and is thus

resistant to chronological organization and categorization. Whereas illustrated manuscripts from

the 1560s containing some kind of date survive from Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, the first securely-

attributable illustrated manuscript from Golconda with a date is from 1582.[10] Moreover, the

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[10] This is the *Anvar-i Suhayli* in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is the subject of the first part of Chapter 4. Some scholars would count a copy of Hatifi's *Shirin wa Khusraw* in the Khuda Bakhsh Library as the earliest Golconda manuscript, but there are significant problems with its attribution. That manuscript and these issues are discussed in Chapter 3.

Persianate style of early Golconda manuscripts led several to be at first taken by scholars to be

the product of workshops in Iran. As a result, for some time after sixteenth-century manuscripts

had been attributed to Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, early Golconda was still a blank spot on the

map of the early Deccani painting.[11]

It wasn't until the 1960s that evidence appeared to fill in this blank spot, and even then,

scholarly work on the subject proceeded in fits and starts. This early evidence took the form of

an article published by Douglas Barrett in which he presented two unpublished, dated

manuscripts and argued that they were made in Golconda: a Persian medical encyclopedia (fig.

1.3) and a copy of Hatifi's *Shirin wa Khusraw* (fig. 1.9).[12] A few years later, in a special issue of

Marg, another early Golconda manuscript was revealed: an illustrated volume of poetry

produced circa 1590-1605 (fig. 1.7).[13] It would be two decades, however, before another early

Golconda manuscript would be identified.[14]

In the meantime, Robert Skelton published an important article seeking to bring the

known works from early Golconda into a single frame and to establish a chronological sequence

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[11] There were, however, inklings of manuscripts still to be uncovered. In 1950 Hermann Goetz hypothesized, in the absence of hard evidence, that paintings were produced in Golconda before the seventeenth century. Hermann Goetz, *The Art and Architecture of Bikaner State* (Oxford: Published for the Government of Bikaner State and the Royal India and Pakistan Society by Bruno Cassirer, 1950), 101-2.

[12] Douglas E. Barrett, "Some Unpublished Deccan Miniatures," *Lalit Kala* VII (1960): 10. Both the *Shirin wa Khusraw* (Khuda Bakhsh Library in Patna, Acc. No. 499) and the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* (Chester Beatty Library, Indian Ms. 30) are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

[13] S. C. Welch, Richard Ettinghausen, and Jagdish Mittal, "Portfolio," *Marg* XVI, no. 2 (1963): 10.

[14] Single page paintings did come to the attention of scholars in the meantime. Barrett, for example, published a portrait of a ruler in the British Museum (1937 4-10 01) whom he identified as Muhammad Qutb Shah in Douglas E. Barrett, *Painting of the Deccan, XVI-XVII Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), p. 5, pl. 8. The identity of this ruler has been a point of debate ever since. Scholars have suggested at various times that it could represent Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, Muhammad Qutb Shah and 'Abdullah Qutb Shah. Dates proposed range from 1586 to 1630. Barrett also introduced a group of paintings that could potentially be seen as from early Golconda in his 1960 *Lalit Kala* article (see the text with plate 8). These five paintings (now in the British Museum, 1974 6-17-06) have been dated by various scholars from 1590 to 1630. These paintings have not been included in this dissertation because of my focus on intact manuscripts and in light of the great uncertainty surrounding their date.

for them.[15] Last, in 1982, two more manuscripts were attributed to early Golconda by J.P. Losty:

an *Anvar-i Suhayli* in the Victoria & Albert Museum (fig. 1.4) and a *Sindbadnama* in the British

Museum (fig. 1.5).[16]

These five manuscripts constitute the accepted corpus of early Golconda material. The

Chester Beatty Library calligraphy album was published in 1987, but it has not tended to be

included in art historical studies because it includes just one drawing (fig. 1.8).[17] Since Mark

Zebrowski's 1983 book, *Deccani Painting,* no further illustrated manuscripts have been

identified, and the five accepted manuscripts have taken on the status of a canon.[18] No studies

have discussed the Andhra Pradesh State Museum *Khamsa*, which has until now gone unnoticed.

Most of the scholarly publications referred to above have focused on the attribution of

manuscripts to Golconda. Although larger issues have rarely been addressed head-on, a close

reading of these articles reveals some common underlying themes. Their authors tend to attempt

to explain the role of Persianate cultural practices in the creation of the manuscripts through a

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[15] Skelton also added to the list of works from early Golconda a fragmentary object which has never received extensive attention. This is a large card in the Chester Beatty Library onto which pieces of many different paintings have been pasted (Persian Ms. 228, folio 4). The costume of the figures would seem to suggest that at least one of these painting fragments is Deccani, perhaps from Golconda, circa the sixteenth century. Robert Skelton, "Early Golconda Painting," in *Indologen-Tagung*, ed. Herbert Härtel and Volker Moeller (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1973), 189-195. See also Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1959-1962), vol. 3, p. 7, no. 228, iv.

[16] Respectively, Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 13-1962 (this manuscript is dealt with in the first part of Chapter 4) and British Library, I.O. Islamic 3214 (this manuscript is dealt with in the second part of Chapter 4). The notion that they were made in Golconda was actually first mentioned in an earlier catalogue of Persian manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, but they did not become part of the historiography of Golconda painting until Losty's publication: J. P. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India* (London: British Library, 1982), no. 48 and 49. The Chester Beatty publication and its role in the study of Golconda painting will be discussed in detail in the introduction to Chapter 4.

[17] This album will, however, be included in this study. It forms the main subject of Chapter 5, part 2. See also David James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," *Islamic Art* II (1987).

[18] Mark Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting* (London and Berkeley, CA: Sotheby Publications, University of California Press, 1983).

common set of conceptual tools, the most prominent of which is the problematic concept of
"influence."[19] In most cases, Persia is presented as a font of cultural material that is essentially
foreign but so deeply admired that it nevertheless controlled the cultural development of early
Qutb Shahi court culture. This rhetoric of control is pervasive, presenting Golconda's artists as
dependent upon and in need of liberation from a dominating alien cultural force.[20]

Corollary to this notion is a conception of the development of Golconda's early
illustrated manuscripts as following a stylistic trajectory from Persianate to local.[21] With the
model of the Mughals clearly in mind, scholars have often looked for signs indicating that over
time, artists in Golconda were slowly able to "break free" from Persia culture's dominance and
develop their own local visual idiom. The dearth of indications of such a course of development
within the first three decades of painting and manuscript production led early Golconda's
Persianate paintings to be considered artistically immature. Linda Leach, for example, described

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[19] Some of the problems that occur when art historians use this concept are discussed in Jonathan Hay, "Toward a Theory of the Intercultural," *Res* 35 (Spring 1999): 6; Michael Baxandall, "Excursus against Influence," in *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). Despite these problems, some scholars have worked out ways to use the term in a productive manner, for example Göran Hermerén, *Influence in Art and Literature* (Princeton, N.J.,: Princeton University Press, 1975); Gary Michael Tartakov and Vidya Dehejia, "Sharing, Intrusion, and Influence: The Mahiṣ āsuramardinī Imagery of the Calukyas and the Pallavas," *Artibus Asiae* 45, no. 4 (1984).

[20] Some examples of this language can be found in Kaplana Desai, *Jewels on the Crescent: Masterpieces of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Formerly Prince of Wales Museum of Western India* (Middletown, NJ: Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 2002), 265; Karl Khandalavala and Kalpana Desai, "Indian Illustrated Manuscripts of the *Kalila wa Dimna*, *Anvar-i Suhayli*, and *Iyar-i Danish*," in *A Mirror for Princes from India: Illustrated Versions of the* Kalilah wa Dimnah, Anvar-i Suhayli, Iyar-i Danish*, and* Humayun Nameh, ed. Ernst J. Grube (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991), 131, 36; J. P. Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," in *Indian Art & Connoisseurship: Essays in Honour of Douglas Barrett*, ed. John Guy (Chidambaram and Ahmedabad, India: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in association with Mapin Publishing, 1995), 299, 302.

[21] Deborah Hutton notes that the same assumption has plagued the study of Bijapur's art and architecture in Deborah Hutton, "The Elixir of Mirth and Pleasure: The Development of Bijapuri Art, 1565-1635" (dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2000), 218-9.

the early paintings from Golconda as "divergent strains" that later were transformed into "truer local idioms."[22]

Since the publication of Zebrowski's book in 1983 there has been only one more scholarly work to deal with early Golconda's manuscripts in depth: a second publication by Losty.[23] Along the same lines as Skelton more than twenty years before, Losty attempted to synthesize what was known about early Golconda's manuscripts and paintings and organize them into a logical chronology. More important for this study, however, are the provocative questions he raised in this publication.

First, Losty contended that painting styles were not predetermined by place and time, but were selected by artists in order to express certain meanings. More specifically, he suggested that the artists who produced Golconda's early manuscripts might have consciously chosen Persianate styles because these seemed to them to be appropriate accompaniments to classic works of Persian literature.[24] In offering this theory, Losty was the first to attribute agency to Golconda's artists, allowing for the possibility that they were not merely dependent on Persian art but were actively selecting images and styles that suited their needs.

Losty's second contribution was to set himself a challenge: to determine "where the differences between [early Golconda] and typical Iranian painting come from."[25] In doing so, he brought up a substantive and previously ignored issue: the ways in which the unique aspects of

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[22] Linda York Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library* (London: Scorpion Cavendish, 1995), vol. 2, 816.

[23] Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style."

[24] Ibid., 309.

[25] Ibid., 303.

Golconda's early manuscripts are creative adaptations of Persianate forms, and the possibility that these shifts were caused perhaps by the unique experiences, aesthetics and needs of the artists at work in Golconda. Losty's conjecture that principles of Deccani temple architecture and motifs from earlier Indian painting informed the artists' uses of Persianate forms comprised the beginning of an investigation of this important issue, and this dissertation seeks to further the discussion.[26]

Looking more broadly at the field of early modern Indian painting studies, one finds a small body of scholarship that examines the role of Persianate artistic traditions in Indian painting with a focus on the creative adaptation of Persian styles and forms. Priscilla Soucek, for example, has explored the immigration of Persian artists to North India in the mid-sixteenth century and usefully considered what forms they brought with them and why these things were valued.[27] Several scholars have looked at the artist Farrukh Beg, who began his career in Iran and then settled in India, discussing how the stylistic tools he learned in Iran evolved as he moved into Mughal and then Deccani courtly contexts.[28] More recently, Som Prakash Verma considered how artists working for the Mughals "reinterpreted" Persianate painting styles in their work.[29]

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[26] Ibid. Zebrowski makes a similar comment in Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155.

[27] In her estimation, Persianate forms were valued primarily for the way they indexed Timurid cultural heritage, an important component of Mughal royal identity. Priscilla Soucek, "Persian Artists in Mughal India: Influences and Transformations," *Muqarnas* 4 (1987). Another article that focuses on the artists who traveled to the Mughal court from Iran is Abolala Soudavar, "Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition," *IRAN* 37 (1999).

[28] Robert Skelton, "The Mughal Artist Farrokh Beg," *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957); John Seyller, "Farrukh Beg in the Deccan," *Artibus Asiae* 55, no. 3/4 (1995).

[29] Although Verma's discussion is not free from problematic assumptions and categories, he usefully points to particular ways in which the Mughals adopted and "reinterpreted" certain aspects of Persian painting to suit their own particular needs. Verma asserts that the Mughals "improved upon" Persian painting by making it more

Studies of Deccani painting that address these issues are few and far between. One early gesture in this direction can be found in Linda Leach's catalog entry about a drawing from the Deccan (possibly Golconda) of a sleeping youth under a willow tree in the Cleveland Museum of Art.[30] In her discussion, Leach compares the circa 1630 drawing to a likely Persian prototype for it, and cites other Deccani paintings as further evidence of a particular kind of treatment of Persianate forms. Underlying this study is a conviction that Deccani artists adapted "Safavid Persian motifs to native Deccani ideas about color and design."[31] Her discussion usefully probes the artistic process undergone by the Deccani artist.

More recently, Deborah Hutton has explored the use of Persianate styles and motifs in early illustrated manuscripts produced in the Deccani sultanate of Bijapur.[32] Her discussion of individual manuscripts is in accord with Losty's thesis that artists selected Persianate forms when they felt these forms suited the text they would accompany. She also demonstrates that Persianate forms were used differently in different manuscripts, sometimes without much adaptation and sometimes greatly altered.

This dissertation aims to extend these discussions to the subject of early manuscripts from Golconda by carrying out an extended study of the processes of artistic selection,

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naturalistic, a notion that is perhaps prompted by national pride as much as scholarly insight, but is refreshing in its inversion of the traditional notion of Persia as dominant and Indian painting as secondary and derivative. Som Prakash Verma, "Illustrations of Persian Classics in Persian and Imperial Mughal Painting," in *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Françoise Delvoye Nalini, and Marc Gaborieau (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2000).

[30] Accession number 44.494. Linda York Leach, *Indian Miniature Paintings and Drawings* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art in cooperation with Indiana University Press, 1986), no. 53.

[31] Ibid., 149.

[32] These issues appear particularly in her discussion of the *Nujum al-'Ulum* in the Chester Beatty Library (Indian Ms. 02). Deborah S. Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, Contemporary Indian Studies (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2006).

adaptation and creation that went into their production. In addition, it will more thoroughly

consider questions of reception, considering possible reasons for the artists' emphasis on

Persianate forms and the way that different communities might have responded to their work.

Qutb Shahi Golconda – History and Elite Culture

The field of political and economic history of Qutb Shahi Golconda rests in large part

upon the work of H.K. Sherwani.[33] His publications provide the most extensively researched

and carefully interpreted sources available. Articles by I.A. Ghauri, Z.A. Shakeb, Colin Mitchell

and John Richards provide additional information on specific issues such as Iran-Deccan

relations and the advent of Mughal rule in Golconda.[34] A forthcoming book by Richard Eaton

and Phillip Wagoner will update the telling of Golconda's history by including it within the

larger frame of Deccani politics and architecture.[35]

The primary textual sources for all of these publications are Persian-language chronicles.

Most useful for the period on which this dissertation focuses is an anonymous history dated 1617

entitled *Tarikh-i Muhammad Qutb Shah*.[36] Other relevant histories include the *Burhan-i Ma'asir*

of Syed 'Ali bin Azizullah Tabatabai written for the Nizam Shahi sultans,[37] and the *Gulshan-i*

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[33] Two of his most important publications are Haroon Khan Sherwani, Ghulam Yazdani, and P. M. Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724* (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1973); Haroon Khan Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974).

[34] M. Z. A. Shakeb, "Aspects of Golconda-Iran Commercial Contacts," *Islamic Culture* 69, no. 2 (1995); I. A. Ghauri, "Central Structure of the Qutbshahi Kingdom of Golconda," *Islamic Culture* 51, no. 3 (1977); John F. Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); Colin Paul Mitchell, "Sister Shi'a States? Safavid Iran and the Deccan in the 16th Century," *Deccan Studies* II, no. 2 (2004).

[35] Phillip Wagoner and Richard Eaton, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (forthcoming).

[36] Salar Jung Museum, Hist. 85. This text has not been translated but an abbreviated version appears at the end of John Briggs' translation of Firishtah under the erroneous title "The History of Mahomed Koolly Kootb Shah." Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah Astarabadi Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishta*, trans. John Briggs as *History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India, Till the Year 1612* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2004), 608-59.

Ibrahim of Firishtah.[38] Historians have also studied closely the body of letters, records and

travel accounts produced by Europeans who visited Golconda during the first two decades of the

seventeenth century. A number of such accounts were compiled by W.H. Moreland in 1931 as

Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century.[39] Finally, information has been found

in Qutb Shahi era letters, compiled and summarized by Riazul Islam,[40] and epigraphic

inscriptions, documented in a number of serial publications.[41]

Most recently, works of literature and architectural monuments have received the

attention of scholars interested in exploring what these can tell us about the elite culture of

Golconda. Ali Akbar Husain has explored the courtly ethos of Golconda through the poetic

compositions of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah and through Qutb Shahi garden architecture.[42]

Marika Sardar's extensive study of Golconda fort and Phillip Wagoner's studies of the Char

Minar and the urban plan of Hyderabad have provided insights into the manner in which

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[37] Tabatabai's chronicle is translated in Tabatabai, *Burhan-i Ma'asir*, trans. T.S. King as "History of the Bahmani Dynasty (Founded on the *Burhan-i Ma'athir*)," *Indian Antiquary* (1899). Also in Tabatabai, *Burhan-i Ma'asir*, trans. T.W. Haig as "The History of the Nizam Shahi Kings of Ahmadnagar," *Indian Antiquary* 49 (1920); ———, "The History of the Nizam Shahi Kings of Ahmadnagar," *Indian Antiquary* 50 (1921); ———, "The History of the Nizam Shahi Kings of Ahmadnagar" *Indian Antiquary* 51 (1922); ———, "The History of the Nizam Shahi Kings of Ahmadnagar," *Indian Antiquary* 52 (1923).

[38] Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishta*.

[39] William Methwold's account of the four years he spent at Masulipatnam (1618-22), Golconda's port city, was combined with that of Antony Schorer (1609-14) and Pieter Gielisz van Ravesteyn (1608-14) and published by W.H. Moreland in 1931 as W. H. Moreland, *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century* (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1931). Another European who came to Golconda at this time was the Flemish gem merchant Jacques de Coutre, who lived in Golconda for four months in 1618, and whose experiences are described in Jacques de Coutre, *Andanzas Asiáticas* (Madrid: Historia 16, 1991).

[40] Riazul Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations* (Tehran: Iranian Culture Foundation; Karachi: Institute of Central & West Asian Studies, 1979).

[41] Between 1907 and 1950 inscriptions were made available in *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (Calcutta: Government of India). After this time, the series became *Epigraphia Indica - Arabic and Persian Supplement* (Delhi: Manager of Publications, Archaeological Survey of India). An additional source for inscriptions is *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* (Delhi: Indian Department of Archaeology and Archaeological Survey of India).

[42] Ali Akbar Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Golconda's urban culture evolved, as well as the ways in which it was interwoven with pre-existing Deccani culture.[43]

Despite the accomplishments of all these scholars there remains a great deal of primary historical material as yet un-translated and unstudied, and further work by historians is sorely needed.[44]

Since the beginning of modern scholarship on Qutb Shahi Golconda, historians have sought to understand and describe the nature of the lives of Golconda's elites. There is a great deal to be learned of them from the Persian chronicles, although much of this material is naturally emphasizes the accomplishments of Persian immigrants. Sanjay Subrahmanyam's articles illuminate the lives of certain influential Persian immigrants and the roles they played in trade and politics, making great use of Portuguese documents.[45] His work is extremely useful for fleshing out the lives of these complex individuals, although he at times over-simplifies the role these figures played in the Qutb Shahi courtly world and its evolution over time. There is

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[43] Marika Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan" (dissertation, New York University, 2007); Phillip B. Wagoner, "The Charminar as *Chaubara*: Cosmological Symbolism in the Urban Architecture of the Deccan," in *The Architecture of the Indian Sultanates*, ed. Abha Narain Lambah and Alka Patel (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2006).

[44] For example, although the anonymous *Tarikh-i Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah* was used by Sherwani, it has not been published or translated and therefore has been under utilized by other researchers. Other primary source material that needs to be further explored includes letters such as those found in the *Insha-i Qasim-i Tabbasi*, which contains correspondence between Qutb Shahi and Safavid rulers. Several copies of this collection can be found. One is in the Salar Jung Museum (A.N./31), one is in the British Library (Ethé 2107), and still another is in the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Mss. F 9).

[45] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese: The Travails of Masulipatnam Shipping in the Western Indian Ocean, 1590-1665," *Modern Asian Studies* 22, no. 3 (1988). ———, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 51, no. 2 (1992).

cause to reconsider, for example, his claim that "Iranian migration and influence [in Golconda] continued to flourish and expand into the seventeenth century in an unalloyed form."[46]

Other scholars such as Sadiq Naqvi and Hyder Reza Zabeth have also focused on this important group.[47] As a result of studies like these we now know a great deal about the life of figures like Mir Muhammad Mu'min Astarabadi, an immigrant who left a career at the Safavid court and came to the Deccan to serve as the top advisor at the Shah's court from about 1581 to 1625.[48]

Attention to non-Persians within Golconda's diverse courtly populace has been sparse. This is in part because no major primary historical sources for the Qutb Shahi era – in the western sense of "historical" – in languages other than Persian are known. This is a common problem in medieval and early modern Indian history, and one that can only be addressed through extensive examination of other types of literary documents.[49] Cynthia Talbot has used inscriptions to produce extremely useful studies of the various communities of medieval Andhra

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[46] Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," 344.

[47] Sadiq Naqvi, *The Iranian Afaquies Contribution to the Qutb Shahi and Adil Shahi Kingdoms* (Hyderabad: privately printed, 2003). Another treatment of this subject, with little to commend it, is Hyder Reza Zabeth, "The Role of Iranian Migrant Scholars in the Advancement of Sciences During the Qutub Shahi Period in the Deccan," in *A Thousand Laurels--Dr. Sadiq Naqvi: Studies on Medieval India with Special Reference to Deccan*, ed. V. Kishan Rao and A. Satyanarayana (Hyderabad: Department of History, Osmania University, 2005).

[48] Mir Mu'min's life and his literary works are extensively discussed in secondary sources. The most important source is Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, *Mir Muhammad Momin: Ya`ni Peshvae Saltanat-i Qutb Shahi*, 2nd. ed. (Haidarabad: Neshnal Fain Printing Press, 1958). Mir Mu'min's own compositions are also available: the *Kitab-i-Raj'at*, on the traditions of the prophet; a preface to Arabic text, *Kathiru'l-Miamin*; the *Risala-i-Miqdariyah*, a *diwan* dedicated to Muhammad Quli (Ethé 682g). European documents mentioning him are referenced in Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," 344-5. Finally, some of his letters are preserved in an unpublished collection of letters, the *Insha-i Qasim-i Tabbasi* (see note 44).

[49] Such an alternative approach to the study of Indian history is exemplified by Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Dean Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India* (New York: Other Press, 2003).

Pradesh, but unfortunately her studies stop at the beginning of the Qutb Shahi period.[50] To my knowledge, Phillip Wagoner is the only scholar who has as of yet mined Telugu texts to examine Qutb Shahi-era Golconda.[51] His work attests to the wealth of information that these texts can provide.

Indo-Persian Culture

The studies of Golconda just described, and indeed this dissertation as a whole, can also be seen as part of a larger field that addresses the culture of Indo-Persian societies.[52] This field takes as its parameters those societies in India which belong to the larger Persian *ecumene* or sphere of exchange.[53] This geographical expanse stretching from Iran to eastern India was a vast world of shared linguistic and cultural practices. Societies within it such as the Safavid and Mughal courts, held so many beliefs and practices in common that an elite traveler among their kingdoms could "arrive in a strange setting, immediately find his bearings, and function with a great deal of ease."[54]

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[50] Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra*; Cynthia Talbot, "Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 4 (1995).

[51] Phillip B. Wagoner, "In Amīn Khān's Garden: Charitable Gardens in Qutb Shāhī Andhra," in *Garden and Landscape Practices in Precolonial India: Histories from the Deccan*, ed. Daud Ali and Emma Flatt, 101-128 (New Delhi: Routledge India, 2011); ———, "The Multiple Worlds of Amin Khan: Crossing Persianate and Indic Cultural Boundaries in the Qutb Shahi Kingdom," in *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New Haven: Yale University Press and Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011).

[52] By "Indo-Persian" I mean societies within the Indian subcontinent wherein Persian language and Persianate forms of culture were employed either by a large portion of the community or by the rulers of a community. A helpful summary of the historical context in which Indo-Persian societies arose is provided by the introduction to Muzaffar Alam, Françoise Delvoye Nalini, and Marc Gaborieau, *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2000).

[53] Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 23.

[54] Ibid., 129.

Among the many routes by which Persian cultural currents arrived in India is what

Richard Eaton has called a "geo-cultural axis" running from Lahore to Delhi to Hyderabad.[55]

Another such route was Indian Ocean trade, which connected cities on the Persian Gulf to sites

all along the western coast of India, and from these port cities into the Indian hinterland. As

Eaton notes, the cultural currents that flowed along these corridors gave rise to "a set of related

traits that have persisted down to the present: Persian styles of architecture, music, art, dress,

technology, cuisine; and a history of the Persian language used for administrative purposes, often

followed by forms of spoken Urdu."[56] Together, these practices can be referred to as "Indo-

Persian culture" although it is by no means a homogeneous category and in each site different

iterations of these "traits" came into being.

Most well known of all Indo-Persian societies is of course the Mughal Empire, which

began in North India in the mid-sixteenth century and eventually came to include the entire

subcontinent. The Mughal rulers were Persianized Turks, descended from Timur and Chingiz

Khan, who came into India from their ancestral home in the Fergana valley of Afghanistan.[57]

Although their founder's first language was Chagatai Turkish, he began what was to be a trend

throughout the Mughal period of using Persian as the main language of the state.[58] This is just

one of numerous ways in which the Mughals employed Persianate cultural practices as "building

blocks" in the construction of their imperial culture. Studies of Mughal culture comprise a

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[55] Richard Maxwell Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761: Eight Indian Lives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9.

[56] Ibid.

[57] For basic Mughal history, see John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, New Cambridge History of India, vol. 1, no. 5 (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[58] Muzaffar Alam, "The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics," *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998).

massive body of literature which, although indisputably rich and useful, has tended to overshadow work on other contemporaneous Indo-Persian societies.

Scholarship on the cultural production of the Mughals and other Islamicate[59] societies in India has yielded rich returns in recent years. Studies published by Alka Patel and Finbarr Barry Flood on mosque architecture of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries in North India and by Richard Eaton, Phillip Wagoner and Cynthia Talbot on the cultural history of the Deccan have helped to bring to light the multifaceted nature of culture and identity in Indo-Persian societies, and the important role that exchange and encounter played in the construction of the porous boundaries between states and societies within early modern South Asia.[60] Several studies have focused particularly on the networks of circulation and the mechanisms of cultural exchange to great benefit.[61]

Such issues have only begun to be explored in regard to Qutb Shahi Golconda, despite the fact that the father of Golconda history – H.K. Sherwani – pointed out decades ago the rich

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[59] Following Wagoner, I use the term "Islamicate" here in the sense that it was first defined by Marshall Hodgson in 1977, as a "social and cultural complex associated with Islam and with Muslims." Phillip B. Wagoner, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings': Dress, Titles, and the Islamicization of Hindu Culture at Vijayanagara," *The Journal of Asian studies* 55, no. 4 (1996): 854.

[60] Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat: Architecture and Society During the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries*, Brill's Indological Library, vol. 22 (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Finbarr Barry Flood, "Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities: Epigraphy and Exegesis in Twelfth-Century Afghanistan," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 42, no. 3 (2005); ———, "Refiguring Iconoclasm in the Early Indian Mosque," in *Negating the Image: Case Studies in Iconoclasm*, ed. Anne McClanan and Jeff Johnson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005); Richard Maxwell Eaton, *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, Themes in Indian History (Delhi and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Wagoner, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings': Dress, Titles, and the Islamicization of Hindu Culture at Vijayanagara."; Talbot, "Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India."

[61] Elizabeth Lambourn, "Carving and Communities: Marble Carving for Muslim Patrons at Khambat and around the Indian Ocean Rim, Late Thirteenth – Mid-Fifteenth Centuries," *Ars Orientalis* 34 (2004); Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval Hindu-Muslim Encounter*; Phillip B. Wagoner, "Fortuitous Convergences and Essential Ambiguities: Transcultural Political Elites in the Medieval Deccan," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 3, no. 3 (1999).

"cultural synthesis" that the Qutb Shahi period saw.[62] The one notable exception is the work of Wagoner, who has written extensively in recent years about architecture, urban planning, literature and social dynamics in sixteenth-century Golconda. He has shown that interaction between Persian- and Telugu-speaking elites was a catalyst for new cultural production in this period and that cities and buildings constructed for the Qutb Shahi rulers brought Persianate architectural forms into dialogue with pre-sultanate forms of architecture and urbanism specific to the region. There is little doubt that early Golconda's illustrated manuscripts also belonged to this rich cultural and intellectual landscape and that studies of them must be expanded to include these insights.

Among the many scholarly projects that explore Indo-Persian culture, some of the most useful for this dissertation are those that examine literary production. Paul Losensky's work on the poet Baba Fighani, for example, explores how poets writing in Persian during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries employed "imitation strategies" through which they responded to and manipulated earlier Persian poetic conventions.[63] Sunil Sharma's study of the poetic compositions of Mas'ud-i Sa'd-i Salman investigates how Salman's poems – written at the Ghaznavid courts of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries – situate him "at the meeting point of two cultures, Indian and Iranian."[64] Sharma argues that although Salman's contact with poets and poetry in India spurred him towards important literary innovations, his personal experience of exile (from Ghazna, which he saw as the center of the Persian world) shaped the

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[62] Haroon Khan Sherwani, "Cultural Synthesis in Medieval India," *Journal of Indian History* 41 (1963).

[63] Paul E. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*, Bibliotheca Iranica Literature Series (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 1998), 11.

[64] Sunil Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Masʿûd Saʿd Salmân of Lahore* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2000), 1.

way he interwove Persian poetic traditions and the new poetic and linguistic worlds he encountered in India.

Allison Busch's studies of the work of the poet Kesavdas in Brajbhasa (a vernacular Hindi dialect) explores a related set of issues, revealing a fundamental ambivalence in the poet's work between "innovation and adherence to tradition."[65] Sanskrit was Kesavdas' "core tradition" but it was his very use of this tradition that gave him the authority he needed to stake out new literary territory for Brajbhasa. Busch's effort to understand exactly how Kesavdas created space for "newness" within the existing tradition of Sanskrit poetry offers an excellent model for the study of Persianate manuscripts produced in India, in which new pictorial and textual elements can be very subtle and are often interwoven with more traditional forms.

These recent studies illuminate a fruitful path for the study of Golconda's early manuscripts by bringing our attention to the subtle but important ways that artists and thinkers in early modern India created new cultural forms by innovating within well-established traditions. They demonstrate how important examination of the context in which artists lived and labored and the ways in which artists presented and saw themselves is to our understanding of their work. Finally, studies of Indo-Persian culture such as those mentioned above help us to understand the relationships between religion, culture and identity in pre-modern and early modern India which, under the influence of the polarizing politics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have at times been deeply and dangerously misunderstood.[66]

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[65] Allison Busch, "The Anxiety of Innovation: The Practice of Literary Science in the Hindi/*Riti* Tradition," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 2 (2004): 50.

[66] For a particularly incisive illustration of how colonial and post-colonial era politics have shaped and are shaped by our understandings of the interactions of Hindus and Muslims in past and present India, see Romila Thapar, *Somanatha, the Many Voices of a History* (New Delhi and New York: Penguin Viking, 2004).

21

Methodology

In *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, Richard Eaton asserts the need for studies that seek to understand "why any given Islamic tradition assumed its particular form where and when it did, and why it might have taken another form in a different historical context."[67] He challenges himself and other scholars to place Islamic traditions in their social and historical contexts, to identity the communities that created them, and to "seek connections between changes in the traditions and the changing social groups that sustained them." Although I focus on Indo-Persian rather than Islamic cultural formations, I attempt in this study to contribute towards the important goals Eaton sets out. My aim is to elucidate the specific character of the immediate context in which early Golconda's illustrated manuscripts were made and used, and to correlate this with the specific qualities of the objects themselves.

In focusing on the context in which these manuscripts were made and seen, and re-assessing the conceptual tools by which they are considered, I have found it necessary to develop an approach that treats the manuscripts as multi-faceted entities that evince different kinds of belonging to the complex courtly world in which they were made. In other words, this dissertation explores how the manuscripts are positioned in relation to the various cultural traditions that enriched the society in which they were made. Such an analysis does not produce a unitary interpretation of each object (no single "position" can be identified for any given manuscript) nor does it lead to a picture of an "early Golconda school" of manuscript production. Rather, it has led me to divide the manuscripts into three groupings, each of which shows a distinctive mode of engagement with Persianate and other local cultural forces. While it is hoped that the commonalities this manner of organization brings to light furthers our understanding of

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[67] Eaton, *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, 24.

Golconda's courtly society, it is also a goal of this dissertation to clarify the unique character of each manuscript.

The methods by which I studied the manuscripts included extensive library research followed by fieldwork in archives and libraries in London, Dublin, Patna and Hyderabad. The library research portion covered the areas of social and political history of the Deccan in general and Golconda in particular, as well as literary and artistic traditions, architecture and urban development. It also included studies of Indo-Persian culture and Persian-Indian political and cultural relations in the early modern period. The fieldwork component was comprised of close examinations not only of the six manuscripts on which this dissertation is focused but also of comparable Persian and Indian manuscripts that throw light on the unique characteristics of the Golconda corpus.

These studies were not, unfortunately, enhanced by scientific studies of the pigments, papers or other material dimensions of the manuscripts. These types of studies could offer substantial information, however, and further work on this subject certainly calls for them. Instead, my studies focused on examination of obvious features of the physical structure, and analysis of textual content, ornamentation (figural and non-figural), organization and indications of use. Particular attention was paid to the following features: arrangement of text and image; composition of images; palette and style of paintings; and rate of illustration.

The results of my examinations are presented in the following chapters, which are arranged roughly chronologically. This is not to say that the dates of each manuscript are secure; in fact, most are undated and their attributions are subject to a certain amount of debate. Instead of contributing substantially to or focusing on these debates, however, I have chosen to place the

issue of dating in the margins of this dissertation by organizing the manuscripts into three temporal-stylistic groups.

The groups have been formed on the basis of commonalities in the manuscripts, and it is my belief that the differences between the groups reflect not stages in a single trajectory of artistic development in Golconda but rather variety in Golconda's elite society. More simply, I hypothesize that they were made for three different social groups: Persian immigrants, the broader community of Qutb Shahi nobles, and the royal house. Historical and cultural background for each social sector is therefore provided in the introduction to each manuscript group, and it is hoped that this contextual information will help to make comprehensible the choices made by the artists and sponsors, and their work's reception.

The first "group" contains a single manuscript, a 1572 copy of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. I will argue that it is the earliest manuscript securely attributable to Golconda. The second group contains three manuscripts which are widely and, I believe, legitimately thought to have been produced in the 1570s and 1580s. They include an *Anvar-i Suhayli* in the Victoria and Albert Museum, a *Sindbadnama* in the British Library, and a *Khamsa* of Nizami in the Andhra Pradesh State Museum. Their exact order of production is not clear, and so they are organized in a manner designed to bring out salient issues rather than to establish a particular sequence. The third and last group contains two manuscripts which contain dates indicating that they were made around the turn of the seventeenth century. One is a copy of the *Diwan* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in the Salar Jung Museum, and the other is a collection of album pages containing poetry by Muhammad Quli in the Chester Beatty Library.

Chapter 2: Historical and Artistic Background

Although the manuscripts that this dissertation explores were produced in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the foundation of the courtly society in which they were made was laid in the thirteenth century. This is because the cultural and political legacies of earlier groups that controlled this area of the Deccan continued to inform the development of culture there into the sixteenth century and beyond. Thus, this chapter begins with a review of the political and cultural history of the Golconda region in the medieval and early modern periods. It then explores Golconda in the period during which the manuscripts were made. Emphasis is placed on the types of relationships the Qutb Shahi rulers fostered with Iran, as this helps to illuminate the evolving role that Persian culture played in Golconda during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

Historical Background

Golconda from the Kakatiyas to the Qutb Shahis

The fort city and surrounding area known in the early modern period as Golconda is within Telangana, a region in the northeastern part of the Deccan plateau of South India (fig. 1.2). This area is located within what today is considered north-western Andhra Pradesh. It is a relatively arid region in which the economy is based on tank-irrigated agriculture, although coastal trade and trade with Southeast Asia have also been important industries.[1] The majority of the population consists of Hindu (Shaiva) speakers of Telugu, a Dravidian language, although

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[1] Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda*, 3-4.

speakers of other South Indian languages – including Tamil and Kannada –also inhabit the region.

      The first period of the political history of Telangana relevant to this study is the reign of the Kakatiyas of Warangal, the first dynasty to create a stable and long-lasting kingdom there.[2] The Kakatiyas, whose capital was at Warangal, ruled this region from 1163 to 1323. Their reign was a prosperous period because of innovations in tank irrigation and land reclamation that led to increased use of fertile land.[3] The many Shaivite temples constructed in the region also attest to the wealth and stability of this period.[4] The Kakatiyas fell, in the early fourteenth century, to Khalji and then Tughluq sultans from Delhi.

      The sultans' attacks seem to have prompted an increase in the construction of fortified capitals throughout the region, and the great fort of Golconda was probably first constructed as part of such a project.[5] Only a few decades after its core was constructed, around 1363, the fort was conquered and much of Telangana absorbed into the emerging Bahmani kingdom – named for Allauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, the founder (r. 1347-58) – which had split off from the Delhi Sultanate.

      Although the Bahmani rulers were culturally linked to the Delhi Sultanate, in many ways, they were oriented towards the Persian world. In the diplomatic realm, a Bahmani embassy

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[2] The history of the Kakatiyas is related in detail in P. V. Parabrahma Sastry, *The Kakatiyas of Warangal* (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1978).

[3] Ibid., 197-99.

[4] Cynthia Talbot, "Temples, Donors, and Gifts: Patterns of Patronage in Thirteenth-Century South India," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50, no. 2 (1991).

[5] Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan," 40.

traveled to Tabriz in 1471, bringing an extravagant array of gifts for the Turkman ruler.[6]

Spiritual connections such as the invitation offered by the Bahmani sultan Ahmad I to the

renowned Sufi Shah Nimatullah to come settle at his court in Bidar also served to draw the

Bahmanis into the larger orbit of the Persianate world.[7] Commercial ties were fostered as well.

The famous Bahmani vizier Mahmud Gawan, for example, is known to have had several agents

working for him in Bursa.[8] Finally, the Bahmani sultans also fostered cultural exchange with

Iran by attempting to bring the best of Persian culture to India in the form of accomplished

intellectuals of all kinds.

While this emphasis on things Persian constituted an important element of the culture of

the Bahmanis, it was by no means the only element. For one thing, most inhabitants of their

kingdom were Marathi-, Telugu- or Kannada-speaking Hindus with deep roots in the Deccan or

Muslims whose families had lived in India for generations and who were thus oriented towards

the Delhi Sultanate's particular variety of Islamicate culture. For another, local Telugu warrior

chiefs remained in control of parts of the eastern Deccan for much of the Bahmani period. A key

new piece of evidence that illustrates the multi-faceted nature of Bahmani culture is a fourteenth-

or fifteenth-century gateway constructed by the Bahmanis in Golconda fort that is carved with

yalis (mythical creatures)*, hamsas* (ducks) and a lotus flower (fig. 2.1). These images, it has

recently been shown, were adapted from Kakatiya monuments and used by the Bahmanis as

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[6] Michael Rogers, "'the Gorgeous East': Trade and Tribute in the Islamic Empires," in *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (Washington and New Haven: National Gallery of Art, Yale University Press, 1991).

[7] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 175.

[8] Rogers, "'the Gorgeous East': Trade and Tribute in the Islamic Empires," 71.

emblems of kingship.[9] There are also bilingual inscriptions such as one in Arabic and Sanskrit, the latter portion of which compares Ala'ud-Din Ahmad II (r. 1436 – 1458) to Indra or Kubera.[10]

In the late fifteenth century the Bahmanis began to lose control of their territory and the governor they had appointed in 1495 to oversee the eastern portion of their territory began to move towards independence. Although he continued to pledge allegiance to the Bahmanis, this governor – Sultan Quli Qutb ul-Mulk – effectively established a new polity based in Golconda and founded the Qutb Shahi dynasty which would rule the region until its defeat by the Mughals in 1687.[11]

Golconda under the Qutb Shahis

Sultan Quli was born in a village near Hamadan in northwest Iran around 1470. He was a descendent of Jahanshah (r. 1438-1467), the powerful ruler of a confederation of tribal Turks known as the Qara Qoyunlu, and it was this princely ancestry that forced him to flee Iran when a different group of Turks (the Aq Qoyunlu) became dominant.[12] Like many others in this period, he made his way to India and there found success at the Bahmani court as a warrior general. Through his military prowess Sultan Quli expanded first the Bahmani sultanate's and later his own territory in Telangana until he was "the undisputed lord of all Telangana" and controlled all

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[9] Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan," 50-56.

[10] Z.A. Desai, "Qutb Shahi Inscriptions from Andhra State," *Epigraphia Indica -Arabic and Persian Supplement* (1953-54): 23-29, pl. IX.

[11] For example, Sultan Quli does not appear to have had coins struck in his own name. Sherwani, Yazdani, and Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan,* vol. 2, p. 444.

[12] Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishtah,* 609; V. Minorsky, "The Qara-Qoyunlu and the Qutb-Shahs," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, no. 1 (1955).

the territory "east of Bidar and between the Godavari and Krishna rivers, and even … the major forts south of the Krishna in the present day Guntur district."[13]

Despite the fact that he had been raised outside of India and came to the Deccan as an adult, Sultan Quli does not seem to have presented his establishment of a new dynasty as a break with the region's past. Rather, he appears to have fostered the creation of a political identity in which the Qutb Shahi sultanate was presented to the public as inheritor of local traditions – both Indic and Persianate. One illustration of this is the mosque built for Sultan Quli in Golconda fort in 1518.[14] While in plan the mosque follows a model that had been in use for mosques in India for centuries, in some decorative features it belongs to a specifically Bahmani tradition, and its entrance is formed of a re-used doorway from a Kakatiya-period temple (fig. 2.2).[15]

One area in which Sultan Quli does appear to have introduced cultural practices not formerly known in the region is the sphere of religion. After the fall of the last Bahmani ruler, Sultan Quli ordered the Shi'a *khutba* (an address which proceeds Friday prayer services) to be read in Golconda, a significant change after centuries of rule by the Sunni Bahmanis. This change, which took place in 1501, seems to have reflected awareness of the establishment of the Shi'a Safavid dynasty in Iran in 1500.[16] All of the Qutb Shahi sultans who followed Sultan Quli

[13] Wagoner and Eaton, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (typscript version), ch. 6, p. 6.

[14] George Michell and Mark Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 98-101, fig. 65; Syed Ali Asgar Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no. 44.

[15] Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan," 35, 70-76.

[16] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 46. A similar change occurred in Bijapur, where Yusuf 'Adil Khan also declared Shi'ism the state religion immediately after learning that the Safavids had done so. Daniela Bredi makes the interesting argument that this declaration was motivated by a desire to assert independence from the Bahmanis. Daniela Bredi, "Shi'ism's Political Valence in Medieval Deccani Kingdoms," in *Islam and Indian Regions*, ed. A.L. Dallapiccola and S.Z. Lallement (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), 138, 40.

were also Shi'a, and they maintained this practice, a fact which differentiates them from the sultans of the neighboring kingdom of Bijapur.[17]

Between Sultan Quli's death in 1543 and the accession of the next major Qutb Shahi ruler there was a period of great uncertainty.[18] Ibrahim Qutb Shah – one of Sultan Quli's six sons – spent this period in exile in Vijayanagara, a kingdom to the south of Golconda, before returning to accede to the throne in 1550. His time in Vijayanagara profoundly affected Ibrahim's life and the course of Qutb Shahi political and cultural history. It exposed him (a member of the first generation of his family to be born in India) to Indic culture in general and Vijayanagara's culture in particular, and enriched his understanding of the Telugu-speaking people whom he was soon to rule. He became fluent in Telugu and is known to have appreciated the literature of this language, which he later patronized generously.[19] Wagoner and Eaton describe this transformation in justifiably strong terms, arguing that Ibrahim's time in Vijayanagara "resulted in the transformation of the Qutb Shahi house from a family of Iranian immigrants into an Indianized family with strong connections to the Telugu language and to the Telangana region."[20]

When Ibrahim re-emerged on Golconda's political scene in 1550, he was supported by a coalition of court factions. One group of supporters was comprised of Persian immigrants. Two

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[17] The alternating religious affiliation of Bijapur's rulers is discussed in Bredi, "Shi'ism's Political Valence in Medieval Deccani Kingdoms."

[18] During this period two sultans ruled for brief periods: Jamshid Qutb Shah and Subhan Qutb Shah. Their careers are detailed in Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, ch. 2.

[19] Ibrahim is known to have sponsored the composition of at least one Telugu text and to have invited many Telugu poets to his court where he bestowed gifts upon them and was, in turn, praised by many in verse. Ibid., 180-82; B. Rāmarāju, *Khutub Ṣāhī Sultānulu -- Āndhra Saṃskṛti,* (Haidrābādu: Idāra Adbiyāte Urdū, 1962), English ch. 3.

[20] Wagoner and Eaton, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (typscript version), ch. 6, p. 3.

in particular are mentioned in an inscription at the fort of Koyilkonda, through which Ibrahim passed on his return to Golconda: Pir Miyan and Sayid 'Ali Miyan.[21] According to later historians, also involved was Mustafa Khan, formally known as Sayyid Kamal-ud-din Husain Ardistani.[22] Hailing from Ardistan in central Iran, Mustafa Khan is thought to have been in the service of the Safavids in Iran before his arrival in Golconda at the end of Jamshid's reign.[23] He served as the Qutb Shahi sultan's highest ranking minister for fifteen years, riding the complex and shifting currents of political loyalty across the Deccan plateau while also remaining in close contact with the Safavids. Mustafa Khan was only one of many Persians serving at Ibrahim's court, and it is clear that the Bahmani custom of welcoming skilled immigrants from Iran was continued by Sultan Quli and his descendents.

Emphasis is placed on the role of Mustafa Khan in securing Ibrahim's accession by the historian Firishtah, who seems to have been inclined favorably towards the Persian immigrant community. He goes so far as to say that Mustafa Khan was the one to write to Ibrahim and invite him to return to Golconda, and then to meet and escort him back to the city.[24] Although the emphasis on the role of figures like Mustafa Khan by historians writing in Persian – many of whom were themselves immigrants from Iran – has tended to skew the historical record towards

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[21] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 103-04, and p. 18, no. 64. The inscription can be found in N. Lakshmi Narayan Rao, "Appendix A," in *Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions for 1928-29,* 21-24 (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1931). The inscription is discussed extensively in Wagoner and Eaton, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (typscript version), ch. 6, p. 15-17.

[22] Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishtah,* 605.

[23] Mustafa Khan is claimed to have served the Safavids in a brief un-translated biography written by Mirza Ibrahim Zubayri in his nineteenth-century history of the 'Adil Shahis: Zubayri, Ibrahim, *Tarikh-i Bijapur; Musamma bih-Basatin Al-Salatin* (Hyderabad: Matba'-i Sayyidi, 1900). Riazul Islam finds a letter from Mustafa Khan to Shah Tahmasp additional support for this claim. Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations*, 128-29.

[24] Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishtah*, 605.

an over emphasis on Persians' contributions, there is no doubt that many of these individuals were indeed quite powerful.

Other groups appear to have been just as important, however, and have in recent years begun to be recognized. For example, another group that supported Ibrahim's accession were *naikwaris* (Telugu chiefs) and *niyogis* (Telugu-speaking Hindu Brahmans). One example of these individuals about whom a considerable amount is known is the minister and military commander Jagadeva Rao. One of the nobles to approach Ibrahim upon his return and bestow upon him the keys to Golconda fort, Jagadeva Rao became close to the sultan and held the role of prime minister briefly before falling out of favor and leaving Golconda for Berar.[25]

In addition to the *naikwaris*, *niyogis*, and Persian immigrants, Deccani Muslims also held positions of power in Ibrahim's court. The best known Deccani nobleman of this period is 'Abd al-Qadir Amin Khan, a Sunni Muslim who was a close advisor of Ibrahim's in the 1560s.[26] Thanks to Amin Khan's patronage of architecture and literature – in particular, of a Telugu poetic work inspired by a story from the *Mahabharata* – we know that the members of these different factions, though political rivals, were not culturally isolated from one another, but rather interacted within a richly diverse, multi-lingual courtly world.[27]

Ibrahim oversaw a period of great growth in Golconda. Most famously, he allied with the rulers of the other Deccani sultanates in order to defeat Vijayanagara, their highly troublesome southerly neighbor. After this battle, in 1565, Golconda saw gains in wealth and some expansion of their territory. They also gained in prestige: it was after this victory that

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[25] Abdul Majeed Siddiqi, *History of Golcunda* (Hyderabad: Literary Publications, 1956), 61; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 100-04 and 25-27.

[26] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 183-85.

[27] Wagoner, "The Multiple Worlds of Amin Khan: Crossing Persianate and Indic Cultural Boundaries in the Qutb Shahi Kingdom."

Ibrahim first minted coins in his own name, becoming the first Qutb Shahi ruler to do so.[28] In this period Ibrahim also embarked on architectural projects, such as the construction of new walls at Golconda fort and a series of new buildings within the fort and outside of it.[29] As with the Bahmani-era gate mentioned above, animal figures – lions, elephants, peacocks, geese and oxen – appear in relief on these walls, some apparently drawn from pre-Bahmani Telangana culture.[30] This is just one of several pieces of evidence suggesting, as John Richards has argued, that Ibrahim presented "himself as an indigenous king, ruling, in so far as possible, in the idiom and style of a Kakatiya, Valama, or Reddi monarch."[31]

Despite the fact that this was a period of unprecedented engagement on the part of the Qutb Shahi rulers with local forms of Indic culture, this may have also been the first period in which there were direct diplomatic relations between the Golconda and the Safavid court. Ibrahim sent letters and gifts to Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524-1576), including one gift of hunting birds and animal trainers.[32] These letters are generally written in a subservient tone (one scholar has described them as written in the "manner of a vassal addressing his overlord"[33]) but there are also elements that suggest a sense of parity with the Safavid ruler. For example, one letter refers to Ibrahim's and Shah Tahmasp's love of hunting and suggests that this comes from their common identity as kings of Turkish descent. Finally, there are indications of artistic exchange

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[28] The earliest extant examples are dated 1565-66. Marie Martin, "Golconda Numismatics: Currencies in Circulation," in *Golconda and Hyderabad*, ed. S. H. Safrani (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1992), 144. Three denominations of coins bearing Ibrahim's name survive. Sherwani, Yazdani, and Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724*, vol. 2, p. 444.

[29] Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan," ch. 4.

[30] Ibid., 127-8.

[31] Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda*, 10.

[32] Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations*, Dn. 295.

[33] Ibid., Dn. 296.

with Iran, for example the polychrome tiles that appear on the exterior of Ibrahim's tomb, which was built during his lifetime (fig. 2.3).[34]

What purpose did these apparently new kinds of relations with Iran serve? One possibility is that they may have been related to a larger goal of Ibrahim's. Marika Sardar has described his efforts vis-à-vis Golconda fort as a quest to "transform…the character of [Golconda] from its impressive, but still rather small-scale, state prior to the mid-sixteenth century into a true imperial capital."[35] It is likely that this engagement with Iran also reflects his larger goals for the sultanate and for himself. In other words, at the same time that Ibrahim appears to have aimed to establish himself as a leader on Indic terms, he was also asserting – through diplomatic and artistic means – a royal identity in the mold of the ideal Persianate ruler, which would put him on equal standing with the Persianate rulers of other great kingdoms, within the Indian subcontinent and beyond it.

When, after three prosperous decades, Ibrahim died in 1580, he was succeeded by Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. As with Ibrahim, the accession of a new sultan offers a window onto the complex factional politics of the Qutb Shahi courtly world. Again, we see Persian immigrants, Deccani Muslims and others attempting to use this moment of instability to gain power for themselves. The absence of a powerful Persian immigrant – Mir Shah Mir – from the court at the time of Ibrahim's death appears to have given a Brahman military commander named Raya Rao the opportunity to put forth Muhammad Quli as the next ruler rather than one

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[34] Sardar, "Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan," 119-23.

[35] Ibid., 144-5.

of his brothers.[36] Raya Rao had been Ibrahim's confidant and advisor for many years, and

helped to lead the Qutb Shahi army in a siege of the important fort at Kondavidu in 1579.[37] That

he remained an important figure at court after Muhammad Quli's accession is attested to by a

later incident in which Muhammad Quli supported Raya Rao against a rebellious Qutb Shahi

commander named 'Ali Khan Lur.[38] Another influential *niyogi* was Nebati Krishnayamatya, a

confidant and minister of Muhammad Quli's whose ancestors had served earlier Qutb Shahi and

even Bahmani rulers.[39] The major role which Telugu-speaking Hindu Brahmans played in Qutb

Shahi courtly culture under Muhammad Quli is further indicated by an royal inscription in which

he is referred to as the Lord of the Cavalry, a title used by *Hindu* rulers of late medieval South

India to refer to Muslim kings.[40]

At the same time, Persian immigrants continued to hold positions of power in Golconda's

courtly community under Muhammad Quli, and none seems to have had a greater impact than

Mir Muhammad Mu'min Astarabadi.[41] Mir Mu'min came from northern Iran, as his *nisba* (the

part of a name that describes a person's occupation, geographic home area, or descent) evidences,

where he grew up as part of a prominent family. He served at the Safavid court for some time

before departing in the 1570s and arriving in Golconda right around the time of Muhammad

Quli's accession. As *peshwa* (prime minister) under Muhammad Quli and Muhammad Qutb

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[36] Sherwani refers to him as Raya Rao and as Rai Rao. His involvement in Muhammad Quli's accession is described in Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 257.

[37] Ibid., 172-3, 241 n 112.

[38] Ibid., 279.

[39] Wagoner, "Social Mechanisms for Indic/Persianate Cultural Exchange at Golconda" (paper presented at *The Art of India's Deccan Sultans*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2008).

[40] Talbot, "Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India," 709.

[41] See Chapter 1, note 48 for references pertaining to Mir Mu'min.

Shah, Mir Mu'min was second in power only to the sultan, in addition to being a noted poet and a respected and devout member of the *ulama*.

Muhammad Quli himself is remembered for his composition of poetry in Dakani and his foundation of a new capital city, Hyderabad, southeast of Golconda fort. The former marked the development of Dakani (a proto-Urdu comprised of Telugu, Persian and Hindavi elements) into a refined literary language,[42] and the latter gave Golconda a grand new city with which to celebrate the millennium of the Muslim calendar.[43] Although it is often said that Hyderabad was intended to be the "new Isfahan," recent research suggests that it was designed in such a way that it resonated not only with Persianate urban forms and those of the Deccani sultanates but also with Kakatiya urban architecture and city planning.[44]

At the same time that he nurtured Golconda's multi-faceted and multicultural courtly culture, Muhammad Quli also instituted some new mercantile, diplomatic and pietistic practices that speak of a ruler with pragmatic political and economic goals. For example, around 1590 he began a practice of sending ships annually to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf with trade goods and alms to be distributed in Mecca.[45] As Subrahmanyam has written, one advantage of this practice was that it enabled ambassadors from the Safavids to reach Golconda without going through Mughal or Bijapuri territory.[46]

Safavid ambassadors did indeed begin to come to Golconda for the first time during

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[42] See discussion of this text and its importance in Chapter 5.

[43] Sherwani discusses the foundation of the city in some detail in Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 300-16.

[44] Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 25; Wagoner, "The Charminar as *Chaubara*: Cosmological Symbolism in the Urban Architecture of the Deccan."

[45] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650*, Cambridge South Asian Studies (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 158-9.

[46] ———, *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges* (New Delhi, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 63-64.

Muhammad Quli's reign. That this was also the first period in which the Safavid ruler referred to the ruler of Golconda as a "shah" further attests to the status that the Qutb Shahis had achieved in the broader Persian world by the late sixteenth century.[47] Two letters that Muhammad Quli wrote to Shah 'Abbas (one sent through Mahdi Quli Sultan Talish[48] and the other sent through Mustafa Khan[49]) further suggest that Muhammad Quli may have found it less necessary to show deference to Safavids than had his predecessors.

The events surrounding the first Safavid embassy to Golconda reveal an interesting feature of relations with Iran under Muhammad Quli.[50] The envoy arrived in Golconda in 1603, having been sent by Shah 'Abbas with plentiful gifts including a crown studded with rubies, a dagger, forty horses, rich cloth and carpets.[51] By all accounts, the envoy's principal goal was to obtain the daughter of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah as a wife for one of 'Abbas's sons. (This daughter, Hayat Bakhshi Begum, is known to us not only from her role in these events but also for her sponsorship of a beautiful mosque and tomb.[52]) The envoy's request was not granted,

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[47] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 62 n 59.

[48] Syed Muhammad Raza Naqvi, "Shah Abbas and the Conflict between Jahangir and the Deccan States," in *Medieval India: A Miscellany* (Aligarh: Asia Publishing House, 1969), 288-91.

[49] Ibid., 291-94.

[50] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 291, 385-6. This event is recorded in several primary sources, with slight differences. Firishta's own account is skeletal and contains errors: Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishtah*, 607. The story appears with more detail in Brigg's summary of the *Tarikh-i Muhammad Qutb Shah,* which he includes as an appendix within his translation of Firishta. ———, *Tarikh-i Firishtah,* 656. Sherwani records that he also mined the *Hadiqat us-Salatin* (a history of the first 19 years of the reign of 'Abdullah Qutb Shah by Mirza Nizam ud-Din Ahmad) for further information on these events.

[51] Firishtah, *Tarikh-i Firishtah*, 656.

[52] Michell and Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, 104-106, 123; Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no. 68. The main mosque in the Qutb Shahi dynastic burial ground is one bearing an inscription dated 1666. Bilgrami suggests that since this is the same date that appears on Hayat Bakhshi Begum's tomb, it can be assumed to have been built along with it. He also attributes to her the village of Hayatnagar and a number of monuments still standing there. ———, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, nos. 18 and 67.

although he was made to remain in attendance at Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah's court for four years, towards the end of which he attended the marriage of Hayat Bakhshi Begum to Muhammad Quli's nephew Muhammad Qutb Shah, who would become the next sultan.[53]

Why did the Qutb Shahi sultan rebuff the Safavid Shah's offer, passing up the opportunity to make what would presumably have been an important an alliance between the Qutb Shahs and one of the most powerful empires in the world? The explanation offered by Sherwani points to the exigencies of local politics. Muhammad Quli had no heir, and so he decided to make his brother's son – Muhammad – his successor. He adopted him and made his wishes known, requiring the nobles and dignitaries of the kingdom to swear allegiance to the young prince. But perhaps Muhammad Quli feared this was not enough to ensure the succession of his favorite. By arranging the marriage of his heir and daughter, in 1607, the sultan further solidified Muhammad's position.[54]

Another motivation for this series of events may have been the fact that Muhammad's brother – Muhammad Khuda Banda – was preferred by the Sunni Muslim community, while Muhammad himself was the favorite of Shi'ites.[55] Mir Mu'min may have helped to put the latter on the throne in order to secure the accession of a sultan inclined towards the Shi'a.[56] It is not difficult to imagine that sectarian and political conflicts contributed to the chaotic events

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[53] The tardy return of his envoy did not go unnoticed by the Safavid Shah. A letter from Shah 'Abbas to Mir Mu'min around 1613 assures him of the highest royal favors and asks him to "promote the loyalty of the Qutb-Shahis to the Safawid family, and to secure and early dismissal of the Persian envoy." Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations*, Dn. 299.1.

[54] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 385-6.

[55] Only two years after the wedding of Hayat Bakhshi Begum and Muhammad Qutb Shah there was an attempt to put Muhammad Khuda Bandah on the throne in Muhammad Quli's place. Muhammad Quli got word of the conspiracy, however, and put the conspirators, including Khuda Bandah, in prison. Khuda Bandah stayed there until his death in 1611. Ibid., 293.

[56] Sherwani does not list a source for his information about Mir Mu'min's role in the accession of Muhammad Qutb Shah.

surrounding this transition, just as they did at the start of previous sultans' reigns.

What this tale seems to indicate is not that the Qutb Shahi rulers and their courtiers no longer felt it necessary to cultivate good relationships with Iran's rulers, but rather that these relationships had become important for the way that they figured into a *local* political world as much as for their ability to secure for the sultan a place in a *trans-local* world of Persianate kingship. In other words, this "international" diplomatic relationship was not only an end in itself, but was also a tool used in the pursuit of a local political agenda.

This brief historical overview is intended to convey several points. First, it is important to note that at no point during the first century of Qutb Shahi rule was the makeup of the courtly community or the tenor of royal cultural practices established by the sultan entirely Persianate. Rather, at each point a diverse group of individuals possessed power in the region, and the sultans themselves cultivated royal images that wove together Persianate and other cultural strands. Second, the multiple political factions, sectarian groups and linguistic communities that populated courtly Golconda were both engaged in cultural exchange with one another and, at the same time, motivated by their own particular goals and desires. To speak of any single courtly culture in Golconda would be to erase the substantial differences between these groups. Third and last, it appears that the role of Persians and Persianate cultural affiliations played varied over time. At some moments Persian immigrants with strong connections to their homeland were extremely powerful at court and served as conduits carrying information, goods and cultural practices from Iran to Golconda and vice-versa. At other times, however, Persia and Persian-ness seem to have been deployed as a legitimizing force, used to support local ventures, some more Persianate than others.

Artistic Background

The architectural splendor of Golconda fort and early Hyderabad, where many of the events just related took place, is beyond question. But what do we know of the arts of the book? A brief reference by Rafi ud-Din Shirazi, chronicler of the 'Adil Shahi rulers of Bijapur, to an area within the Qutb Shahi palace specifically for painters, illuminators, calligraphers and bookbinders is the only recorded observation of which I am aware attesting to the fact that there were manuscript workshops in Golconda during the time of Ibrahim Qutb Shah.[57] There is a reference to the existence of manuscript libraries, however, in the inscription on the Mecca Gate of Golconda Fort, where it describes Ibrahim as "the collector of books" in addition to calling him "disperser of armies" and other such honorific titles.[58]

Off-hand comments such as these offer scant details, but they give us sufficient cause to hypothesize that manuscripts were being made in Golconda from at least the 1550s. These earliest manuscripts were probably made in accordance with a tradition of manuscript production that began during the years of the Bahmani empire, and it is therefore with the Bahmanis that we must begin.

Local Traditions - Persianate

Scholars have not yet identified any illustrated manuscripts that can be shown definitively to have been produced in the Deccan during the periods of Tughluq or Bahmani rule. A few manuscripts do, however, contain hints of a possible Bahmani provenance, such as an anthology

[57] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 201-02. Rafi ud-Din Shirazi wrote his *Tadhkirat ul-Muluk* for Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II between 1608 and 1615. (Asafiya Library ms. no. 1081; Salar Jung Museum, Hist.142)

[58] Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no. 49.

in the Chester Beatty Library dated 1436 (fig. 2.4).[59] This manuscript had been attributed to

Sultanate India for some time before Barbara Brend argued in 1986 that it was produced in Bidar

under the Bahmani sultans.[60] The strongest pieces of evidence linking the anthology to this

region are a note it contains recording that it was purchased in 1514 by "the 'Adil Shah" –

presumably a reference to the ruler Isma'il 'Adil Shah (r. 1510-34) – and an impression of

Isma'il's seal.[61] Brend also marshals stylistic evidence to support her argument, such as the

appearance in depictions of architecture of chevroned pilasters, stylized flower vases and

addorsed palmettes very much like those seen in certain Bahmani-era buildings at Bidar (fig.

2.5).

　　　　Whether or not Brend is correct in arguing that this anthology was made in Bidar, it is

only with caution that we can assume that the manuscript exemplifies a larger group of lost

manuscripts in the same style from the Bahmani period. Assuming for a moment that it does in

fact represent a substantial tradition in the Deccan, we can identify a few formal similarities with

the early Golconda manuscripts. In particular, the illustrations show a propensity for dense

patterns and motifs and a tendency to break up compositions into many rectangular segments,

both of which are features also found in illustrations from the *Sindbadnama* and *Anvar-i*

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[59] Chester Beatty Library, Per. 124. See Barbara Brend, "The British Library's Shahnama of 1438 as a Sultanate Manuscript," in *Facets of Indian Art*, ed. Robert Skelton (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986). Brend also argues in this article that a *Shahnama* in the British Library (Or. 1403) dated 1438 was produced in Bidar, though somewhat less convincingly.

[60] I.L. Fraad and Richard Ettinghausen, "Sultanate Painting in Persian Style, Primarily from the First Half of the Fifteenth Century: A Preliminary Study," in *Chhavi: Golden Jubilee Volume, Bharat Kala Bhavan, 1920-1970*, ed. Anand Krishna (Banaras: 1971), 49.

[61] This information is found in a note on folio 294b of the second volume of the manuscript. Part of the inscription there reads: "By virtue of a purchase made from Khvajah 'Ayyub this anthology [passed into] the library of his august and splendid majesty…Sultan 'Adil Shah…" Arberry, et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1959), vol. 1, p. 53.

Suhayli.[62] The differences between the anthology and the known Golconda manuscripts are, however, more striking than the similarities between them, and it is unwise to drawn any direct connections from the former to the latter.

Local Traditions - Indic

Although a Bahmani manuscript tradition – if definitive evidence of it could be found – would probably be the most direct local "ancestor" of early Golconda's manuscripts, there is little doubt that there were other painting traditions in the eastern Deccan in the decades before the first of these manuscripts was produced. Evidence for the existence of these traditions before the seventeenth century suggests that murals, cloth paintings and paintings on paper were being produced in this region during the sixteenth century.[63]

Sixteenth-century murals at the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi represent the best preserved early example of these traditions in the Golconda region (fig. 2.6).[64] They depict scenes of gods and devotees as well as legends from Hindu mythology. Red, brown, white and green are prominent in the palette of these paintings, whose figures are generally shown in profile with the further eye partially protruding beyond the face. Their faces and bodies are angular, but nevertheless elegant, and textile patterns are depicted with painstaking attention to

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[62] See Brend, "The British Library's Shahnama of 1438 as a Sultanate Manuscript," fig. 8.

[63] Admittedly slim though still convincing evidence is presented in C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Paintings* (New Delhi: National Museum, 1968); Anna L. Dallapiccola, *South Indian Paintings: A Catalogue of the British Museum's Collection* (London: British Museum Press, 2010).

[64] Amancharla Gopala Rao, *Lepakshi* (Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh Lalit Kala Akademi, 1969); R. Pachner, "Paintings in the Temple of Virabhadra at Lepakshi," in *Vijayanagara: City and Empire*, ed. A. L. Dallapiccola (Heidelberg: Steiner, 1985). Other (mainly later) sites with surviving wall paintings are reviewed in brief in George Michell, *Architecture and Art of Southern India: Vijayanagara and the Successor States, 1350-1750* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 220-46.

detail. Compositions are broken into horizontal registers bounded by elaborate borders. Together, these qualities have been referred to by some as a "distinctive Telugu idiom."[65]

As Wagoner has shown, a number of figures in the Lepakshi murals wear garments – the *kabayi* (a white tunic) and *kullayi* (conical cap) – that were common in certain circles in Vijayanagara but not in other South Indian courts. These garments appear to be local adaptations of garments worn in Southern Arabia or Egypt, and were adapted at Vijayanagara's court as part of that community's effort to gain membership in the larger Islamicate world. While it has not been shown that courtiers in Golconda (or in any other Deccani sultanate) wore these particular garments, it would not be at all surprising if some adopted or carried over sartorial customs from Iran. In fact, interaction between the Deccani sultanates and the Vijayanagara court may have been one way that Islamicate cultural practices such as these became known in Vijayanagara.[66]

The distinctive aesthetic of the "Telugu idiom" exemplified by the Lepakshi murals does not find an obvious echo in the early Golconda manuscript illustrations. This might reflect that in these early years of manuscript production, Persian-language manuscripts were so strongly associated with the visual culture of Iran that it did not occur to artists to incorporate features from other visual traditions. Another possibility is that imagery from wall paintings was not easily transferred to the manuscript format because of the shifts in scale and medium required.[67] Zebrowski suggested in several publications that not wall paintings but sculpture from Indian

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[65] Michell, *Architecture and Art of Southern India*, 224.

[66] Pachner points out the relationship between some Lepakshi paintings and fifteenth-century Persian paintings, suggesting that certain scenes may have intentionally borrowed motifs from Persian painting in order to compare chaos-causing demons to the Deccani sultans. Pachner, "Paintings in the Temple of Virabhadra at Lepakshi," 336-37.

[67] It is generally difficult to prove that early mural images served as prototypes for late manuscript paintings but it remains an intriguing possibility. Michell has speculated, in a similar vein, that the Lepakshi murals influenced painted textiles. George Michell and Vasundhara Filliozat, *Splendours of the Vijayanagara Empire: Hampi*, Marg Publications (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1982), 109-11.

temples inspired the density and opulence of Golconda's manuscript illustrations, but with no particular specifics to support this thesis.[68]

One last note on the wall paintings and their potential relationship to early manuscript production is necessary. There is some evidence that the palaces of Deccani sultans would have been widely ornamented with wall paintings. The best preserved examples are found in a building at the site of Kumatgi, near Bijapur.[69] Although they have not yet been thoroughly documented, recent research has revealed that some of these seventeenth-century wall paintings represent stories from the *Shahnama,* an important and often illustrated Persian epic poem.[70] It would be interesting to learn whether these share any characteristics with temple or palace wall paintings in the Telugu idiom.

In addition to wall paintings like those at Lepakshi, the eastern Deccan in the sixteenth century is likely to have seen the production of a great number of painted cottons or *kalamkaris*. The *kalamkaris* produced in Petaboli, near the port of Masulipatnam – Golconda's main port – are believed to have been produced for the Deccani and Mughal courts as well as for the Persian market.[71] The earliest examples of this type of textile known today are dated to the mid-seventeenth century, but it is likely that they were produced much earlier since the technical requirements were very demanding and would surely have been in development for some time

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[68] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155; Michell and Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, 193.

[69] Michell and Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, 143; J. C. Nagpall, *Mural Paintings in India* (Delhi: Gian Pub. House, 1988), 112, pl. 42.

[70] Personal communication with Keelan Overton, 2010.

[71] John Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Painting of the Early Seventeenth Century," *Lalit Kala* V (1959); Mattiebelle Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World* (Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1982), 115, no. 100-102; Rachel Morris, "Enter the Royal Encampment: Re-Examining the Brooklyn Museum's Kalamkari Hanging," *Arts of Asia* 34 (2004): 99. Masulipatnam is discussed in detail in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "'Persianization' and 'Mercantilism': Two Themes in Bay of Bengal History, 1400-1700," in *Commerce and Culture in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1800*, ed. Om Prakash and Denys Lombard (New Delhi: Manohar and Indian Council of Historical Research, 1999).

(fig. 2.7).[72] Further evidence of their earlier production is provided by Francois Bernier, who is probably referring to *kalamkaris* when he records that some of the Mughal emperor Akbar's own tent hangings came from Masulipatnam.[73]

Features such as costume details, decorative motifs and stylized landscape elements known from Persian carpets appear in many *kalamkaris* with Indo-Persian subjects, as do some elements used in Persian paintings.[74] Despite this evidence of artistic cross-fertilization, it is difficult to identify features that suggest that the *kalamkaris* had an impact on the nature of the early Golconda manuscripts. This is not because the Persianate nobles of the Qutb Shahi court were unaware of *kalamkaris* and their imagery. Dutch records attest that "painted cloth" was "used by the King of Golconda and the King of Persia for their soldiers" and it is likely that these records refer to *kalamkaris*.[75] Various sources indicate that the Qutb Shahi court valued these textiles enough to claim a monopoly on these good as early as the 1630s.[76] It is easy to imagine that Qutb Shahi rulers would have been pleased to possess the set of *kalamkari* hangings now in the Brooklyn Museum, as they represent royal receptions involving the full range of people abiding at the Golconda court: Europeans, Hindus, Persians, and others.[77]

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[72] See, for example, Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, no. 100.

[73] Ibid., 115.

[74] Most notable for our purposes is the appearance of rocky landscapes in the style of Persian paintings in some of the Golconda region *kalamkaris*. See Ibid., no. 102.

[75] Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Painting of the Early Seventeenth Century," 15, n. 2.

[76] Ibid., 14-15.

[77] Morris, "Enter the Royal Encampment: Re-Examining the Brooklyn Museum's Kalamkari Hanging"; Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 89-108.

There is also a considerable tradition of scroll painting associated with Telangana.[78] With innumerable scenes painted in multiple registers on cotton cloth, these scrolls are perhaps halfway between a *kalamkari* and a manuscript. They were used by professional storytellers as memory aides and colorful backdrops. The Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art contains a painted scroll from circa 1625, the earliest known example. This scroll was probably produced in Mahbubnagar, Andhra Pradesh, and relates the story of the sage Bhavana. Its horizontal bands are occupied by angular figures dressed in bright textiles against a red background, sharing much with wall paintings and *kalamkaris* from this region.[79]

The last and haziest category of painting in the eastern Deccan relevant here is that of manuscript production itself. The few early palm leaf manuscripts that are known from South India appear to come from western regions.[80] The first evidence of more easterly manuscript production is a dispersed manuscript of the *Mahabharata* possibly produced in the seventeenth century in Tirupati, which may have been the site of a substantial painting tradition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (fig. 2.8).[81] The early Golconda manuscripts' illustrations have little in common with this manuscript, but there is one curious commonality: the incorporation of appliquéd paper into painted compositions. For example, small pieces of paper were used to depict the wheels of battle chariots in a number of illustrations. (This is most

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[78] Dallapiccola, *South Indian Paintings*, 226-7.

[79] Acc. No. 76.470. Jagdish Mittal, *Sublime Delight through Works of Art* (Hyderabad: Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, 2007), cat. no. 33; Michell, *Architecture and Art of Southern India*, 221.

[80] Saryu Doshi, "Twelfth Century Illustrated Manuscripts from Mudbidri," *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum* 8 (1962-4); Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Paintings*, 90-96.

[81] This manuscript has often been attributed to Srirangapattana and dated 1669 but recent work by Anna Dallapiccola suggests that Tirupati may in fact be the site of its production. Dallapiccola also points out that the manuscript's date needs to be verified. Dallapiccola, *South Indian Paintings*, 16-17. For an earlier discussion of the manuscript, see Michell, *Architecture and Art of Southern India*, 221, 60, fig. 193. Pages from this dispersed manuscript can be found in the San Diego Museum of Art (1990:1399); LACMA (M.88.29.2); Oriental Museum, Durham University (1964.17); National Museum, Delhi (64.150).

visible when the paper has fallen off, leaving behind a circle of plain paper.) This technique will come up again in relation to the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in Chapter 5. Lacking a corpus of earlier material from the region, however, we can hardly begin to guess whether this was a common practice in the Deccan and where it might have begun.

Later evidence of manuscript illustration in the eastern Deccan comes in the form of a circa 1740 *Ramayana* now in the collection of the Andhra Pradesh State Museum.[82] This manuscript is dominated by paintings, with little text beside the Sanskrit captions written in Telugu script that accompany them. Some pages seem related to Persian paintings, as for example a folio in which Hanuman is battling a *naga* (snake) goddess who looks very much like a demon in the Persian tradition, and whose body is painted in bands of grey that are reminiscent of paintings by the mysterious Siyah Qalam.[83]

This short survey of two-dimensional pictorial arts current in the eastern Deccan in the years immediately before and during the production of the early Golconda manuscripts suggests that although multiple painting traditions existed that occupied overlapping geographical areas and were even sometimes appreciated by the same individuals, these traditions cross-fertilized one another only to a limited degree. The techniques that painters of murals or textiles needed to master would not necessarily have been easily transferrable to the medium of book arts, so that it is possible that entirely different groups of artists were involved in the production of each. We

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[82] This manuscript is the main focus of Jagdish Mittal, *Andhra Paintings of the Ramayana* (Hyderabad: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1969).

[83] Ibid., pl. 30. For a brief introduction to Siyah Qalam, see Eleanor Sims, B. I. Marshak, and Ernst J. Grube, *Peerless Images: Persian Painting and Its Sources* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 51-52.

may yet find more ways in which these artistic worlds were linked, but for now there are only

tenuous connections.

It is important to note, however, that the absence of evidence of direct contributions made

by Indic pictorial traditions to the early manuscripts produced in Golconda does not mean that

the manuscripts were made in a purely Persian cultural zone, insulated from the regional context.

On the contrary, the wide availability of the Indic traditions and the interest at the Qutb Shahi

court in these traditions suggests that it is unlikely that the artists who worked in a Persianate

vein on the Golconda manuscripts were unaware of the existence of these other visual traditions.

The fact that they did not utilize them is more likely a conscious rejection rather than a sign of

obliviousness.[84] The chapters that follow this one will offer other kinds of evidence to further

support the notion that although their Persianate form might seem to indicate otherwise, the early

Golconda manuscripts are indelibly tied to the local site of their creation and reflect the

communities in which they were made.

Objects and Artists from Iran and Central Asia

Prototypes for the early Golconda manuscripts likely came in the form of objects

imported from Iran and Central Asia. There is plentiful evidence that members of Golconda's

courtly society owned both illustrated and non-illustrated Persian manuscripts. Many, though

not all, of these manuscripts were produced in Shiraz, which was a major center of manuscript

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[84] A related point is made by Molly Aitken in her work on Rajput painting, where she posits that familiarity with multiple North Indian painting styles was common, and that Rajput artists not working in a Mughlai style were often consciously rejecting in favor of styles they felt were better suited to the depiction of poetic or divine subjects. Her argument challenges the long-prevailing notion that Rajput artists failed to adopt the Mughal style because of cultural isolation, the power of the Rajput "sensibility," or resistance to Mughal dominance. Aitken, *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting*, ch. 2.

production and export from the fifteenth to seventeenth century.[85]   Highly portable and not

particularly fragile, manuscripts might have been brought over as mercantile goods, keepsakes,

gifts, or for other reasons.

In addition to newly-made Shirazi codices, older Persian manuscripts also made their

way to Golconda. These older manuscripts were probably valued for a range of reasons

including the fame of the patron who sponsored or scribe who copied the manuscript, the beauty

of its illustrations, or the importance of former owners. The value placed on manuscripts at the

Mughal court has been analyzed by John Seyller, who has shown that the identity of the

calligrapher was among the most important factors in the valuation of a manuscript, even an

illustrated one.[86] Although unlike the Mughals, the Qutb Shahis did not leave notations of the

value of a manuscript on the object itself, through examples like a *Khamsa* of Nizami produced

for the Timurid ruler Shahrukh which contains numerous impressions of Muhammad Qutb

Shah's seals we can see that they also valued highly manuscripts that had been made in earlier

periods (fig. 2.9). In some cases, multiple Qutb Shahi rulers placed their seal upon a single

manuscript, marking it as an object of great value and significance.[87]

Although at this time no manuscript can be identified as the direct model for any of the

Golconda manuscripts, there must, naturally, have been at least one copy of each text available,

from which the text could be copied. There are so many extant illustrated copies of the *Anvar-i*

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[85] Some examples can be found in B. W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library: A Descriptive Catalogue* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1980), 35, 155. Not all Shiraz manuscripts were made for export, however. As recent scholarship has shown, some were made for high ranking local patrons. Lâle Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts* (Istanbul: Türkiye Is Bankasi, 2006).

[86] John Seyller, "The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts in the Imperial Mughal Library," *Artibus Asiae* 57, no. 3/4 (1997).

[87] One example is an unpublished *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (13.228.8.1) that contains seals of Muhammad Quli and Muhammad Qutb Shah.

Suhayli and *Khamsa* of Nizami in museums and libraries today that it is possible that the makers

of the Victoria and Albert *Anvar-i Suhayli* (to be discussed in Chapter 4) and the Andhra Pradesh

State Museum *Khamsa* had access to several copies of each text. The scribes would have copied

the text directly from such a manuscript, and in many cases, illustrators would have based their

work on its illustrations. Kurt Weitzmann pointed out in regard to European manuscripts that

"once the scenes were created, later generations of illustrators copied, whenever it was possible,

from the established pictorial archetype, and comparatively seldom was a new cycle of

miniatures invented for a text which existed already with pictures."[88] I would suggest that this is

likely to be true in the Indian and Persian contexts as well, although – as Weitzmann himself

explains – the word "copy" should not be understood to mean that the artist strove to make a

picture identical in all ways to that which he encountered in his model.

Although no direct model has been identified for any of the manuscripts this dissertation

explores, there are a number of codices that were at one time in Golconda and which represent

the type of manuscript to which the artists likely had access. For example, a circa 1580 copy of

Yusuf wa Zulaykha in the Metropolitan Museum of Art has seals of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah

and Muhammad Qutb Shah.[89] Its four Shirazi-style illustrations have compositions almost

identical to those in the early Golconda manuscripts as well as sharing decorative patterns and

figural types (fig. 2.10 - 2.11). It is not difficult to imagine that the artists who worked on the

Golconda manuscripts had objects like this one to copy and study. In a few cases, as will be

shown below, artists working on Golconda manuscripts seem to have been working directly from

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[88] Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration*, Studies in Manuscript Illumination (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), 130-1.

[89] Accession number 13.228.8.1. Maurice Sven Dimand, *A Handbook of Mohammedan Decorative Arts* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1930), 43.

Shirazi manuscript illustrations. In addition, as Chapter 4 will show, Golconda artists at times

worked directly with imported manuscripts, adding to and altering their form.

The question of whether Persian and Central Asian artists themselves came to Golconda

is more difficult. The names of painters are not found in any of the manuscripts dealt with in this

dissertation, and they are not mentioned in any currently known source. The names of

calligraphers are much more common, however, and these do appear in three of the six

manuscripts. In some of these cases the names (in particular, the *nisba*s) of these calligraphers

indicate their places of origin. One of the pages in the album described in Chapter 5, for

example, contains a calligraphic page signed by Muhammad al-Shirazi. One does not know,

however, whether Muhammad himself or one of his forbearers came to India from Shiraz. A

more definite example is a calligrapher named Jalal al-Din Muhammad ibn Jamal al-Din Husayn

al-Fakhkhar, whose son is known to have produced inscriptions on several mosques in Golconda

in the 1590s.[90] Since we know that the father produced a Qur'an in Shiraz dated 1564-5, it is

quite clear that the son was a first or second generation immigrant to India.

Despite the dearth of evidence of this type for painters, there is no reason to doubt that

such individuals also made their way to the Qutb Shahi court from Iran or Central Asia. As was

described above, a large number of individuals were moving back and forth between South India

and Iran in this period, and artists would surely have numbered among those who made the trip

to India in search of employment or for other reasons. Among those who have argued for the

appearance of Persian painters in Golconda is Zebrowski, who asserted that much of the painting

produced during the reign of the earliest Qutb Shahi sultans was done by "Turco-Iranian émigrés

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[90] David James, *After Timur: Qur'ans of the 15th and 16th Centuries* (London: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1992), cat. no. 45; James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah"; Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no. 7.

– the greatest number coming from Bukhara, Bakharz (in Khorasan) and Shiraz."[91] Such claims

are difficult to verify but are not unreasonable, and where relevant they will receive

consideration in the chapters to follow.

Only a hazy sketch of the artistic landscape upon which Golconda's earliest manuscript

workshops were constructed is provided by this brief review of painting traditions in circulation

in the eastern Deccan in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The evidence is scant, though there

are enough hints that one can begin to rough out a picture of Telangana as a region in which long

standing traditions and artists of great skill produced *kalamkaris* and murals (if not other types of

paintings) for multiple contexts and markets.

Whether the artists involved in the making of cloth paintings and temple or palace murals

eventually became involved in the production of illustrated manuscripts is not at all clear. It may

well be that the artists who worked in one medium had little reason to change course. It is

important to note, however, that even if the artists were not crossing the boundaries between

Indic and Persianate traditions, the audiences and patrons quite possibly were.

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[91] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155.

Chapter 3: Manuscript Group 1

This chapter focuses on the earliest known illuminated manuscript from Golconda: a copy of al-Jurjani's *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.[1] Because of the highly Persianate nature of its illuminations, it has traditionally been seen as the product of immigrant artists whose working methods and aesthetic goals had not been significantly altered by their departure from Iran. While it is certainly possible that the artist or artists were Persian immigrants, it is my contention that the manuscript could not have been made in isolation from the local, cosmopolitan society of the Qutb Shahi courtly world. Indeed, it is a truism among scholars of diasporic communities that the idea of "doing things just as we did them at home" is a fallacy.[2] The impression that a person or practice has not been affected by the experience of immigration should therefore arouse our curiosity if not our suspicion. As Jonathan Hay writes, even "apparently 'pure' … styles are rarely, if ever, innocently such."[3]

Bearing Hay's warning in mind, this chapter considers the Persianate nature of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* as having a direct relationship to the socio-cultural context in which it was made. In particular, it contends that the manuscript was made within a mobilized Persian diaspora whose "Persian-ness" was crucial to their pursuit of power and wealth.

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[1] Potentially earlier manuscripts are several Qur'ans copied by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Hasani al-Husayni, who lived in Shiraz in the sixteenth century. It has been suggested that he went to Golconda and produced Qur'ans for the Qutb Shahi sultans in the 1560s. While it is indisputable that Ibrahim Qutb Shah and Abdullah Qutb Shah both donated Qur'ans inscribed by Husayni to a shrine in Mashhad, this does not necessarily mean that they were produced in Golconda, and for this reason, these Qur'ans are not included in the present discussion. James, *After Timur: Qur'ans of the 15th and 16th Centuries*, cat. no. 47.

[2] Thomas Turino and James Lea, *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. J. Bunker Clark, Detroit Monographs in Musicology, No. 40 (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 17.

[3] Hay, "Toward a Theory of the Intercultural," 8.

The larger context in which the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* was made was Golconda's thriving court, flush with the actual and psychological riches gained from the defeat of the Deccani sultanates' southerly neighbor, the state of Vijayanagara. For decades, the Hindu rulers of Vijayanagara had been on-again, off-again allies of the Deccan sultans. The most infamous of them all, Rama Raya (*de facto* ruler from 1542 to 1565) made and broke alliances with lightning speed, incurring the wrath of each sultan in turn and eventually inciting them to form an unprecedented military alliance against him.[4] In 1565 the Deccani sultans banded together to defeat Rama Raya and end his troublesome military and political meddling. This victory brought new wealth to all of the Deccani sultans (though it did not end their struggles against one another for very long).[5]

In addition to being a period of increased wealth and stature for the Qutb Shahi sultanate as a whole, this was a period of growth for Persian immigrants in Golconda.[6] The most powerful immigrant of Ibrahim Qutb Shah's reign was Sayyid Kamal-ud-din Husain Ardistani, known widely as Mustafa Khan.[7] After a career at the Safavid court, Mustafa Khan traveled to the Deccan and settled in Golconda around 1550. From that time until 1565 he served as Ibrahim Qutb Shah's prime minister or *peshwa*, involved in all major affairs of state. In addition to being

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[4] For a full narration of Rama Raya's tumultuous career, see Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761: Eight Indian Lives*, chapter 4.

[5] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, chapter III, section 2.

[6] The rise of the Persian immigrant community in this period is discussed briefly in Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," 344. More extended, and dispersed, coverage can be found in Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, chapter III.

[7] The fullest treatment of Mustafa Khan's career can be found in Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, chapter III.

immortalized in a number of historical chronicles, he is known today by a series of architectural monuments in the construction of which he was involved.[8]

Mustafa Khan played a major role in orchestrating the alliance that allowed the Deccani sultans to defeat Vijayanagara.[9] Immediately after the battle, however, he was exiled in punishment for his having allowed the 'Adil Shahi sultan of Bijapur to claim a territorial jewel (Raichur fort) that Ibrahim himself greatly desired.[10] Interestingly, Mustafa Khan went not to Mecca – to which he had been exiled – but to Bijapur, where he was given an important ministerial post by the 'Adil Shahi ruler. It seems that he had put down sufficient roots in the Deccan to prefer relocating within the region to leaving India, and it is probable that many Persian immigrants in Golconda at this time were similarly attached to their adopted land. His decision to stay in the Deccan notwithstanding, Mustafa Khan maintained strong connections with Iran, at times even presenting himself as a servant of the Safavid Shah, if a surviving letter to Shah Tahmasp is to be believed.[11] Although Mustafa Khan had left Golconda by the time the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* was produced, his career indicates the great prestige that Persian immigrants were able to achieve at the Qutb Shahi court during Ibrahim's reign.

High-ranking courtiers like Mustafa Khan were not the only Persians who were seeing their fortunes rise in Golconda during this period. Persian merchants who traded goods through

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[8] In 1559 he seems to have supervised the construction of the Mecca Gate at Golconda Fort, and in 1561 he built a mosque just outside the Fort, in what would later become the Naya Qila. Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no.49; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 204-06.

[9] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 142. Tabatabai, *Burhan-i Ma'asir*, trans. T.W. Haig as "The History of the Nizam Shahi Kings of Ahmadnagar, the Burhan-i Maasir," *Indian Antiquary* 50: 143-4.

[10] Sherwani, Yazdani, and Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724*, vol. 1, p. 438; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 158-9.

[11] Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations*, Dn 297. The austere style of Mustafa Khan's mosque, which eschews many of the decorative features associated with Qutb Shahi architecture, also suggests attachment to Iranian culture rather than adoption of local practices.

Golconda's principal port at Masulipatnam were increasingly playing powerful roles in the sultanate's economic and political life. Masulipatnam had been a minor port for centuries, but it became a major nexus of trade beginning in the 1570s as a result of Golconda's expansion and growth, because of the establishment of trade networks that extended the port's reach, and in response to Portuguese control over many other South Indian ports. Persian immigrants owned most of the ships engaging in this expanded trade network, and they also held important posts in Masulipatnam's administration such as that of governor of the port and the larger region around it.[12]

In the third quarter of the sixteenth century this immigrant community of wealthy merchants and powerful courtiers had the characteristics of what scholars of diaspora refer to as a "mobilized diaspora."[13] By this term is meant a group of immigrants whose members occupy elite positions in the host society by virtue of their collective organization, their local and international networks, and their skills (linguistic, occupational, etc.).[14] The members of mobilized diasporas tend to form an elite which jockeys for position with a dominant local elite and which can be highly sophisticated in its use of various strategies to acquire and maintain power and status.[15]

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[12] Subrahmanyam, "Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese: The Travails of Masulipatnam Shipping in the Western Indian Ocean, 1590-1665."

[13] The concept of a mobilized diaspora was first articulated in John A. Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *The American Political Science Review* 70, no. 2 (1976). Armstrong used the term to refer to Germans in Eastern Europe and Chinese in Southeast Asia, among other groups. Scholars have since applied it to African and other contemporary diasporas. See, for example, Joseph Harris, "The Dynamics of the Global African Diaspora," in *The African Diaspora*, ed. Alusine Jalloh (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996).

[14] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 58.

[15] Although Armstrong refers to a dominant local elite of which the mobilized diaspora is a rival, he acknowledges that at times political conditions put the diasporic individuals in positions of power over the local group. He cites, for example, Phanariot Greeks in the seventeenth-century Ottoman empire. Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," 394, 400.

Although as far as we know, Persian immigrants in Golconda were not communally organized in any formal manner, they are known to have frequently banded together in opposition to another political faction: the Deccanis. The local elites who composed this loosely bound political group included Deccani Muslims, Hindus and Habshis (Ethiopian immigrants).[16] The Deccanis continually vied for power with the immigrants, who were referred to in contemporary texts as "Westerners" or "outsiders."[17] As Richard Eaton has written, the Westerners "intermarried, coalescing over time into a bloc politically, socially, and culturally distinct from the Deccanis."[18] The international networks and artistic, linguistic and other skills of people like Mustafa Khan made them powerful competitors for the local Deccani elite, and enabled them to gain and maintain hold of many prominent positions in the Qutb Shahi court in this period and throughout the first half of the next century.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam points to a specific group of skills possessed by members of the Persian diaspora which may have contributed to their high status in Golconda. Looking at a subset of courtiers with extensive mercantile experience, he demonstrates that many immigrants from Iran possessed a combination of commercial and political skills that made them especially employable within Deccani states that were becoming increasingly involved in commerce. In his

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[16] I follow Phillip Wagoner in using the term "Deccanis" to refer not only to Deccani Muslims but rather to all those individuals who at times banded together in opposition to the Westerners or immigrants. Wagoner, "Social Mechanisms for Indic/Persianate Cultural Exchange," n. 3.

[17] The members of this community of Persian immigrants and their descendents are commonly referred to in scholarly literature as *afaqis*. The Persian word *afaq* means "one who travels much in search of knowledge." This term seems to have come into usage in modern times, however. Seventeenth-century historical texts tend to use two terms, both derived from a root which means "west." One of these is *gharibiyan* or "Westerners" and the other is *gharbiyan* or "outsiders." As these terms suggest, not only Persians but also Africans, Arabs, and any other foreigners from lands to the west of India would have been included. Richard Eaton, "'Kiss My Foot,' Said the King: Firearms, Diplomacy, and the Battle for Raichur, 1520," *Modern Asian Studies* 43, no. 1 (2009): 293-94, n. 10.

[18] Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan*, 67. Eaton suggests that while the Deccanis were originally an ethnic group, by the sixteenth century it was more of a political affiliation. Personal communication, April 2010.

words, these figures were valued "beyond their talents as poets, or their quickness of repartee" because of their "semicommercial, semiadministrative profile."[19]

To this nuanced conception of Persian immigrants' roles in Deccani courtly society we may add an insight of scholars of mobilized diasporas, who note that among the skills and knowledge by which immigrants earn positions of status in their host societies, medical knowledge is a particularly useful tool. "Among diaspora technical skills prized by dominant elites," one scholar has written, "medicine has always ranked very high."[20] This is in part due to the fact that medicine was more profitable than a field like philosophy, and more easily utilized outside the society in which it was studied than something like law. Examples of important immigrant doctors abound. Jewish physicians from medieval Spain, for example, carried their knowledge of Western medicine to the Ottoman court in Istanbul.[21]

This fact, previously unexplored in discussions of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, helps us to make sense of Golconda's first glorious work of manuscript production.

Shirin wa Khusraw

Before beginning a discussion of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, however, another manuscript must briefly be explored. Most discussions of early Golconda manuscripts begin with what is widely seen as the earliest specimen: a *Shirin wa Khusraw* in the Khuda Bakhsh

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[19] Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," 356-58.

[20] Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," 397.

[21] Moses Hamon, a well-known physician born in Granada in the late fifteenth century, eventually came to serve two Ottoman sultans. Uriel Heyd, "Moses Hamon, Chief Jewish Physician to Sultan Süleymān the Magnificent," *Oriens* 16 (1963).

Library in Patna (Acc. No. 499), the colophon of which contains a date of 1568.[22] Its seven

paintings are in a style associated with Bukhara, which has been interpreted by some as an

indication that Bukharan artists were working in Golconda during the second half of the

sixteenth century.[23] While it is likely true that artists from Bukhara worked in Golconda during

this period, there are several factors that cast doubt upon this manuscript's attribution to

Golconda. These factors will be presented below in a brief discussion of the manuscript.

     The Khuda Bakhsh Library *Shirin wa Khusraw* has been considered a Golconda

manuscript since 1960 when Douglas Barrett presented it in an article in *Lalit Kala*.[24] The

attribution to Golconda is based on the colophon of the manuscript which states that it was made

by the order of "Shah Ibrahim 'Adil" and includes a chronogram that yields the date 976 A.H. or

1568/9 C.E (fig. 3.1).[25] Although he does not state this outright, Barrett was clearly aware when

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[22] *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at (Bankipore) Patna*, (Patna: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1962), vol. 2, no. 223.

[23] Barrett, "Some Unpublished Deccan Miniatures," 10. A good comparison for the style of the paintings can be found in an anthology produced in Bukhara in 1564-5 that was sold at a Hotel Drouot auction on 16-17 November 1992 as lot 293. A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "The Anthology of a Sufi Prince from Bokhara," in *Persian Painting: From the Mongols to the Qajars: Studies in Honour of Basil W. Robinson*, Pembroke Persian Papers, ed. Robert Hillenbrand (London: I.B. Tauris in association with the Centre of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, 2000).

[24] Barrett, "Some Unpublished Deccan Miniatures," 10.

[25] The full text of this colophon is as follows:

<div dir="rtl">

تمت على يد العبد الفقير الحفيز يوسف غفرا لله ذنوبه و سرعيبه

بحمد الله درين دور خجسته

که آمد دولت و عشرت بهم جفت

بحکم شاه ابراهیم عادل

که خاک آستان او فلک رفت

مزین گشت این شیرین و خسرو

که در وی هاتفی صد گونه در سفت

مرا تاریخ سالش هاتف غیب

بیان اشتیاق کوهکن گفت

</div>

Completed by the hand of the lowly slave Yusuf, may god forgive his sins and cover his faults
Praise be to god that in this auspicious age
Because good fortune and joy have come together
By the order of king Ibrahim the just
The dust of whose threshold heaven swept
This Shirin and Khusrau was ornamented

he published his article that the only ruler in the eastern Islamic world in 1568/9 whose name was Ibrahim was Ibrahim Qutb Shah. On the basis of the style of the paintings, which resemble those found in Bukharan manuscripts of 1560 to 1580, Barrett concluded that this *Shirin wa Khusraw* was made either by artists from Central Asia working in Golconda or by Indian-born artists following Persianate models. Although these deductions are not unsound, there are other aspects of the manuscript that need to be considered.

To begin with, the colophon contains a title – "Shah Ibrahim 'Adil"– that Ibrahim Qutb Shah does not appear to have used in his coins or epigraphic inscriptions, which are admittedly few. Epigraphy provides us with examples of Ibrahim using the title "Sultan,"[26] while known coins have a form of his name without a title.[27] On his seal he is called "Qutb Shah Ibrahim."[28] Although it is possible that "Shah Ibrahim 'Adil" was nevertheless intended as a reference to Ibrahim Qutb Shah, it does not appear to have been the standard way of referring to the ruler in the 1560s. Since the colophon states that the manuscript was made "by the order of" this ruler, it is difficult to understand the use of these anomalous titles. Surely a scribe in the employ of the Qutb Shahi court would have known his patron's preferred titles.

In which in a hundred ways Hatifi composed poetry
The expression of Farhad's desire said to me
That the year of its composition is "the unseen voice"

[26] The inscription on his tomb refers to him as "Sultan Ibrahim Qutb Shah." It is recorded in T.W. Haig, "Inscriptions in Hyderabad and Golconda," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (1907-08): 24. A 1551 inscription of the tank at Pangal refers to him as "Abul Muzaffar Sultan Qutb Shah." Ghulam Yazdani, "Inscription of Ibrahim Qutb Shah from the Pangal Tank, Nalgona District," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (1925-26).

[27] Only a few coins struck under Ibrahim are known and the reading of the legends on them are not certain. One coin, dated 973 or 1565/6 appears to read: "Falus-i Ja'iz-i Ibrahim Quli Sa'adatmand-i 'Ali Golkondah" or "valid falus of Ibrahim Quli happy in [the faith of] 'Ali, Golconda." Stan Goron et al., *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates: Covering the Area of Present-Day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2001), 335.

[28] The text of Ibrahim's seal is transcribed in Muhammad Ashraf, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library* (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Museum Publications, 1965), vol. VIII, no. 3206. The seal reads:

شهی که نقش نگین ساخت مهر آل مقیم + بود سپهر کرم قطب شاه ابراهیم

There is no easy answer to this quandary. No other Ibrahim ruling in 1568 is known, and no other date can be derived from the manuscript's colophon, which appears genuine.[29] The most that can currently be said is that the contention that the manuscript was transcribed for Ibrahim Qutb Shah needs further consideration. What is more, even if one were to assume that the manuscript was made for Ibrahim, there are reasons to doubt that the paintings in the manuscript were produced in Golconda. Namely, codicological evidence suggests that the paintings were inserted into the manuscript some time after the transcription of the text was completed.

The first part of this evidence is the fact that all seven of the paintings in the manuscript are completely blank on their backs. This is not typical of Persian manuscripts, in which pages virtually always have text and/or imagery on both sides. Even when paintings take up the entire page – which was not common in this period – or include only one or two lines of text, the text invariably continues on the back of the painting. Blank pages do appear occasionally in Persian manuscripts, but these are in between chapters rather than in the middle of a section of text as they are here.

The second piece of evidence can be found in the appearance, on four of the seven paintings, of a Persian *beyt* (a line of poetry, divided into two hemistiches) that repeats a *beyt* inscribed on a page before or after the painted page (fig. 3.2 - 3.3). In other words, the *beyts* on these painted folios are redundant. Although it is not unknown for scribes sometimes to make mistakes and repeat a line or two of the text they are copying, repeated accidental duplication of verses at exactly the point where a painting is inserted is highly unlikely.

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[29] Only Mark Zebrowski has held that the manuscript has no "proper colophon." Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 156.

The unusual features presented above suggest that the paintings were inserted some time after the manuscript was constructed and its text transcribed. One might add there is nothing in their pictorial content (style, composition, palette, etc.) to link them to Golconda or to the other manuscripts attributed to Golconda. Given this information, and the considerable doubts about the colophon, I must conclude that the attribution of the Khuda Bakhsh *Shirin wa Khusraw* to Golconda is somewhat less than secure. On the basis of this uncertainty, the manuscript will be left out of further discussions in this dissertation. This brings me to place the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* as the earliest known example of elite book production in Golconda.

Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi

Although it contains only illuminations and no illustrations, the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* or *Treasury of the King of Khwarizm* (Chester Beatty Library, Indian Ms. 30) has been included in all discussions of Golconda painting since its introduction to the art historical community in 1960 by Douglas Barrett. Barrett and most scholars writing after him have presented the manuscript as evidence that at this early stage, book production in Golconda was isolated from the local cultural environment and was the work of émigré scribes and artists trained in the "metropolitan" styles of Iran. This chapter will consider the formal characteristics of the manuscript in relation to comparable practices in Iran and India during this period in order to interrogate this assessment of the manuscript. It will also explore what this extraordinary object may have signified to those who made it and came across it in the period in which it was created. It will argue that although the manuscript appears insulated from Indic or Deccani artistic traditions and its Persianate features unchanged despite the distance from Iran, it is likely that this was a contrived effect, part of a larger attempt on the part of the Persian immigrant

community to leverage their cultural heritage to attain power in the local social, economic and political spheres.

The Text

The *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* is a medical encyclopedia composed by Zain ud-Din Abu Ibrahim Isma'il al-Jurjani (d. 1136) and dedicated to his patron: Qutb al-Din Khwarizm Shah, a twelfth-century governor of Khwarizm (a region in modern Uzbekistan).[30] That al-Jurjani was a court physician when he composed his text, and that it was specifically dedicated to his patron, should remind us that the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* is not the product of an intellectual "ivory tower" isolated from the rest of society as a medical text produced today might well be. On the contrary, though the content can be rather esoteric, the text was written in and for courtly society. It would remain a courtly text for centuries to come, finding frequent readers, copyists and illuminators among the widespread nobility of the Persianate world.[31]

Al-Jurjani based his text, which was written no earlier than 1110 or 1111, on the world-renowned *Canon* of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), a medical treatise composed in 1025 and based primarily upon Greek medical sources.[32] Like al-Jurjani, Ibn Sina resided for a time at the court of the prince of Khwarizm at Khiva. He wrote the *Canon* – a compendium of medical knowledge – in Arabic although he himself was Persian. Translations into Latin made the Canon one of the primary medical texts of Europe for at least the next five hundred years.

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[30] C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1977), vol. 2, part 3, 207; Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Roland Michaud, *Islamic Science: An Illustrated Study* (Westerham, Kent, UK: World of Islam Festival Publishing Ltd., 1976), 182.

[31] Linda Komaroff and George Saliba point out a similar phenomenon in reference to the *Materia Medica* of Dioscorides which was frequently translated and illustrated in the pre-Mongol Islamic world, often for patrons who were not medical professionals. George Saliba and Linda Komaroff, "Illustrated Books May Be Hazardous to Your Health," *Ars Orientalis* 35 (2005): 32, 38.

[32] Claudia Liebeskind, "Unani Medicine of the Subcontinent," in *Oriental Medicine: An Illustrated Guide to the Asian Arts of Healing*, ed. Jan Van Alphen and Anthony Aris (London: Serindia Publications, 1995), 50-51.

Al-Jurjani's text was the first to convey the information of the *Canon* through the Persian language, and he is known for having invented Persian terms to refer to new concepts. His *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* is, in this perspective, a text associated with the pride in the Persian language and with the sophistication of Persian culture. It may have been partly for this reason that in the medieval Persian-speaking world, al-Jurjani's text was second in popularity only to Ibn Sina's.

This discussion of the status and meanings associated with the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* is not meant to imply that the text had no practical uses. The text contains twenty chapters on subjects of unmistakable utility, including definitions of medicine, causes of disease, preservation of health, diagnosis of disease, fevers, poisons and antidotes, etc.[33] It is likely to have been consulted by physicians as well as studied by elites who aspired to the broad knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, literature and other disciplines highly valued in Persianate societies.

This type of Greco-Arab medicine came to India as early as the eighth century, though it was not until the twelfth or thirteenth century under the sultans of Delhi that it received major institutional support.[34] Support, when it came, was perhaps due in part to its fundamental commensurability to Ayurveda (the main Indic form of medicine): both medical systems share a common holistic approach to medicine and see health as determined by the body's "humors." The major texts of *Unani* medicine – as the Greco-Arab system was called in India – were copied and studied extensively by Muslim rulers who gave honors to physicians who advanced

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[33] A list of the subjects of each chapter can be found in Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 889-91.

[34] Liebeskind, "Unani Medicine of the Subcontinent," 50.

medical knowledge.[35] Allauddin Khilji (r. 1296-1321), for example, supported several *Unani* physicians at his court, as did the Mughal emperors after him.[36]

Bearing all this in mind, it should thus not surprise us that multiple copies of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* circulated in the Deccan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One copy, in the Salar Jung Museum, belonged to the Qutb Shahi library where it was stamped with the seals of three successive Qutb Shahi sultans: Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, Muhammad Qutb Shah, and 'Abdullah Qutb Shah.[37] Few manuscripts contain so many different Qutb Shahi rulers' seals, which suggests that this copy of the text may have been highly valued. Muhammad Ashraf considered it to be a royal copy, made for the Qutb Shahi sultans, but there is no definitive evidence for this as the manuscript has no colophon. It can be dated, however, on the basis of its illumination (three small and conventional but good quality *'unwan*s) to the sixteenth or seventeenth century and it is certainly possible that it was produced in Golconda. A second copy of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* in the Salar Jung Museum was made for the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmadnagar.[38] Although it has none of the fine illuminations of the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, the fact that it was produced for the rulers of Ahmadnagar further demonstrates that the text was of interest to rulers across the Deccan.

In addition to the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, other Arabic and Persian medical texts were popular among the Deccani sultans. For example, the Qutb Shahi sultans possessed several

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[35] Interestingly, by this point, many ideas from Indian medicine had in fact been incorporated into *Unani* medicine. Poonam Bala, *Medicine and Medical Policies in India: Social and Historical Perspectives* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007), 44.

[36] Ibid., 45. Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 128.

[37] Salar Jung Museum, Tibb 101. Ashraf, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library*, vol. X, no. 3949.

[38] Salar Jung Museum, Tibb 111-112. Ibid., vol. X, no. 4021.

copies of Ibn Sina's own work, the *Kitabu'l-Qanun.* One copy contains the seals of Muhammad

Quli Qutb Shah and his successor,[39] while another has a colophon that explicitly states that it

was copied in Golconda in 1601, suggesting that it may well have been made for inclusion in the

royal library.[40] Several folios from an illustrated manuscript of the *Materia Medica* of

Dioscorides dated circa 1595 have been attributed to Golconda, and may well have been

produced in the same context in which texts like that of Ibn Sina were transcribed (fig. 3.4).[41]

One can also point to a number of medical texts that were composed in Golconda, in

many cases for the Qutb Shahi sultans themselves. One is the *Ikhtiyarat-i Qutb Shahi,* a

commentary on another classic work of medicine (the *Ikhtiyarat-i Bad'i* by 'Ali b. Husain

Husaini who died in 1403) composed at the command of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah.[42] A copy

of this text was produced in Golconda in 1630, and contains two beautiful *sarlawhs* (full-page

illuminated headings), one of which incorporates lion and *peri* (fairy-like creature) heads (fig.

3.5).[43] Also composed for Muhammad Quli is the *Zubdat al-Hukama* of Shamsuddin bin

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[39] Muhammad Nizamud-Din, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Salar Jang Collection* (Hyderabad: published by order of the Salar Jang Estate Committee, 1957), vol. VIII, no. 2272.

[40] Ibid., vol. VIII, no. 2236. This manuscript is also interesting also because it demonstrates that manuscript production continued in Golconda fort after Hyderabad was established in 1591.

[41] *Treasures from India* (London: Francesca Galloway, 2006), no. 11.

[42] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 528.

[43] Salar Jung Museum, Tibb 13. Ashraf, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library*, vol. X, no. 4035. For another copy in the Salar Jung Museum, transcribed one year earlier, see ———, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum & Library*, vol. X, no. 4036; S. A. Hussain and Momin Ali, "Medical Manuscripts of Qutb Shahi Period in the Libraries of Hyderabad," *Bulletin of the Indian Institute of History of Medicine* XIX (1989?): 131-32. Hussain and Ali point out that this second copy was gifted by 'Abdullah Qutb Shah to one Mir Mahmud Ali in 1072 A.H. (A.D. 1661/2), according to an inscription in the manuscript.

Nuruddin, describing techniques for the preservation of health.[44] Many more medical texts and

manuscripts are known from Golconda and from the other Deccani sultanates.[45]

Why were the Qutb Shahi sultans and their peers interested in medical knowledge? The

answer may lie in notions of proper kingly behavior established long before the sixteenth

century. Norms of Islamic kingship required rulers to support the continuing development of

medical knowledge as well as to maintain the health and welfare of their people by establishing

hospitals and financing them with *waqfs* or pious endowments.[46] These practices were adhered

to by Muslim rulers in India such as Firoz Shah Tugluq, who established many medical schools

and hospitals as well as sponsoring the production of medical treatises.[47] The Mughal emperor

Akbar is also known to have built hospitals.[48] Epigraphic and architectural evidence suggests

that this aspect of Islamic kingship was adhered to by the Qutb Shahi sultans. We have, for

example, an inscription recording the endowment in the name of the Shi'a imams of two towns

for the purpose of providing food for the poor by Sultan Quli in 1513.[49] Likewise, Ibrahim Qutb

Shah established gardens and opened them to the public.[50] It was in this tradition that

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[44] Salar Jung Museum, Tibb 277/6. Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 124-5 n 2, 4.

[45] Several others from Golconda are mentioned in Ibid., 27. Medical manuscripts from other sultanates are described in Liebeskind, "Unani Medicine of the Subcontinent," 54, 63.

[46] One frequently cited example is the hospital of Nur al-Din Muhammad ibn Zangi, which he founded in Damascus in 1154. This masterpiece of Zangid architecture still stands today. Ernst Herzfeld, "Damascus: Studies in Architecture: I," *Ars Islamica* 9 (1942): 2-11.

[47] Bala, *Medicine and Medical Policies in India: Social and Historical Perspectives*, 47.

[48] Liebeskind, "Unani Medicine of the Subcontinent," 50.

[49] Sherwani, H.K. "A Qutb Shahi Inscription from Kodangal," *Epigraphia India, Arabic and Persian Supplement* (1959-60): 57-60, pl. XV.

[50] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 203.

Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, Ibrahim's successor, established a hospital and medical college immediately after founding Hyderabad in 1591.[51]

In addition to the importance placed upon the promotion of health and medical knowledge by Persianate culture, there was also long-standing Deccani tradition – very much alive in Qutb Shahi Golconda – by which citizens of high stature and rulers nurtured the health of their communities through the patronage of public works. This has been demonstrated by Phillip Wagoner in an article exploring a garden built by Amin Khan, a prominent Sunni nobleman at the court of Ibrahim Qutb Shah.[52] Wagoner argues that Amin Khan's garden represents a form of medieval Indian Islamic garden – the "charitable garden" – that was constructed by prominent members of the society as a mode of charitable contribution to the poor. These gardens would have been open to the public and provided not only places to rest and pools of water, but also medicinal plants.

The roots of this tradition date back at least to the twelfth century in the eastern Deccan, to a tradition that contended that founding a garden for the public good as one of the *sapta-santanas*: seven actions that a person seeking a good reputation in this life and the next must carry out. From the content of a Telugu poem (based on a story in the *Mahabharata*) that Amin Khan commissioned, in which there is a description of his garden, we can tell that the garden was understood to be one of these seven good deeds.[53]

This analysis suggests that in Golconda, al-Jurjani's *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* may have been understood in three different ways: first, as a repository of a respected type of medical

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[51] Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, 25.

[52] Wagoner, P. B. "In Amin Khan's Garden: Charitable Gardens in Qutb Shahi Andhra."

[53] This poem *The Story of Yayati (Yayati Caritramu)* has not been translated in its entirety. A Telugu edition is M. Rangakrsnamacaryulu, *Yayati Caritramu, Ponnikanti Telaganarya Pranitamu* (Hyderabad: Kakati Pablikeshans, 1977).

knowledge; second, as a landmark of Persian literary accomplishment; third, as a focal point within a larger discourse of public health and charity common to Islamicate and Deccani culture.

The Manuscript: Basic Features, Date and Patron

The *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* manuscript in the Chester Beatty library is a large, impressive manuscript. It contains 604 folios of thick, light brown paper, each one 322 x 222 millimeters. The pages contain a text box outlined by red, blue, black and gold rules, and containing twenty-seven lines of *naskh* (a small, delicate type of Arabic script).[54] The text, which is prose, is mainly in black, although rubrics and some passages are in red or gold ink. The manuscript begins with a remarkable double-page illumination (*sarlawh*) which is its chief ornamentation (fig. 3.6), in addition to twelve illuminated chapter headings (*'unwans*) that appear throughout the text at the start of certain chapter and section headings (fig. 3.10 - 3.11).

Its colophon provides a great deal of information about the manuscript. It can be translated as: "Completed at the capital city of Golconda on the twenty-second of the month of Sha'ban the magnified, in the year 980, by poor Baba Mirak of Herat, known as Muhammad Sa'id."[55] A number of points emerge from this brief inscription. First, we are fortunate that the scribe chose to record that the manuscript was copied in Golconda, for without this reference scholars would surely have attributed the manuscript to a Persian city. Instead, we are able to certify that high-quality illuminated book production took place in Golconda at this early date, a fact which is not surprising, but otherwise unverifiable. Second, the date of 980 A.H. or 1572 C.E. tells us that the manuscript was made within seven years of the defeat of Vijayanagara, as

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[54] The measurements of the text box are: 211 x 133 mm.

[55] This translation is taken from Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings,* vol. 2, 889. The exact text is:

بدار السطنه گلکنده بتاریخ 22 شهر شعبان المعظم سنه 980 صورت

تحریر یافت فقیر بابا میرک هراتی المشهور به محمد سعید

thus may have been part of an artistic boom that this important event sparked in the Deccani sultanates. Third, the name of the scribe – Baba Mirak of Herat – confirms the notion that in this period, Persians or people whose families hailed from Persia were among the scribes and artists in Golconda. What is missing from the colophon is any reference to a patron. There is no mention of Ibrahim Qutb Shah or the royal library, which suggests that although the manuscript was produced in Golconda, it may not have been sponsored by the Qutb Shahi sultan. The absence of any impressions of Ibrahim's own seal further brings us into doubt as to whether this was in fact a royal production.

The manuscript offers up one last bit of information about its early years in the form of several impressions of the seal of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. These seals indicate that the manuscript joined the royal library before or during the reign of Ibrahim's successor. Although there is no evidence that the manuscript was sponsored by Ibrahim Qutb Shah, the fact that it was brought into the royal library by the time of Muhammad Quli hints that it was probably commissioned by someone at or near the heart of the Qutb Shahi court. One plausible explanation is that it was sponsored by a high-ranking nobleman. The intense cultural exchange at Golconda's court means that we cannot be certain that it was sponsored by a nobleman who was a Persian immigrant, but this is quite likely considering the high status and upward social mobility of Persians in Golconda at this time. We arrive, therefore, at the hypothesis that the manuscript was sponsored by a Qutb Shahi noble, possibly a Persian immigrant, who was resident at Golconda in the 1570s, and was then gifted to a Qutb Shahi sultan.

Scholarship on the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*

Douglas Barrett was the first scholar to publish an account of the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, in 1960.[56] In his gloss in *Lalit Kala*, Barrett offered this manuscript as evidence that either Persian artists worked in Golconda or "Persian models were available to the native artists" during the late sixteenth century. He described its illuminations as having been made in a "metropolitan Persian style," a comment which suggests that although he considered it possible that the manuscript was made by Indian artists, he did not feel that they had introduced any new elements to the style in which they were trained.[57] In short, although Barrett knew it had been made in Golconda and acknowledged the possibility that it was made by local artists, he saw it essentially as a Persian object.

The same approach was taken up by Robert Skelton in the next publication to treat the manuscript. Skelton suggested that Khurasan and Bakharz were the most likely "sources" of the Golconda manuscript's stylistic characteristics.[58] In particular, Skelton drew attention to the *peri* faces in the borders of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* and to their similarity to the faces of figures in paintings from Bakharz.[59] He also stated a belief that the artists were immigrants, not Indians working from Persian models as Barrett had suggested was a possibility.

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[56] The *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* was not included in the three volume catalog of Indian manuscripts at the Chester Beatty produced in 1936. Thomas Arnold, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures*, ed. J.V.S. Wilkinson (London: E. Walker, Ltd., 1936).

[57] Barrett, "Some Unpublished Deccan Miniatures," 10.

[58] Skelton, "Early Golconda Painting," 188.

[59] See, for an example, Ivan Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis de 1502 à 1587* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1959), no. 190.

The next scholar to add significantly to this discussion was Linda Leach.[60] In her 1995 catalogue of the Chester Beatty Library, Leach more extensively described the nature of the manuscript's illuminated pages than had been done by previous scholars. She suggested that certain features of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*'s *sarlawh* and *'unwans* presage characteristics of paintings made in the following decades in Golconda. At the same time, however, she agreed with earlier scholars that the illuminations were probably produced by a foreign artist who "made little adaptation to local taste," and offered that Persianate styles were likely appreciated for their sophistication.[61]

Although there is no consensus as to whether the artist or artists who produced it were local or foreign, the publications discussed above generally agree that the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* was made through the transplantation, virtually unchanged, of a Persianate style of illumination to Indian soil. By linking the manuscript to a specific population of immigrants who moved from Iran and Central Asia to India in the second half of the sixteenth century, we can replace this notion of transplantation in virgin form with a more historically grounded framework. In addition, we can give special attention to the subtle ways in which the manuscript's illuminations are unique, allowing for a more precise exploration and explanation of how and why Persianate forms were used in this particular place and time.

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[60] Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 889-91. Losty and Zebrowski also discussed the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* in their various publications, but they did not add anything substantial to what Skelton and Barrett had already written. Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 299; Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 156-7.

[61] Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 890.

The Illumination

Before exploring the illumination that ornaments this manuscript, it may be helpful to review illumination in the Persian tradition. [62] While scholarship on manuscripts from the Western world uses the term illumination to refer to the decoration *and illustration* of codices, scholars working on Persian and Indian manuscripts use the term to refer only to non-narrative decoration. In the latter context, illumination is defined as a form of ornamentation of two-dimensional objects by which pigments made of precious metals and semi-precious stones (gold, silver, lapis, etc.) are painted onto paper which may or may not also contain text. Floral and geometric motifs dominate, and conventions of color are followed with a fair degree of stringency. One can, for example, usually distinguish fifteenth- from sixteenth-century illuminations by the type of blue pigment they employ. [63]

It became common in the sixteenth century for manuscripts to begin with a double-page *sarlawh* (full-page illumination) surrounding the opening of the text (fig. 3.7). Such illuminations tend to contain a fairly standard set of components: a central text box, panels above and below it, thin inner borders and wider outer borders, often with scalloped edges. [64] Gold and blue are the most common colors in such illuminations, although secondary decorative elements

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[62] Illumination has traditionally received much less attention among art historians than figurative imagery, and thus there are no comprehensive studies of illumination in Persian manuscripts. Scholars such as Elaine Wright and Sheila Canby, among a few others, have contributed to a discussion which slowly grows richer, but the field is still one left to the odd devotee. Elaine Julia Wright, "The Look of the Book: Manuscript Production in the Southern Iranian City of Shiraz from the Early-14th Century to 1452" (thesis, University of Oxford, 1997); Sheila R. Canby, "Safavid Illumination," in *Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran, 1501-1576*, ed. Jon Thompson and Sheila R. Canby, 134-53 (Milan and London: Skira, Thames & Hudson, 2003); Elaine Wright, "The *Shamsa* in Iranian Illuminations" (thesis, University of Victoria, 1988). Earlier but still important sources are O. F. Akimushin and Basil Gray, *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia, 14th-16th Centuries* (London and Paris: Serindia Publications / UNESCO, 1979), ch. 2; R. Ettinghausen, "Manuscript Illumination," in *A Survey of Persian Art*, ed. A. U. Pope (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1939).

[63] Akimushin and Gray, *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, 38.

[64] Ibid., 38, 45, fig. 22.

appear in a wide array of hues. Gold itself appears in various tints which are often used in conjunction to create subtle visual effects.[65]

The *sarlawh* with which the Chester Beatty manuscript begins follows these conventions in the sense that its various elements and their organization are not in themselves unusual, but taken as a whole it is a masterpiece of illumination for which there exists no fitting comparison. The palette – which emphasizes gold, orange and pink – and the clever incorporation of animal and fairy forms into the *sarlawh's* components set this work of illumination apart from that produced in any of the major Persian production centers.

There are three main components in the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi sarlawh*: panels above, below and on the sides of the text; an inner border with *peri* heads; and an outer border that is divided into a blue and a gold section. The first component contains bright blue and gold panels around the text which are overlaid with vine scrolls and flowers in red, gold, lavender and white (center, fig. 3.8). There is ample gold in two shades – one more yellow and the other more red – an indication of the skill and sophistication of the illuminator. Visual complexity is established through the variations in gold, and is further enhanced by panels above and below the text that are differentiated from those to either side. It is increased still more by the alternating use of thin orange and blue borders and the insertion of brightly colored birds into gold cartouches in the panels to the sides of the text. Pricked gold in several areas makes these already elaborate panels even more visually rich.

The second component – the border surrounding the panels just described – is less complex, though visually effective in a different way (outer edge, fig. 3.8). It contains blue flower-filled cartouches outlined in orange alternating with *peri* heads, against a yellow-toned gold background. The *peri* heads have prominent brows and locks of dark hair ornamented with

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[65] Ettinghausen, "Manuscript Illumination," 1970.

strands of pearls. Interestingly, on the verso (right side) each head has a bun of dark hair on the

top, while those on the recto (left side) have none. This could indicate that two different

illuminators worked on the frontispiece together. As mentioned above, Skelton has noted that

the faces resemble those found in paintings produced in Bakharz during the late sixteenth

century.[66] Similar *peri* heads also appear in illumination from Shiraz, however, as in a *Kulliyat*

of Sa'di from Shiraz dated to 1570/71.[67] The delightful faces of this border provide a transition

from the small scale motifs of the inner panels to the dense and creature-filled outer borders to

which we now proceed.

The last component is the most unique aspect of the *sarlawh* (fig. 3.9). It is comprised of

two bands, one with a blue background and one with a reddish-gold one, both of which are filled

with flowers. Part of the beauty of these bands is the way that they are interlaced: on the top and

bottom of the pages the gold band is the inner one, while on the left and right side of the pages

their places are reversed. Its other remarkable feature is the way that the border between these

bands is formed by the outstretched wings of angels dressed in blue and orange, the bodies of

orange dragons and the tail feathers of *simurgh*s (gryphons).[68] Though their faces are a bit

crudely drawn, the angels' wings are delightfully colorful and their poses dynamic. They hold

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[66] See, for example, Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, nos. 190, 191 and 194.

[67] See Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts*, no 232. Here the heads are almost identical to the Golconda ones except for their facial features which in the former are drawn with more grace, and their brows, which are less curving and do not connect over the nose. *Peri* heads like those in the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* appear in a number of early Golconda manuscripts. They are included in both the illustrations and illumination of the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah of 1590-1605, which is discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, as well as in later Golconda manuscripts such as the aforementioned *Ikhtiyarat-i Qutb Shahi* of 1630. All of the *peri* heads in these examples conform to the basic characteristics we see in the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*.

[68] One can find a few other examples in which the bodies of dragons play a role in the structure of an illumination. See, for example, illuminations in an anthology in the British Library (Or. 13193) which is datable to 1470-80. In this manuscript, dragons are placed at the corners of a panel inside of which are birds and animal heads. Norah M. Titley, *Dragons in Persian, Mughal, and Turkish Art* (London: British Library, 1981), 35.

gold platters and musical instruments: accoutrements of courtly life.[69] The dragons and

*simurgh*s are delicately drawn and subtly interwoven: the dragons grasp the long feathers of the

simurghs with the claws of one front foot, making their bodies form what seems to be one

continuous line.

    After the *sarlawh,* the text pages – on which the text is written in a rather utilitarian *naskh*

script – are quite bland in appearance. This is only slightly punctuated by the twelve *'unwans*

(chapter headings) that appear throughout the manuscript (fig. 3.10 – 3.11). They follow the

standard format for sixteenth-century *'unwans*, though each combines cartouches, floral patterns,

etc., in a different way. While the *'unwans* are certainly the work of an accomplished

illuminator, they are not the same *tour de force* that the frontispiece is. Some contain *simurgh*s

(e.g. folio 82v, the opening of book three) and an emphasis on orange and gold, which link them

visually to the frontispiece, while others (e.g. folio 118v, the opening of the second part of book

three) feature more conventional shapes and colors.

    Only a few of the features just described can be linked to visual traits that later came to

figure prominently in painting from Golconda. The use of *peri* heads and other creatures to

"animate" ornamental and figurative imagery is something that makes multiple appearances in

Golconda painting. Not only do we find *peri*, lion and rabbit heads on pages (illustrations and

illuminations) in the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah and in later manuscripts like the

aforementioned *Ikhtiyarat-i Qutb Shahi* (fig. 3.5), but a circa 1630 painting in the Islamisches

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[69] The angels in particular are reminiscent of those that appear in Safavid carpets. One comparable example is found in the Brooklyn Museum, Accession No. 36.213g.

Museum, Berlin, of the *waq-waq* tree (a mythical tree with human and animal heads in its branches) has also been attributed to Golconda (fig. 3.12).[70]

It is tempting to draw a link between the menagerie contained in the Chester Beatty manuscript's *sarlawh* (and those in other works of this time and place) and the appearance of animals in the contemporaneous stucco-work of Golconda's early architecture (for example, the Bala Hisar gate at Golconda fort (fig. 2.1) which Marika Sardar has attributed to the time of Ibrahim Qutb Shah), however the very different form and context of these creatures makes this a tenuous link. It is more probable that these mythological and animal forms are simply an exuberant outgrowth of the fairly common practice of incorporating creatures (often just their heads) into Persian illumination in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (fig. 3.13).[71]

Exuberant it is, however, and there are few examples of illuminations that are comparably densely permeated with these kinds of creatures. Even in the rare example that includes just as many creatures, such as a page from a 1536 *Khamsa* of Nizami, the creatures are not as cleverly incorporated into the larger composition (fig. 3.14).

The palette – with its emphasis on "hot," colors like pink and orange – is the only other feature that appears in later paintings from Golconda with regularity.[72] Hot colors are not particular to Golconda, however, since they appear in much sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

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[70] Islamisches Museum, Berlin. Skelton, "Early Golconda Painting," fig. 160. Another manuscript with birds and *simurghs* in its illuminations which may relate to the Golconda group in the Chester Beatty Library: an *Arba'ah* of Hatifi (CBL Ms. 261), which is discussed in some detail in Chapter 4. Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, vol. 3, p. 35; Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 156.

[71] John Seyller has recently pointed to the appearance of a *kirtimukha* head in the spandrel of an architectural façade in a Basohli painting, which may have been painted by a Deccani artist. This example may indicate that there were in fact instances in which motifs like the illuminated animal heads discussed here migrated into architectural ornament, an intriguing idea worth further exploration. Personal communication, June, 2010.

[72] It is also interesting to note the common juxtaposition of orange and blue, since the same thing occurs in the illustrated *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in the Salar Jung Museum. See Chapter 5 for more on this manuscript's palette.

Deccani painting. The Chester Beatty Library's famous painting of a *yogini* from Bijapur is one of many examples of this tendency (fig. 3.15). This is a peculiar feature of Deccani painting for which, to my knowledge, scholars have not yet found a cause.[73]

Neither the use of imagery "animated" with the heads and bodies of various creatures nor the "hot" palette are truly unique to Golconda. Their intensity and frequency may be unusual, but their effect is not that of a variation as much as an amplification of conventions of Persian illuminated manuscripts. The intention in the creation of this object, it seems, was not to innovate in a new direction, but to demonstrate mastery of a time-honored tradition and to create a truly extravagant work of illumination.

It is interesting to note that there is no close counterpart to the art of illumination among the Indic artistic traditions reviewed in the previous chapter. The purely decorative is not unseen among the murals and painted cloths of the eastern Deccan, but ornamental forms tend to be used to enhance or to form the relatively narrow boundaries around figural imagery rather than for their own sake. This raises two possibilities. First, that even had an artist wanted to create a new kind of illumination unique to Golconda, there would not have been any readily available local artistic mode that could be seamlessly conjoined with Persianate illumination to create a hybrid style. And second, that those who came to Golconda from Iran or Central Asia (or those who were the students of these immigrants) with the ability to create such illuminations may have been particularly sought after for their special skills and knowledge. It may not have been in their best interest, therefore, to deviate markedly from the conventions in which they had been trained.

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[73] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 10. In reference to the palette of Bijapuri painting, see Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 12-13, 75.

Reflections on Manuscript Group 1

Previous assessments of the Chester Beatty *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* have generally treated the manuscript as a cultural import. They tend to place it at the beginning of a sequence of manuscripts produced in Golconda, implicitly suggesting that the Persianate nature of its illumination reflects the relative youth of Golconda's painting tradition. Over time, it is suggested, Persianate features "naturally" came to be replaced by more homegrown pictorial creations.

I propose that this conception of artistic development in Golconda is mistaken, and that even if the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* had been produced later in the sixteenth century or at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it is possible that it would not have been done any differently. Indeed, illuminations in the 1630 *Ikhtiyarat-i Qutb Shahi* produced over 60 years after the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, do not show any major changes in the way illuminations were created in Golconda. In other words, the characteristics of this masterful *sarlawh* would, at any point, have been determined by the experiences of the artists, the expectations of its patron, and the nature of the surrounding artistic landscape as much or more than they might have been shaped by their position in a chain of artistic events.

The artistic and social conditions that may have shaped the production of this mansucript's illumination include the frequent immigration of accomplished artists from Iran and Central Asia, the absence of a local artistic counterpart to the tradition of manuscript illumination, and social conditions in which a large and highly mobilized Persian diaspora sought to achieve political and economic success through the demonstration of skills particular to their social group. Knowledge of the Greco-Arab medical tradition – a type of medical learning that was highly valued in but not indigenous to India – and the ability to create masterful Persianate

illuminations seem to have been valuable assets at the Qutb Shahi court. Thus, the manuscript's form and content distinctly emphasize two realms of knowledge and accomplishment – artistic and medical – by which Persian immigrants in Golconda gained access to the realms of political, social and economic power.

If this manuscript was made for the Persian diaspora, as I have speculated, that does not mean that it did not circulate beyond this community. Indeed, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah's possession of the manuscript tells us that it was examined by viewers who were as comfortable with Dakani and Telugu as they were with Persian. If and when the manuscript did come to the attention of a Deccani Muslim or Telugu-speaking Hindu viewer, there is no reason to think that these viewers would have reacted with anything less than admiration. This is one of the most remarkable aspects of Golconda's courtly world: unlike the many societies that are home to large immigrant populations whose cultural practices in constant danger of being lost, in Golconda the culture of the immigrants was a valuable commodity. Thus, the cultural specificity and, indeed, the cultural difference, that this manuscript acknowledges and even celebrates would have been a potent source of power.

Chapter 4: Manuscript Group 2

In the late 1950s, five scholars convened at the Chester Beatty Library in the center of Dublin to begin an immense cataloguing project. Over the next several years, A.J. Arberry, J.V.S. Wilkinson, Ernst Blochet, M. Minovi and B.W. Robinson produced a detailed account of the Persian manuscripts and paintings in the unparalleled collection that American industrialist Chester Beatty had donated to Ireland in 1950. The three oversize volumes in which their work was published between 1959 and 1962 became a foundational catalog in the field of Persian painting studies.[1]

In the third of these volumes, published 1962, there is a description of a little known manuscript: an undated copy of Hatifi's *Arba'ah* (Chester Beatty Library Persian Ms. 261).[2] Besides the manuscript's six curious-looking paintings (fig. 4.1 - 4.2) and the gold-sprinkled paper on which the text is inscribed, it is not particularly notable as a work of art. Indeed, it has not been the subject of any further publications, and its paintings have never been reproduced. Although neither the object itself nor the catalogers' description of it has generated scholarly interest in the years since the third volume was published, this manuscript – as Arberry and Robinson, who wrote the entry on it, realized – held the key to an important group of fairly well-known but hitherto misunderstood manuscripts.

The main members of this group were an *Anvar-i Suhayli* in the Victoria and Albert Museum (hereafter, the V&A) and a *Sindbadnama* in the British Library (hereafter, the BL).

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[1] Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*.

[2] Ibid., vol. 3, p. 35-36.

These two manuscripts had been known for some time to scholars of Persian painting, who had noted similarities between them and hypothesized that they had been produced in provincial Persian contexts.[3] Since neither manuscript has an intact colophon or any other clear indication of the place of its production, they could not be definitively linked to any particular site.

When Arberry and Robinson began to examine the Chester Beatty *Arba'ah*, they made two important discoveries. First, they found that it contained a number of seal impressions: one of Ibrahim Qutb Shah's seal, one of Muhammad Quli's and several of Muhammad Qutb Shah's. Second, they noticed that its paintings were peculiar in a very familiar way: some of their idiosyncratic features were also found in the paintings of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*. Putting these pieces of information together, Arberry and Robinson hypothesized that all three of the manuscripts had been made in the Qutb Shahi sultanate.

The *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama* have since received a fair amount of scholarly attention, but the *Arba'ah* itself has languished in obscurity. This is perhaps because although the seal impressions definitively link the manuscript to the Qutb Shahi court, the stylistic similarities between the paintings in the *Arba'ah* and the other two manuscripts are limited. Arberry and Robinson noted that all include irregular and unusual ways of representing faces, figures and landscape elements, and a palette that emphasizes "hot" colors. To this list of similarities could be added that the *Arba'ah* includes birds and *simurgh*s in its illuminations (fig. 4.3) in a manner reminiscent of illuminations in the Chester Beatty's own *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* (see Chapter 3), known to have been made in Golconda. These stylistic connections are not insignificant, but one might wish for a few more.

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[3] Hermann Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (Oxford: Printed for the India Office by H. Hart, 1903), 714; B. W. Robinson, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Persian Miniature Paintings from British Collections* (London: n.p., 1951), no. 143 and 44.

Having personally examined all three of these manuscripts, I cannot assert with total confidence that the *Arba'ah* was produced by the same artists as the other two manuscripts. The stylistic evidence is simply not adequate. For this reason, the *Arba'ah* is not included in my formulation of the early Golconda manuscript corpus. Although I do not include it in my grouping, I nevertheless rely on Arberry and Robinson's original insight: that late in the sixteenth century, artists in Golconda produced a number of Persianate manuscripts (the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama* among them) with a common set of stylistic characteristics.[4] This assertion forms the foundation upon which this chapter stands.

A few more comments about the *Arba'ah* must be made before the manuscript can be left to languish once again. First, it is possible that it was indeed created by artists and scribes from Golconda, and future scholarship may well uncover evidence that can conclusively link it to Golconda artists. Second, there is a possible alternative explanation for the stylistic similarities between the *Arba'ah*'s paintings and those in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Sindbadnama*: the *Arba'ah* may have been produced outside of Golconda and then purchased by or given to someone in the sultanate. It might then have been included in the royal library, as we know many other Persian manuscripts to have been, or in the library of a nobleman. As a prized object, the manuscript could easily have been chosen to serve as a model for subsequent manuscript production in Golconda, for manuscripts sponsored by nobles or the sultan himself.

[4] There is one final manuscript that could be part of this category, an undated *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* in the collection of the British Library (Or. 4535). An unusual type of snow-covered mountain has been identified in both the *Arba'ah* and the *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* by Robert Skelton, who has in personal conversation raised the idea that both manuscripts might have been produced in Golconda. At this time there is not enough evidence to make a secure attribution of the *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* to Golconda, but Skelton may well be correct. For information on Or. 4535, see Charles Rieu, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 1895), 190; E. Blochet and Cicely Margaret Powell Binyon, *Musulman Painting XIIth-XVIIth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1929), pl. CXXXVI; Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, no. 192, pl. LXXII; B. W. Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from Collections in the British Isles* (London: H.M.S.O., 1967), no. 1818; Norah M. Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting and Its Influence on the Art of Turkey and India: The British Library Collections* (London: British Library, 1983), 181-2; Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 157.

For now, this is merely a possibility. Perhaps, over time, greater clarity on the subject of this key manuscript will be achieved.

The three manuscripts that make up this chapter include two noted above – the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the BL *Sindbadnama* – and a third which has never before been linked to Golconda. Although this last manuscript – a copy of the *Khamsa* of Nizami in the Andhra Pradesh State Museum – is probably the earliest of the three, it will be discussed only after the features of the other two are set out. This is because the attribution of this "new" manuscript is based in part on the stylistic similarity its paintings bear to those found in the other two, more well-known codices.

These three manuscripts were probably produced during the first decade or so of the reign of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. This is not to say that the manuscripts were royally sponsored; those who prompted and financed their production have not been identified. While it is possible that they were royal commissions, there is no strong evidence to suggest this is so. In fact, rather than having been made for a single, royal patron, they may have been made for several elite individuals. Visual evidence further suggests that although certain artists may have worked on two or even three of the manuscripts, there is no reason for us to assume that the membership of this "workshop" was fixed. Rather, it seems likely that the artistic context in which the manuscripts were made and the conditions of their sponsorship were much more fluid than a royal workshop like that of the Mughals to the north.

And yet, the manuscripts are clearly closely related to one another. All three take the form of Persian illustrated codices and their content is Persian literature, but none is a slavish imitation. On the contrary, each one stakes out some area within the Persianate framework in

which to experiment, whether it is with the role of the margin, the relationship between text and image, or the depiction of natural landscapes. In their consistent – though subtle – experimentation, the three manuscripts are quite different from the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, which emphasizes mastery of established forms as opposed to innovative experimentation with them.

It is tempting to see these objects as representing an advancement of manuscript production from the relative conservatism of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* to a more culturally open artistic tradition. An assertion such as this one, however, imposes upon Golconda's early manuscript production a developmental trajectory from closed and foreign to open and local.[5] While it is possible that the community within which these manuscripts were produced had undergone a transformation which caused a loosening of cultural boundaries and a concomitant change in artistic possibilities, it is just as likely that these manuscripts were simply not made for or by the same people for or by whom the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* was made.

The diversity of the Golconda court in this period virtually guarantees that there would have been multiple markets for illustrated manuscripts, each with its own expectations of such objects and reasons for desiring them. The evidence presented below leads me to hypothesize that in the case of these three manuscripts, the intended audience (and perhaps the sponsors themselves) was the cosmopolitan Qutb Shahi courtier: an individual who spoke multiple languages (probably at least Persian, Dakani and Telugu), moved in circles occupied by Deccanis and foreigners, and was familiar with manuscripts from Iran but was not personally invested in the status of Persian culture at the Golconda court.

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[5] One might also question whether significant trends in production can be identified with so few "data points" (i.e. manuscripts).

The last quarter of the sixteenth century in Golconda, during which the manuscripts discussed in this chapter were made, saw the continuation of many of the socio-political trends and conditions known from the previous quarter century. Immigrants from Iran continued to make their way to Golconda in large numbers, often acquiring prestigious posts. Rivalry between these immigrants and Deccanis at court continued to erupt from time to time. The accession of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in 1580 exemplifies these groups' ongoing antagonism, as he was put on the throne in part by the brahman Raya Rao – a powerful member of the Deccani faction – in direct competition with Mir Shah Mir, a powerful Persian courtier who preferred Muhammad Quli's brother, Husain Quli.[6]

Despite these rivalries, the high degree of multiculturalism that Ibrahim Qutb Shah encouraged in Golconda continued in the late years of the century. Cultural interaction occurred not just between Deccani and immigrant Muslims but also, as Phillip Wagoner has shown, between these groups and Hindus such as the Telugu chiefs and Srivaisnava Brahmans who served at the Qutb Shahi court.[7] These latter groups have for the most part been overlooked in scholarship on Golconda, which tends to be based solely on Persian sources and emphasizes the actions and contributions of Persians over all others. Wagoner's recent work brings to light figures such as Nebati Krishnayamatya, a Telugu brahman who was a diplomatic representative, governor, minister and advisor under Muhammad Quli. Krishnayamatya belonged to a family that served in a variety of capacities under first Bahmani and then Qutb Shahi sultans.[8]

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[6] Raya Rao had been Ibrahim's confidant and advisor for many years, and helped to lead the Qutb Shahi army in a siege of the important Kondavidu fort in 1579. Mir Shah Mir, also known as Syed Shah Taqi, was born in Isfahan. ———, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 172, 261.

[7] Wagoner, "The Multiple Worlds of Amin Khan: Crossing Persianate and Indic Cultural Boundaries in the Qutb Shahi Kingdom."

[8] Wagoner, "Social Mechanisms for Indic/Persianate Cultural Exchange at Golconda."

Krishnayamatya is known today only from a Telugu literary work he composed, the *Ocean of Royal Policy* (*Rajaniti-ratnakara*), which is an adaptation of the Sanskrit *Panchatantra*. Although the text has not been published in full and has yet to be exhaustively studied, the mere fact that a Telugu version of the *Panchatantra* was composed by a Qutb Shahi courtier during this period is important for this chapter, in which two of the three manuscripts contain Persian texts derived from this classic Sanskrit work. That interest in these stories spanned linguistic and religious groups supports the notion that the Persian manuscripts examined in this chapter were not admired by Persian immigrants and their descendents alone.

Anvar-i Suhayli

The considerable charms of the Victoria and Albert Museum's *Anvar-i Suhayli*[9] – its rich program of illustration, fantastic illuminations and colored papers – have attracted a number of scholars over the years. Those who have worked on it can be divided into two main categories. Some have approached the manuscript as a representative of a stage in the development of the "Golconda style," seeing in its illustrations early hints of a unique local aesthetic. Others have found in its pages rare evidence of the organization and methods of an early modern Indian painting workshop. The discussion presented below aims to build upon these contributions by offering several new observations.

First, it is undeniable that the illustrations of this *Anvar-i Suhayli* manuscript contain features that appear to be unique to Golconda. A number of these features can be found also in the other two manuscripts to be dealt with in this chapter, which indicates that at this particular

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[9] Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 13-1962. The manuscript was in the Erskine of Torrie Institution, Dunimarle, Fife, before it entered the Victoria and Albert Museum. Rosemary Crill et al., *Art of India: Paintings and Drawings in the Victoria & Albert Museum* (Haslemere, Surrey, U.K.: Emmet Publishing, 1992), 108-11.

moment in time, a fairly set group of artists with steady financial support were involved in an extended collaboration. Rather than seeing these features as harbingers of Golconda painting's artistic maturity, however, I would suggest that they reflect the interests of a particular group of artists and patrons. It is not clear that they provided the ground upon which future artists in Golconda based their own stylistic explorations.

Second, close observation reveals that the illustrations of the manuscript were created in roughly three sequential phases that likely represent shifts in the makeup and methods of the workshop. Over time, the artists who produced the illustrations became more and more adventurous with their compositions, using the margins to greater advantage and moving towards full-page paintings. This is a development that occurred at different times and in different ways in many parts of India and Iran, but it has never before been acknowledged that Golconda's artists were at the forefront of what has been called the "emancipation" of illustrations from text in India, as one scholar has put it.[10] The artistic progression within the manuscript also indicates an area of active and conscious engagement on the part of the artists with the pictorial conventions of Persian manuscript illustration.

Third, this *Anvar-i Suhayli's* illustrations were intended to function differently from the way illustrations functioned in other Golconda manuscripts. The illustrations are only superficially related to the narrative, and do not seek to depict episodes in detail, to explore or comment on the episodes, or to reflect the structure of the narrative. There are at least two reasons for this. First, as John Seyller has pointed out, the artists were in many cases instructed

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[10] John Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*: The Illustration of a De Luxe Mughal Manuscript," *Ars Orientalis* XVI (1986): 126. The notion of emancipation of images from texts has been around for quite some time. It is discussed in reference to Western medieval manuscripts in Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration*, 89. Weitzmann's ideas have been applied to Arabic manuscripts by Oleg Grabar in Oleg Grabar, "About an Arabic Dioskorides Manuscript," in *Islamic Visual Culture, 1100-1800* (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006).

by notations as to the subject they were to paint, and probably did not read the text themselves. Second, the artists directed their energy towards developing new methods of representation of architectural and natural settings rather than towards exploring the narrative through visual means. This loosening of the text-image relationship in favor of other artistic goals points to a second area of focused innovation.

The *Anvar-i Suhayli* is one of the most commonly illustrated Persian texts, and the scores of illustrated manuscripts it has inspired offer an unusually rich field against which to explore the traits of the Victoria and Albert Museum's copy of the text. In this context, it becomes clear that while the artists who worked on the manuscript did not seek to radically challenge the foundations of the manuscript tradition in which they worked, they did seek to intervene into this tradition in specific and subtle ways, with a logic and purpose specific to their own time and place.

The Text

The *Anvar-i Suhayli* belongs to a family of texts the progenitor of which is the *Panchatantra*, a Sanskrit work of prose composed around 300 A.D.[11] The *Panchatantra* is a political treatise in the form of a collection of fables containing lessons for kings and ministers. Many of the fables were known for centuries before the *Panchatantra* was composed and some of them appear in similar forms in the *Mahabharata* and the Buddhist *Jatakas* (stories of the Buddha's past lives).[12] Although this group of stories is Indian in origin, they have been immensely popular across Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Thus, the earliest version of the *Panchatantra* to survive is a Syriac translation which was produced around the sixth

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[11] Patrick Olivelle, *Pañcatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[12] Ibid., xxxiii.

century.[13] It was then translated into Arabic[14] and Persian[15] as *Kalila wa Dimna* in the eight and twelfth centuries respectively, before being rewritten in Persian as the *Anvar-i Suhayli* by Kamal al-Din Husayn ibn Ali al-Va'iz (whose pen name was Kashifi) in the late fifteenth century in Herat. Kashifi composed the *Anvar-i Suhayli* for Amir Suhayli, a Turkic nobleman who was a poet in his own right.[16]

The *Anvar-i Suhayli* does not alter the content of the earlier Persian version of the stories of *Kalila wa Dimna.* Rather, Kashifi's new version was intended to update the language of the text so as to make the tales resonate better with contemporary readers.[17] The structure and narrative content of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, therefore, are much the same as that of the *Panchatantra* and *Kalila wa Dimna.* All three texts are based around an overarching "frame story" interspersed with "sub-stories," many of which are themselves interspersed with further "sub-stories." This system for organizing a narrative dates back to ancient Vedic literature.[18] A number of other texts that are related to the *Panchatantra* – like the *Sindbadnama* and the *Tutinama* – are also structured this way.

One of Kashifi's most substantial changes to the text was his addition of a new outer frame story to the text. This new story is quite simple – comprising a conversation between a Chinese emperor and his vizier – and it only appears at the very beginning and the very end of

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[13] Ibid., xliii.

[14] by 'Abdallah ibn al-Muqaffa

[15] by Nizam al-Din al-Hamid Abul-Ma'ali Nasrullah ibn Muhammad ibn Abd al-Hamid

[16] For an overview of the text, see G. M. Wickens, "Anwar-e Sohayli," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, vol. 2, fascicle 2, 1986, 140-141.

[17] Mika Natif, "Explaining Early Mughal Painting: The *Anvar-i-Suhayli* Manuscripts" (dissertation, New York University, 2006), 23-26.

[18] M. Witzel, "On the Origin of the Literary Device of the 'Frame Story' in Old Indian Literature," in *Hinduismus Und Buddhismus: Festschrift Ulrich Schneider* (Freiburg: Hedwig Falk, 1987).

the text. In their talk, the vizier tells the emperor a story about an encounter between an Indian

despot named Dabishlim and Bidpai, a wise Brahman. The interactions between Dabishlim and

Bidpai constitute the frame story of the earlier versions of the text as well as the main frame

story throughout the remainder of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.

In the first part of this latter frame story a number of different characters tell stories.

Soon, however, Bidpai takes over and becomes the sole storyteller, relating a series of fourteen

major stories, each of which contains nested stories. The longest and most familiar of Bidpai's

stories is "The Lion, the Bull Shanzabah and Kalila and Dimnah." At the end of each of these

stories the text returns to Bidpai and Dabishlim. The two men discuss the meaning of the story

and the king asks the brahman to tell another. After Bidpai tells all fourteen of his stories,

Dabishlim expresses his satisfaction with Bidpai and their part of the narrative ends. The text

then shifts back to the Chinese vizier, who has now finished telling *his* story. He is praised by

his king, who vows to abide by the moral and political guidelines of the stories in the running of

his government. Thus ends the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.

As this brief description shows, the peregrinations of these stories from South Asia

through Central and West Asia and then back again did not alter the setting of the main body of

stories, which continued to be identified as Indian. The *Anvar-i Suhayli's* frame story is set

outside of India, however, and the preface extensively discusses how the stories were translated

first into Pahlavi and then into Arabic for Persian kings desirous of the knowledge contained in

the stories of the *Panchatantra*. Indeed, as Barry Flood has recently noted in reference to *Kalila

wa Dimna*, "the tales begin with a self-conscious celebration of the role of translation in their

own dissemination."[19] Kashifi's additions to the stories only added to the many layers of

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[19] Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval Hindu-Muslim Encounter*, 6.

references to transmission and translation. These cultural transactions between Persianate and Indic societies may have had special resonance for those members of Golconda's cosmopolitan courtly community who read and viewed the Victoria and Albert Museum manuscript. Indeed, the manuscript itself embodies the continuous re-inscription and circulation of these stories throughout the Persianate world.

Despite its Indian roots, the *Anvar-i Suhayli* belongs to a genre of Persian literature known as "mirrors for princes": texts containing compendiums of lessons necessary for transforming princes into effective rulers.[20] These lessons include topics such as how to keep abreast of one's enemies' intrigues, the dangers of carelessness, and the importance of maintaining alliances. Their primary function was instructional, though there is no doubt that they also helped to articulate and codify conceptions of kingship.

As in many parts of the Persianate world in this period, there seems to have been avid interest in "mirrors for princes" in general and the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Kalila wa Dimna* in particular in the upper echelons of Golconda's court. In addition to the V&A manuscript we know that Bari Sahib, daughter of Muhammad Qutb Shah (Muhammad Quli's successor), owned a copy of *Kalila wa Dimna* which is dated 1492.[21] A Mir Jumla of Golconda during Muhammad Quli's reign (Mirza Muhammad Amin Isfahani, also known as Mirza Muhammad Amin Shahristani) owned an important copy of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* itself, dated 1593, which he gifted

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[20] Ann K. S. Lambton, *Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government*, Collected Studies Series (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980), 419-42.

[21] National Museum, Delhi, Acc. no 71.8. Khandalavala and Desai, "Indian Illustrated Manuscripts of the *Kalila Wa Dimna*, *Anvar-i Suhayli*, and *Iyar-i Danish*," 129.

to the Mughal emperor Jahangir in 1618.[22] If one expands one's view beyond Persian and

Arabic texts, and adds the Telugu aforementioned adaptation of the *Panchatantra* composed by

Nebati Krishnayamatya, one begins to get a sense that these tales appealed to quite a wide range

of Golconda's courtiers.

Illustrating the *Anvar-i Suhayli*

The texts adapted from the tales of the *Panchatantra* have attracted artists for centuries.

They have been illustrated for at least the last 1500 years in various forms: wall paintings, stone

carvings, terracotta panels, pottery and, of course, illustrated manuscripts.[23] As Ernst Grube

points out, manuscripts of *Kalila wa Dimna* "were made in more places and periods than any

other literary text ever produced in the Muslim world."[24] The earliest surviving copies of *Kalila*

wa Dimna are from the thirteenth century, though there is no doubt that illustrated copies were

made centuries before.[25] The text became increasingly popular among scribes and illustrators in

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[22] It has been suggested that this manuscript, today in the collection of the late Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, was made for and perhaps by Sadiqi Beg Afshar, the head of the atelier of Shah 'Abbas I. According to a note on its first folio, the manuscript was "received at the Abode of Sovereignty, Ahmedabad in Gujarat" on July 3, 1618, as a gift to Jahangir from the Persian Sayyid Mir Jumla, who had been in the service of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah and Muhammad Qutb Shah. B. W. Robinson, "Two Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Marquess of Bute, Part II: *Anvar-i Suhayli* (Bute Ms 347)," *Oriental Art* 18 (1972); Ernst J. Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts," *Islamic Art* IV (1991): no. 39; Eleanor Sims, "16th Century Persian and Turkish Manuscripts of Animal Fables in Persia, Transoxiana, and Ottoman Turkey," in *A Mirror for Princes from India: Illustrated Versions of the* Kalilah wa Dimnah, Anvar-i Suhayli, Iyar-i Danish*, and* Humayun Nameh, ed. Ernst J. Grube (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991), 101-19.

[23] These different media are discussed in Julian Raby, "The Earliest Illustrations to *Kalilah wa Dimnah*," in *A Mirror for Princes from India*, ed. Ernst J. Grube (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991).

[24] Ernst J. Grube, *A Mirror for Princes from India* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991), 2.

[25] Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 27-28.

the fourteenth century until in the fifteenth century several magnificent illustrated copies of the text were produced.[26]

During the fifteenth and sixteenth century, illustrated copies of these stories were produced not only in Iran and Transoxiana but also in Ottoman lands and in India.[27] A handful of manuscripts have been attributed to fifteenth-century India, though none with colophons to secure these identifications.[28] One of these shows affinities with the V&A manuscript in its depiction of trees and animals, but its palette, method of depicting rocks, and its text (which incorporates passages of Arabic in *thulth* – an elegant cursive script – and *naskh* – a smaller, more delicate version of *thulth* – into the otherwise Persian text) differentiates it considerably.[29]

More definitively attributable manuscripts of these texts were produced in India during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. The V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* seems to be one of the earliest surviving illustrated manuscripts from this period. Until recently a copy of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* at the School of Oriental and African Studies (Ms. 10102) was believed to have been produced in 1570 at the court of the Mughals, but Mika Natif has convincingly argued that most of its illustrations were actually produced in the mid-1580s, making it contemporaneous with or even slightly later than the V&A manuscript.[30]

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[26] For example, the Istanbul University Library *Kalila wa Dimna* (Farsça 1422), ca. 1360. See Ernst J. Grube, "The Istanbul University Library *Kalilah wa Dimnah* and Other 14th-Century Persian Manuscripts," in *A Mirror for Princes from India*, ed. Ernst J. Grube (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991).

[27] Sims, "16th Century Persian and Turkish Manuscripts of Animal Fables in Persia, Transoxiana, and Ottoman Turkey."

[28] One manuscript in the National Museum, Delhi (71.18) is dated 1492 and attributed to the Lodi Sultanate while the other manuscript, in the British Library (Or. 13163) is undated and attributed to either the Lodi Sultanate or to Shiraz. Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts," manuscript nos. 48 and 49. Another manuscript was recently sold by Sotheby's in London (5 October 2010, lot 53) and described in the catalog as being from Northern India during the Sultanate period.

[29] I refer here to the manuscript sold through Sotheby's mentioned just above.

[30] Mika Natif, "The SOAS *Anvar-i Suhayli*: The Journey of a 'Reincarnated' Manuscript," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008).

By 1610 several more manuscripts of this group of texts had been created in North India, many by artists from the imperial Mughal atelier or artists in the employ of Mughal officials.[31] It is possible that between 1580 and 1610, more copies of these texts were produced in India than in any other Persian-speaking region.[32] After this period, production dropped off. There is little doubt that the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century was a time when great strides were being taken in the pictorial representation of these classic tales.

Though it has many unique qualities, the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* must be seen within this larger context of production. Golconda's artists, like those who created the Mughal manuscripts, were working at what might be considered the second peak in the manuscript tradition that grew up around this group of texts. While all of these artists' creations to some extent belonged to the extensive pictorial tradition that had grown up around these texts in previous centuries, they were also continually reinventing this tradition for new audiences.

The Manuscript: Basic Features

The V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* contains 441 folios, today encased in a leather binding that does not appear to be original. Each folio is approximately 265 by 160 millimeters, and most are a deep brown color, though blue pages appear occasionally throughout the manuscript. The average text box is 179 by 95 millimeters in size, and is bound by gold, black and blue rules. Eighteen lines appear on a page of text. A number of folios have incomplete rules and borders suggesting that the manuscript was never brought to an absolutely complete state.

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[31] These manuscripts were the subject of Mika Natif's dissertation. Natif, "Explaining Early Mughal Painting: The *Anvar-i-Suhayli* Manuscripts."

[32] This conclusion can be drawn from the data recorded in Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts." Though incredibly useful, the Prolegomena is a first attempt to collate all known copies of these texts and it contains mistakes. Future scholarship may lead to other conclusions.

Although these preliminary details are quite typical of copies of this text, the manuscript quickly begins to offer its viewers surprises, beginning with the first folio. The *shamsa* (folio 1r, half of which has been tragically lost) is constructed of traditional components – a medallion in the middle of a large rectangle – but its decoration is extremely unusual (fig. 4.4). The central medallion is standard enough: it is oval in shape, and has a diamond-shaped cartouche above it. It is likely that there was once another cartouche underneath, which is now destroyed. The rectangle in which these elements are contained is made of thin blue and gold rules. It is with the gold and blue corner pieces that the illumination begins to get inventive. These forms appear to slip under the rules and emerge on the far side to form triangles in the margins, one on each side of the rectangle. These triangles are cleverly made to extend slightly over the rules into the interior of the rectangular frame as if bending around it and locking the illumination together. The effect is almost three-dimensional in appearance.

It is in the space between the central medallion and the rectangular border, however, that we find this page's most remarkable element: a field of overlapping green leaves (fig. 4.5). This may be a sort of pictorial literalization of the convention of filling illuminated fields with abstract vegetal motifs. Indeed, it is almost as if one is seeing a grassy field through an illuminated window. The artist who created this *shamsa* may have been making a sort of visual pun, interchanging abstractions of plant life for realistic depictions of lush fields. Whether intentionally clever or not, this illuminated page is a fitting opening to the manuscript, serving to prepare the viewer for the manuscript's unusual representations of gardens and greenery and for the other types of visual risk-taking he or she will encounter in its pages.

The double-page frontispiece which follows (folio 1v-2r) has been very badly damaged (fig. 4.6). It is still, however, possible to make out that its outer margins were originally

elaborately illuminated in blue and gold. Inside these margins appears a blue border with gold

vines and red flowers that is similar to the illumination in the corner pieces and marginal

triangles of the *shamsa*. Within this border there is a hunting scene on the right (verso) side and

a royal feast on the left (recto), both densely packed with figures. Intriguingly, the feast scene

carries over the bright blue from the hillside of the opposite page, but uses it as the floor of a

throne room upon which figures dance, play music, cook and serve food.

The text begins on the following page with an *'unwan* (folio 2v) that is much like those

that appear in sixteenth-century Persian manuscripts of all kinds (fig. 4.7). The title of the text is

inscribed in now-faint white inside a blue and gold rectangle, above which there appear one

whole and two half triangular cartouches. Although this *'unwan* is quite conventional, the wide

border that runs along both of its sides and continues around the text block – identical to the

border that surrounded the double-page frontispiece just discussed – is rather unusual for Persian

and Indian manuscripts.

Within the folios following this series of remarkable opening pages there are 127

illustrations, spread more or less evenly throughout the manuscript. The identities of the artists

who produced the illustrations are not known, as no attributions have been made or signatures

discovered. Zebrowski has hypothesized that the *Anvar-i Suhayli* was made by "Turco-Iranian

émigrés" employed at the Qutb Shahi court.[33] In my opinion, however, it is most likely that the

artists were born in India and exposed to recent modes of painting from Iran through objects

and/or immigrant artists, as well as to earlier modes of Persianate painting through objects

produced in North India during the Delhi Sultanate such as the Mandu *Nimatnama* or the Bengal

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[33] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155.

Sharafnama.[34] This idea was first proffered by Losty, who suggested that "a studio must have been set up [in Golconda] in the first half of the sixteenth century with artists from Iran working with artists used to a Sultanate school and to the Turkman Shiraz style."[35]

Dating and Attribution

Although the manuscript has no colophon, a date appears on its final folios: 1582 (992 A.H.).   Unfortunately, it appears to have been damaged and re-written in such a way that it is not possible to tell whether the date was changed at the time of re-writing, and there are no inscriptions or seals that reinforce it. There is no record of the place of production.

When it was first catalogued in 1951 by B.W. Robinson, it was thought that this *Anvar-i Suhayli* was a "provincial" Persian manuscript, or in other words, a manuscript made in a place like Shiraz.[36] Its paintings share enough features with Persian painting to make this plausible, but as Robinson noted, stylistically they are suggestive of a period a bit earlier than the 1580s. He also pointed out that the manuscript shared something of its style with the *Sindbadnama* in the British Library, to be discussed in the next section of this chapter. In 1959 Ivan Stchoukine agreed with Robinson on both points, but went further in remarking that its paintings evoked those of fifteenth-century Shiraz.[37]

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[34] Norah M. Titley, *The Ni'matnama Manuscript of the Sultans of Mandu: The Sultan's Book of Delights*, Routledgecurzon Studies in South Asia (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 179-83, pl. 32.

[35] Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 71.

[36] Robinson, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition*, 34, no 144.

[37] In this comment Stchoukine seems to have been noting what Losty later would. Namely, that some elements of fifteenth-century Persian painting, filtered through India (as in the manuscripts of Mandu), seem to have been in the minds of the artists as well as the more up-to-date sixteenth-century styles. Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, 138.

Scholarly opinion shifted after the discovery of the Chester Beatty Library *Arba'ah* of

Hatifi, which seemed to suggest that the *Anvar-i Suhayli* had been produced in Golconda. In

1967 Robinson stated his confidence in this attribution, departing from his previous attribution of

the manuscript to Iran.[38] With the exception of Robert Skelton, this notion was accepted by

subsequent scholars.[39] After J.P. Losty included the manuscript in the Deccan section of *Art of*

the Book in India,[40] and Mark Zebrowski included it in his seminal monograph on Deccani

painting of 1983,[41] the attribution to Golconda became virtually iron-clad.

Dating the manuscript has, however, remained tricky. The archaistic features first noted

by Robinson caused Zebrowski to put aside the damaged date of 1582 and suggest instead that

the manuscript was from the 1550s or 1560s.[42] A few years later Ernst Grube did the same.[43]

Most other scholars have accepted the re-written date, however. In my opinion it is likely that

the manuscript was indeed produced in 1582, and that its pre-1580 stylistic features result from

the distance from Iran at which it was made and the continuing impact of "Sultanate" painting

with its strong connections to fifteenth-century Persian painting.

Scholarship on the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*

Early scholarship on the manuscript was dedicated towards describing and identifying its

style of illustration. The first scholar to describe the manuscript's paintings was Stchoukine,

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[38] Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 113.

[39] Skelton has since come to support the attribution of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* to Golconda. Personal communication, 2009.

[40] Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, no. 49.

[41] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155-56. Zebrowski wrote that there were Qutb Shahi seals in the manuscript. I have not seen any myself, and no other scholar mentions them. It is likely that this was an error.

[42] Ibid., 155.

[43] Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts," 364, 394.

who observed that although its paintings included elements he associated with Turkman painting, they were bold and original in various ways.[44] The unique characteristics Stchoukine alluded to were more fully described shortly afterwards in A.J. Arberry and B.W. Robinson's description of a style they believed linked the Chester Beatty Library *Arba'ah of Hatifi* with the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*. It was characterized by "vagaries of drawing and costume, the modified or distorted landscape formulae, the un-Persian colour-scheme with its prominent purple, yellow, and orange, its hot Indian red, and its dull greens and blues..."[45] Losty added to this basic description in his 1982 catalogue, noting the illustrations' abundant and fantastic depictions of greenery,[46] their tendency towards intensive "pattern-making" and a number of iconographic details that link the *Anvar-i Suhayli* to the *Sindbadnama* such as the frequent inclusion of oriel windows and tall date palms.[47] In the following year, Zebrowski noted many of the same features, adding only that the paintings contained palaces with intersecting arcades the like of which he believed to have been built in Golconda.[48]

Scholarship on the manuscript shifted focus in the 1980s when it joined a broader discussion about issues of text-image relationships and the transmission of iconographic and pictorial models between manuscripts, regions and time periods. Scholars of Persian manuscripts have long been divided on the question of how programs of illustration (i.e. "pictorial cycles") are generated. Some believe that artists looked to other manuscripts of the

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[44] Unfortunately, he did not elaborate or present any Turkman-era manuscripts for comparison. Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, no. 199 and p. 85.

[45] Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 35-36.

[46] Mark Zebrowski referred to the vegetation in this manuscript as "aggressively lush." Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155.

[47] Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 71.

[48] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155-56.

same text for the subjects and placement of their illustrations, and that pictorial cycles must have been passed down from one manuscript to the next.[49] Others assert that artists create illustrations anew each time they work on a manuscript and that their choices of subject and placement have more to do with local artistic expectations and traditions than with the pictorial programs of earlier manuscripts.[50]

John Seyller has been a major proponent of the latter notion. In reference to the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Kalila wa Dimna*, he has suggested that although there is no doubt that pictorial models derived from earlier manuscripts of these texts were in the minds of the artists who created new manuscripts, artists also frequently departed from these models.[51] Reasons for departing from established models include the artists' desire to apply local compositional and stylistic principles and their interest in making illustrations relate specifically to the text on the page.

Seyller's thesis found support in Bernard O'Kane's 2003 book on late fourteenth-century *Kalila wa Dimna* manuscripts.[52] In it O'Kane argued that although in some cases the pictorial program of one manuscript was copied from another with which it shared a "family" relationship, in most cases the artists derived the illustrations on their own. In his thinking, artists tended to work from the text itself, though they often used stock compositions rather than creating a unique image to suit the required passage. He added, however, that in some cases artists did call upon compositional models that had emerged for the most popular scenes.

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[49] Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts."

[50] Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*: The Illustration of a De Luxe Mughal Manuscript"; Natif, "Explaining Early Mughal Painting: The *Anvar-i-Suhayli* Manuscripts."

[51] Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*." The existence of pictorial models is most clear for certain "classic" stories such as the flying tortoise, to be discussed below.

[52] O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century*.

The other position was developed in relation to the *Anvar-i Suhayli* with Ernst Grube's "Prolegomena for a Corpus of Publication of Illustrated *Kalilah wa Dimnah* Manuscripts," an invaluable compendium of data on ninety illustrated manuscripts of these texts.[53] Grube's goal was to begin cataloguing the over four thousand illustrations in extant manuscripts in order to facilitate the identification of what Grube called "family connections" between the pictorial programs of the manuscripts. Grube offered a counterpoint to Seyller's emphasis on the role that local artistic goals played in determining the nature of the pictorial program of a manuscript, suggesting instead that artists inherited pictorial cycles from earlier manuscripts.

The most recent addition to this scholarly discourse is Mika Natif's study of five Mughal manuscripts of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Iyar-i Danish*.[54] Natif concurs with Seyller and O'Kane on the question of whether one can track the transmission of pictorial cycles from manuscript to manuscript. Building on the idea that decisions about illustration are made locally, she proposes that rather than examining manuscripts of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* in relation to one another, one should look at each manuscripts of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* in relation to manuscripts of other texts produced in the same time and place.[55] Natif discusses the V&A manuscript briefly, linking it with a Mughal *Anvar-i Suhayli* at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and other early Mughal manuscripts like the Cleveland *Tutinama*, all of which she sees as having been made during a period of transition from Persian to Indian styles of painting.

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[53] Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts." Although it is extremely useful, there are errors in the appendices of which one must be wary. Of the 127 paintings in the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*, for example, only 82 were included in Appendix III, which breaks down the included manuscripts by episode. In addition, several of the Mughal copies were left out of Appendix III. An updated version of Grube's landmark work would, for these reasons, be extremely welcome.

[54] Natif, "Explaining Early Mughal Painting: The *Anvar-i-Suhayli* Manuscripts."

[55] Ibid., ch. 2.

Although this last notion is problematic in its implication that artists all over the subcontinent were sloughing off of Persianate conventions, I agree with Seyller, O'Kane and Natif's convictions that there has been a neglect of the role of local context and local creative processes in the production of illustrated manuscripts in India. The following discussion of the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* illustrations will, it is hoped, provide abundant visual evidence to support the idea that this manuscript was made by artists whose creative adaption of elements from Persian manuscripts reflects local conceptions and conditions.

Phases of Illustration

As mentioned above, the paintings in the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* can be divided into three groups, a fact which has not been noted in previous scholarship. The characteristics that divide them include the format of the paintings, their style, their palette, and the type of borders that surround them. Although these three groups most likely represent sequential stages of production, there is nothing to indicate that any significant span of time passed between their making. It is probable, however, that the artist whose work appears in the first group of paintings was not involved in the making of the later illustrations. It appears that one artist or one group of artists produced the second and third group of paintings, though there are some significant differences between these two groups, which will be outlined below.

The first group of paintings, running from folio 36r to 76v includes eleven mainly small illustrations that are placed within the text box, and that employ a distinctive palette and style. A characteristic example of this group of images appears on folio 42v and depicts Dabishlim visiting Bidpai outside his cave (fig. 4.8). This is one of just two images in the manuscript that depict the frame story in which Bidpai tells fables to King Dabishlim.[56] This illustration, which

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[56] The other one is 154v.

is entirely contained by the text box, shows their first encounter. The two men (Bidpai on the left and Dabishlim on the right) are seated together in a cave within a verdant garden. Behind them rises a small tomb. Bidpai is identifiable by the ascetic band around his torso, while Dabishlim has no particular identifying marks. He wears a plain white turban like the Brahman. The cave is nearly engulfed by the abundant flowers, plants and trees which fill the garden. Salmon, red, blue and green dominate the palette.[57]

The second group, running from folio 78v to 207v, contains thirty-eight larger illustrations painted in a very different style (fig. 4.9). The palette emphasizes pastel colors as well as a rich dark brown. Most of the images in this section of the manuscript have a wide blue border around the outside of the painting with gold vines and white and deep red flowers, much like the border on the *'unwan* on folio 2v and around the frontispiece (fig. 4.24 – 4.26). Appearing in several different parts of the manuscript, this border helps to lend the folios a certain degree of aesthetic consistency. Illustrations in this section tend to occupy both an area within the text box and the outer margin of the page, such that they form an "L" or "T"-shape. Notably, the rules are inscribed not just around the text box but also around the forms in the margins.

Folio 101v, which depicts the episode of the flying tortoise, exemplifies this group of paintings (fig. 4.10). In this story, a tortoise is transported by her two duck friends. She bites onto a stick they hold between them and is lifted into the air. The ducks warn the tortoise not to try to speak, for if she does she will fall to her death, but she forgets and addresses a group of

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[57] Zebrowski suggested that this group of paintings was painted by an artist trained in the western Indian style, citing the oblong format, striped clouds and bright reds and blues of these paintings. I find this a somewhat unconvincing argument since only one of the paintings in this first set of illustrations is actually longer than it is wide, and since the palette emphasizes secondary colors over primary reds and blues. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 156.

villagers who gape at the strange threesome. The painting forms an "L": the villagers stand in the horizontal part, staring and pointing as the tortoise is carried by the ducks at the top of the vertical part. The dense vegetation of the paintings in the first set of illustrations has dissipated, resulting in a much less crowded image. The palette is lighter and less saturated. Rocks are depicted in a distinctive manner, as multi-colored bulbous forms with pock-marked protrusions. Although this page does not have a blue border as many others in this section of the manuscript do, thin gold, black and blue rules encase the sky and landscape elements that extend into the margins.

This story is a favorite of painters. It is illustrated in virtually every copy of *Kalila wa Dimna* and the *Anvar-i Suhayli.* As a result, the composition had become more or less standardize. While artists often adapted it by adding or removing small elements, it is rare to find a visual representation of the story that does not basically conform to the standard composition. There are a number of stories for which have developed this sort of a "classic" compositions.

In the third group, which runs from folio 211r to the end of the manuscript, there are seventy-seven paintings. These paintings occupy space within the text box and extend into the margin, as in group two, but here the margins are treated very differently. There are very few examples of the blue flowered border. What is more, there are no rules surrounding the pictorial elements in the margins of these paintings, so that their boundaries dissolve into the irregular forms of people, plants and animals. Stylistically, however, these images are similar to those of the second section of the manuscript. We see the same lumpy colored rocks and pastel colors mixed with browns.

Folio 241r, for example, depicts a moment in the story of the king of the monkeys and the tortoise (fig. 4.11). The king of the monkeys, who has been deposed, makes a new home in a fig tree on the shores of a lake. The main area of the composition shows a verdant green island in a once-silver (now gray because the surface has become oxidized) lake. The depiction of the island's greenery recalls the dense overlapping leaves of the manuscript's first illumination. The island, which occupies the area between the two text panels, is inhabited by a group of cavorting monkeys. In the outer margin is the shore of the lake, thick with rocks and trees. Among these trees is the monkey king, looking across the lake to the island where his fellow monkeys are gathered. There is no sky or other background painted "behind" the forms in the margin, and no rules containing them. Instead the margin seems to sway with the swell of the lake shore, the tree trunks bending as if in a strong breeze, and the rolling forms of the rocks.

In this portion of the manuscript, even paintings of architecture extend in irregular ways into the margins. Compare, for example, folios 191v and 397v (fig. 4.12 – 4.13). On folio 191v, the architecture, although fantastic and irregular in many ways, is bound by a firm border around the outer margin. In contrast, the architecture depicted on folio 397v extends into the margin without containment. The official who is being ushered in to see the king of Yemen on folio 397v is depicted against the backdrop composed only of the blue paper on which the scene has been painted.

It is easy to imagine that the artist who produced the first eleven paintings simply left the project early on. The differences between the second and third groups of paintings are, however, more puzzling. One possibility is that these differences reflect decisions made by artists whose ideas evolved as the manuscript was being produced. It has been argued that this kind of pictorial evolution occurs in a number of manuscripts made in North India during the 1560s and

70s. John Seyller, for example, has suggested that five small paintings in the beginning of the SOAS *Anvar-i Suhayli* represent an early effort by artists who later in the manuscript enlarged their work in to the margins.[58] This development is accompanied in the SOAS manuscript by a gradual decrease in the number of lines of text that appear on each folio with a painting until there are just four lines on each painted page, suggesting that the artists and the scribe collaborated to alter the relative size of the text and illustrations.[59] Seyller describes this change as a gradual "process of physical emancipation of the miniatures from the text."[60]

There is no gradual or sudden decrease in the amount of text on illustrated pages in the Golconda manuscript, but there is a similar pattern of pictorial expansion. The V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* illustrations expand beyond first one and then another set of rules. It is notable that this development appears to have happened in the Deccan at about the same time or perhaps even slightly earlier than it happened in North India at the Mughal court. The Mughal painters, though certainly more refined than those in Golconda, were not the only artists breaking new pictorial ground in sixteenth-century India.

Re-inventing Shirazi Painting

The paintings of all three phases of illustration are related to paintings produced in mid-sixteenth-century Shiraz. This is not surprising, since Shiraz in the fifteenth and sixteenth

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[58] Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*," 127.

[59] Seyller and Natif disagree about this, as Natif believes that the paintings were designed occupy the margins from the very beginning. In the case of the V&A manuscript, the first phase of illustration may have been intended to occupy only the text block, but in the latter two phases the artists decided to utilize the margins and a full thirty percent of the paintings have important actions taking place either in the margins or in the margins *and* within the text block.

[60] Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*," 126. Natif offers a different explanation for this as well. She believes that the small images were made in Bukhara in 1570, before the manuscript came to India where its illustrations were completed by Mughal artists in the 1580s. Natif, "The SOAS *Anvar-i Suhayli*: The Journey of a 'Reincarnated' Manuscript."

centuries was a highly productive center of manuscript production and paintings from there are known to have been widely exported.[61] Its products have historically been described by art historians as "commercial," and although we now know that Shiraz also produced very high quality manuscripts for elite patrons, it is still clear that a larger number of manuscripts of lower quality were produced to be sold at market, exported, or for sponsors of lower status.[62]

A manuscript of *Mihr wa Mushtari* in the Raza Library made between 1540 and 1560 is a good example of mid-century Shirazi production.[63] In an illustration of Mihr gazing at a portrait of Mushtari (fig. 4.14), as in many Shiraz paintings from this period, the image occupies a space within the text block as well as a portion of the outer margin. Figures are stylized and fairly static, and have lost the slender physique of figures painted in the early decades of the sixteenth century, though they are not as thick-bodied as those of Turkman Shiraz. Palettes vary but secondary colors are often juxtaposed. In outdoor scenes, horizons are relatively high and skies are ornamented with clouds with long tails. After about 1560 some of these characteristics changed: full-page illustrations became more common, the borders above and around the text block became part of the illustration, and these expanded compositions were often populated by numerous small scale figures.[64]

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[61] Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, ch. 4.

[62] The notion that Shiraz produced mainly "commercial" manuscripts was recently challenged by Lâle Uluç, whose publications on this topic recently culminated in Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts*.

[63] Ms. P.4128. See Barbara Schmitz and Ziyaud-Din A. Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 2006), no. IV.19, pl. 296. For other examples of mid-sixteenth-century style, see B. W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library: A Descriptive Catalogue* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1976), no. 236-65.

[64] For an example of how things began to change around 1560 see Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library: A Descriptive Catalogue*, no. 269-91, pl. VIII. For the late sixteenth century, see ———, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library*, no. 363-76, pl XI.

As several scholars have noted, despite the fact that the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* is dated 1582, its illustrations are closer to mid- than late sixteenth-century Shirazi paintings.[65] This is evident in the scale of the figures, the high horizons and long tailed clouds,[66] and the Persian dress of virtually all figures.[67] It is also evident in the format of the paintings, roughly three-quarters of which extend into the outer margin in the manner described above. While many of these also occupy either the top or bottom margin and some could almost be considered "full-page paintings," in most cases the painted elements in the margins are extensions of the main painting field within the text box.

Despite their overall conformity to the basic conventions of paintings from mid-sixteenth-century Shiraz, the illustrations of this manuscript employ a set of forms and motifs that is quite distinctive. This is most clear in depictions of architecture, which tend to combine a fixed set of elements: pale pink bricks oriented in many different directions, brown doors with gold or black handles, and rows of blue merlons (fig. 4.16).[68] The brown door is a particularly important motif for understanding this group of manuscripts, as there are very few instances of a

[65] A comparable Shiraz manuscript is a *Shahnama* in the Rylands Library, dated 1542 (Ryl Per 932). While some paintings are contained entirely by the text box, most paintings occupy the outer margin as well, though the marginal paintings are contained within rules. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library: A Descriptive Catalogue*, 575-612.

[66] Often these clouds are delightfully multi-colored, a feature which appears in some paintings from sixteenth-century Iran. See, for example, Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, plate 12.

[67] Losty asserts that a figure on folio 114r wears a Deccani turban. The turban on this figure is so strange that I find it difficult to associate it with any particular type of headwear. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 71.

[68] Examples can be found on folio 116r, 245r, 374r, and 397v. Although one finds bricks oriented vertically or diagonally in Persian manuscripts of all kinds, this occurs much more frequently in the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* than in most manuscripts. For another example, see Glenn D. Lowry and Milo Cleveland Beach, *An Annotated and Illustrated Checklist of the Vever Collection* (Washington, D.C. and Seattle: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; University of Washington Press, 1988), cat. no. 247.

door like this to be found in Persian painting.[69] Also notable on some folios is the frequent

appearance of a more common architectural element: a blue panel above doorways with a white

inscription reading "*al-sultan al-'Adil*." All of these features appear in the *Sindbadnama* and the

Khamsa of Nizami, with slight variations.

The treatment of human figures, the face in particular, is also rather idiosyncratic. The

artists frequently employ a manner of representing the face that I will refer to as the "protruding

nose" (in contrast to the "protruding eye" familiar from early Indian painting). The faces are

depicted from a three-quarter perspective but the nose is allowed to protrude out beyond the edge

of the face as if in a profile view.[70] An example of the "protruding nose" can be seen in the

illustration on folio 298v (fig. 4.15). The right-most figure, dressed in blue, has a protruding

nose, while his companions' noses are contained within the boundaries of their faces. This

feature also appears in the *Sindbadnama*, and with even greater frequency, but I am not aware of

any examples of such a facial form outside of Golconda.

The *Anvar-i Suhayli* also contains unique features that are more pleasing to the eye, and

which add considerable dynamism to the illustrations. As J.P. Losty has pointed out, for

example, the artists frequently depict oriel windows supported by brackets in the margins of the

illustrations (fig. 4.17).[71] This feature appears in both the *Anvar-i Suhayli* (particularly in the

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[69] The only close match to these doors of which I am aware can be found in the illustrations of a copy of *Mihr wa Mushtari* in the Raza Library, Rampur (Ms. P.4128). See fig. 4.14. Schmitz and Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur*, pl. 296.

[70] Examples include folios 58r, 101v, 128v, 131v, 139v, 191v, 245r and 311v. For a discussion of the "protruding eye" in Indian painting, see Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 43-44. In his discussion of the *Sindbadnama,* Losty notes the appearance of the "protruding eye" but it has never been noted that a similar facial type appears in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.

[71] Examples appear on folio 311v, 319r, 321r, 385v and 397v. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 71.

third illustrative section of the manuscript) and the *Sindbadnama*.[72] Such windows are not unheard of in Shirazi painting of this period but they appear with remarkable frequency and in unusually elaborate form in these manuscripts.

A few illustrations in the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* contain truly wild representations of architectural spaces. Folio 116r, for example, depicts an episode in which a merchant forces his untrustworthy friend to confess to having been deceitful (fig. 4.18). The encounter occurs in the household of the merchant, which in the text is not described as particularly extravagant. Nevertheless, the artist has chosen to envision a sort of palace. The resulting image can almost be called a full-page painting; the action occurs in between two small text panels (one line above and two below) but the architectural setting fills the outer, upper and lower margin. Above the heads of the figures arcs a remarkable swath of ornamentation in which red and blue ribbons swoop through the air against a blue background. The blue border that outlines many paintings in the second section of illustrations appears on the right, almost blending in to the strange scenery.

Equally fantastic is the depiction on folios 191v and 193r of the palace of the king of Kashmir (fig. 4.19 – 4.20). In this story, the king is angry because his mistress loves another man. He decides to kill her but cannot keep his plans a secret and before he can act his mistress has him killed. The format of these two paintings is the same as that of 116r: they occupy the outer, upper and lower margins in addition to the text boxes. Despite the fact that blue borders unambiguously define the text boxes and the marginal space, our eyes are overwhelmed. Extremely dense and colorful architectural components envelop the king's magnificent throne, resting on tentacle-like legs. Emphasis on red, orange, blue and gold in these paintings further

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[72] For example in folio 36v, 90r and 97r of the *Sindbadnama*. Ibid.

increases their visual impact. They depict scenes of a king on his throne – a subject depicted by countless Persian and Indian paintings – in an utterly unique manner.[73]

The artists who created these images also turned their creative energy towards the depiction of the natural environment. This appears as early as the manuscript's leaf-filled *shamsa* but becomes a major feature in the second and third sections of illustrations. In these paintings foliage appears as an exuberant – even riotous – force, taking over not only landscapes but also illuminations and architecture. Several scholars have noted that this remarkable foliage is reminiscent of vegetal forms in Turkman-era Shirazi paintings, as well as of Indian manuscripts like the Mandu *Ni'matnama* (fig. 4.21).[74] While I find this connection quite plausible, I would add that what we see here is not just the re-appearance of an earlier method for representing plant life but a further amplification of that method.[75]

The many stories set in the wilderness offered the artists many opportunities to depict this kind of dense greenery. Folio 120r, for example, tells the story of "The Ass Who, Searching for a Tail, Lost His Ears" (fig. 4.22). The ass goes to look for his tail in a cornfield and comes upon a peasant who catches him and cuts off his ears. Though it is merely the setting of the story, the cornfield occupies most of the space on the folio and is shown as a dense field of massive green leaves.[76] The leaves are arranged in clumps of different sizes and shapes, layered one on top of the next, creating the impression of a heaving mass of greenery.

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[73] It is interesting to note that the artists have made sure to depict the space consistently so that we know we are still in this same story. Such care is not taken in other instances. For example, the story of the king and his guard/monkey, as depicted on folios 244r and 246v.

[74] Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 71.

[75] Whether there is some kind of meaning behind this special treatment of greenery, I do not know. A scholar of Deccani gardens might wish to investigate this matter further to see if other sources on garden practices or conceptions are illuminating.

[76] Folios 207v, 229r and 241r contain slight variations on the same kind of plant forms.

In other instances, the foliage is just as extravagant but rather more restrained. On folio

176v, for example, the plant forms are constrained within red interlocking, cusped arches on the

rear wall of a house (fig. 4.23). Two of these arches contain energetic sprays of foliage, surely

intended as outdoor scenery visible through a window but more closely resembling the top of a

pineapple. The spaces between the arches is filled with blue pigment overlaid with gold floral

illumination, once again delightfully juxtaposing "real" plant forms with abstracted, ornamental

ones.

Two points should by now be clear. First, that the artists who created the paintings in this

Anvar-i Suhayli were aware of and embraced certain conventions current in Shiraz at or shortly

before the period in which they were working. Second, that these artists frequently departed

from Persianate conventions. When depicting architecture and the natural environment, they

created particularly original and often delightful imagery.

Text and Image in the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*

As Seyller has shown, manuscripts like the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* – which have a large

number of illustrations – tend to illustrate the text they accompany in a rather literal manner.[77]

When there is one or more illustration for each story, each painting depicts a single story or even

a single moment. In contrast, in manuscripts with just a few illustrations paintings sometimes

serve more complex narrative functions like summarizing or commenting on the text. This is

borne out by a comparison between the V&A manuscript and the contemporaneous SOAS

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[77] Seyller, "The School of Oriental and African Studies *Anvar-i Suhayli*."

In the first illustration of this story (fig. 4.27) the artist has depicted ten jackals in a landscape underneath a gold sky. Seyller has been able to make out just two words of a scribal note that is faintly visible underneath the upper right corner of the sky: "confused jackals."[82] It is not clear why the scribe describes the jackals as confused, since the text above and below the painting tells not of confused jackals but of a group of jackals that do not approve of the pious jackal's decision to give up meat. This discrepancy between the text and the note help us to see that the artist has illustrated the note rather than the adjacent text: he has painted the jackals in a wide variety of bodily contortions, but adds nothing to represent a confrontation between a single pious jackal and a group of angry jackals and wolves.

The next painting in the story helps to clarify these issues (fig. 4.28). The text on the page describes the lion king attempting to convince the pious jackal to be his vizier. One is quite surprised, then, to see that the painting depicts a young *human* king in conversation with a man dressed in blue. They are surrounded by other members of an entirely *human* court. Seyller has not found a scribal note on this folio, and though it is possible that there was a scribal note once which has now become invisible, it is also possible that the artist was left to his own devices in the selection of his subject and thus went astray, not realizing that the previous storied continued.

The final illustration in "The Lion and the Pious Jackal" (fig. 4.29) shows the jackals and wolves accusing the pious jackal of having stolen the meat before the lion. The painting shows an assembly of animals of various species. Roughly in the center there is an animal that is probably a jackal and one that is a lion, but none of the other animals appear to be jackals, nor are there any wolves. What is more, neither the central jackal nor the lion is painted in such a way as to make clear its importance to the story. So while the artist has again realized that the

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[82] Seyller provides the following transliteration of the note: "*mukhālatat shaghalān.*" Seyller, "Painter's Directions in Early Indian Painting," 304-05.

court is occupied by animals, not humans, he still does not have a high degree of awareness about the content of the text.

This series of three paintings exemplifies the overall nature of the illustrations and their relation to the text. From it we can gather a number of points. First, it is clear that the paintings were intended to illustrate narrowly-defined moments from the stories. Second, some of the artists who worked on this manuscript could not or simply did not read the Persian text and therefore required someone else to select the subject of the illustration. Third, the setting in which the V&A manuscript was produced was a workshop with at least some degree of hierarchy, such that there was someone reading the text and making decisions, and others painting the illustrations. This is not, of course, intended to suggest that the artist was simply a laborer. The inventive nature of many of the illustrations described in the previous section should make abundantly clear that the artist or artists were not without imagination.

Another interesting point concerning text and image (which Grube's *Prolegomena* usefully illuminates) is that very few manuscripts of texts in this literary family include illustrations of the frame story or stories (Dabishlim/Bidpai or the Chinese king/vizier).[83] Even when these stories are illustrated, one cannot usually discern whether the subject of any given painting is the main narrative or a sub-story without recourse to the text.[84] The V&A manuscript is consistent with this larger pattern. It contains only two paintings of the frame story in which

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[83] One exception to this rule is British Library Or. 13506: a *Kalila wa Dimnah* dated 1307-08. Among this manuscript's sixty-seven illustrations are eight that mark the beginning of Bidpai's stories, and two other illustrations of different moments when Bidpai and Dabishlim interact. Interestingly, there are no illustrations of the first or last moment of interaction between the two characters. Nevertheless, it seems that the illustrations act as signposts along the way through the text, notifying the viewer each time a new section is beginning. P. Waley and Norah M. Titley, "An Illustrated Persian Text of Kalīla and Dimna Dated 707/1307-8," *The British Library Journal* 1 (1975); Norah M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts: A Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India, and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum* (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1977), no. 16B.

[84] This point has previously been made in Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 213.

Bidpai and Dabishlim converse, and there are so many stylistic and iconographic differences between the two that one can hardly identify them as illustrations of the same tale. That the narrative structure of the text is not reflected in or reinforced by the illustrations is not in and of itself surprising, but it will become clear below that not all Golconda manuscripts were approached this way, and the differences add to our knowledge of the working methods of these artists.

Reflections on the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*

The V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* has no close relations. There is no surviving mid-sixteenth-century Shiraz copy of *Kalila wa Dimna* or *Anvar-i Suhayli* to which we can compare the V&A manuscript[85] and although there are several illustrated Mughal copies of these texts from this period, they are extremely different is most respects.[86] Despite the fact that it stands alone in this way, it is clear that the artists who made it were drawing upon knowledge of other illustrated copies of this text and of other Persian manuscripts of the mid-sixteenth century as they worked. We can see this in certain stylistic features of the illustrations, in the use of "classic" compositions, and in the overall conception of the manuscript along the lines of a Persian illustrated codex.

And yet, the manuscript is very much a product of the local culture. The scribal notations, for example, make clear that the subjects of many of its illustrations were selected by a

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[85] There is a "Provincial Safavid" copy in the Bibliotheque Nationale dated 1547, but it has only thirty-one paintings, and these are mostly small and in the margins of the folios. Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, Ms. 185. If we look more broadly to sixteenth-century Safavid manuscripts we find a manuscript associated with Qazvin dated to about 1580 in the John Rylands Library, but it has only four paintings which are not of episodes from the text. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library*, 243-44.

[86] The closest comparisons can be made with two Mughal manuscripts with large programs of illustration, but even these manuscripts are very different than the Golconda manuscript. The first is divided between the Chester Beatty Library (Indian Ms 4) and the collection of Sir Cowasji Jehangir. It was produced in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The second is in the Prince of Wales Museum (manuscript 73.5). For more details see Grube, "Prolegomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimnah* Manuscripts," cat. nos. 54 and 55.

"supervisor" based on his own understanding of the text. Similarly, the idiosyncratic depictions of architecture and landscapes reflect locally developed practices, and the gradual expansion of the image is a sign of local shifts in the way that illustrations were conceived. These features begin to give us a sense of the setting in which the manuscript and others in this chapter were produced, a crucial step towards understanding its cultural context and meaning.

The local world in which it was made and viewed, which we dimly perceive through the various elements of the V&A manuscript, does not appear to be identical to that which gave rise to the *Zakhira-i Khwarismshahi*. First, while both would have been understood as great Persian texts, the medical encyclopedia was valuable as a repository of Greco-Arabic knowledge, while the *Anvar-i Suhayli* is a compendium of Sanskrit stories, the origins of which are directly mentioned in the text's opening passages and many of the stories of which take place in India itself. Second, the frequency and depth of stylistic experimentation and innovation apparent in the V&A manuscript's illustrations speak of a group of artists working creatively to put their own stamp on their work rather than attempting to create an impeccable specimen of a Persian art form.

The V&A manuscript may have been intended for a community that appreciated Persian culture but had little invested in the maintenance of its "authenticity" or in its potential to convey the refinement and sophistication of Persianate culture. Telugu Brahmans or Deccani Muslims at the Qutb Shahi court, for example, could possibly have financed and would certainly have appreciated a volume like this one. Viewers such as these may even have found a reflection of their own cosmopolitan courtly world in the stories' references to and origins in cultural exchange and translation between India, China and Iran.

Sindbadnama

The hypotheses presented above about the audience and sponsors of the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* find support in the British Library's *Sindbadnama*, the subject of this next section.[87] This manuscript, a richly illustrated codex containing the only known copy of a text composed in fourteenth-century Iran, has for more than half a century been attributed to Golconda.[88] Despite being considered one of the few surviving manuscripts produced in the early years of the Qutb Shahi sultanate, it has received little scholarly attention. This chapter will begin to rectify this situation by exploring the manuscript's construction and organization, the style and arrangement of its illustrations, and the way text and imagery are interwoven within its folios.

In addition to laying out these important characteristics, it will demonstrate that the manuscript was made by at least some of the same artists who worked on the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, and that these artists had – by the time of its making – settled upon certain stylistic characteristics that they favored and used repeatedly. At the same time, the chapter will point to features that differentiate the two manuscripts. First, it will offer evidence that a distinctly different conception of the relationship between illustrations and the text they accompany was used in the making of the *Sindbadnama*. Second, it will show that the working methods and organization of the workshop were also different.

Lastly, this section will offer a discussion of the Kannada marginal notations that appear on a number of folios early in the manuscript. Previously misidentified as Telugu, and never before translated or studied, these brief texts offer a unique window into the reception of the *Sindbadnama* during or shortly after the period of its making. They reveal that the manuscript

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[87] British Library, IO Islamic 3214. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 54, 70-71.

[88] There are other *Sinbadnama* manuscripts known, but none of them contains the versified text of IO Islamic 3214. The other known illustrated *Sindbadnamas* will be discussed below.

circulated well outside the orbit of the Persian diaspora in Golconda. Indeed, they indicate that it was probably owned and was certainly appreciated by a viewer for whom Persian was not the primary language, and for whom the illustrations were best understood when "translated" into Indic terms.

The Text

Like the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, the roots of the *Sindbadnama* (lit. "Book of Sindbad") are in the *Panchatantra.*[89] The earliest appearance of a text specifically centered on a vizier named Sindbad, however, was in the ninth century, at which time a text called the "Book of Sindbad" could be found in Pahlavi and Arabic versions.[90] Later on, many translations were made from the Arabic text, including versions in Syriac, old Spanish, Hebrew and Dari. The Persian versions that emerged by the twelfth century seem to have been derived from the Dari translation.[91]

Unlike the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* which contains the standard version of a text, the date and place of composition of which we can pinpoint, it is quite difficult to clarify the early history of the version of the *Sindbadnama* that appears in the British Library (BL) manuscript. Composed by an unknown author in 1374-5, it belongs to the larger group of Persian versions but is unique in that it is the only one in verse. According to the preface, the author's patron pronounced to him that he should: "perform such an achievement, with the sword of the pen, as

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[89] The opening events of the *Sindbadnama* – the repeated failures of an Indian king to educate his son and the undertaking of the youth's instruction by a sage – correspond to the basic elements of the *Panchatantra* narrative. W. A. Clouston, Forbes Falconer, and Jonathan Scott, *The Book of Sindibad or, the Story of the King, His Son, the Damsel, and Seven Vazirs* (Glasgow: privately printed by J. Cameron, 1884), xxi.

[90] Ibid., xxxvi.

[91] One Persian version, now no longer extant, is that by Azraqi, who died in Herat in 1132. Another version by Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Muhammad bin Husayn Az-Zahir al-Katib al-Samarqandi was produced towards the end of the twelfth century for Abu'-l Muzaffar Kilij Tamghaj Khaqan. Ibid., xxxix-xliv; Charles Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 2 (London: The British Museum, 1879-1883), 748-749.

shall live as long as swords are wielded. Turn into verse, during my reign, some prose work, that my memory may be perpetuated: let it be the Tale of Sindibad."[92] The author then explains that he accepted this challenge, and "when seventy-six [years] were added to 700…I composed the following work, and thus reared an edifice proof against all the assaults of Time, and not such a structure that any one can designate as the 'house of the spider.'[93] Despite this colorful preface, we do not know where the author worked or who his patron was.

Like the *Panchatantra* and its other literary descendents, the *Sindbadnama* has a "nested" structure: a frame story in which many other stories are inserted. But whereas the *Anvar-i Suhayli*'s frame story is a minimal tale of a king listening to a vizier tell stories, the frame story of the *Sindbadnama* relates the highly eventful tale of the coming of age of an Indian prince. In the first part of the text we learn about the hopelessly stupid prince and the vizier who is selected to teach him. The vizier meets with success (and tells many stories along the way) but immediately afterwards the prince runs into trouble: one of his father's concubines draws him into a plot to remove the king from his throne. When the prince rejects the idea of murdering his father, the concubine runs off to the king and claims that the prince generated the ugly plot. Seven different viziers take turns trying to convince the king to show mercy to his son by telling him fables. Eventually, the prince is saved.

The first few chapters of this text are close in content to the frame story of the *Panchatantra*, but the latter portion of the *Sindbadnama* is different in that it is largely about the treachery of women. In alternating sections, the viziers and the concubine tell stories, the former designed to get the king to forgive his son, and the latter intended to convince the king to side

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[92] Clouston, Falconer, and Scott, *The Book of Sindibad*, 5-6.

[93] Ibid., 6-7.

with his concubine. These alternating speeches create a literary structure with fourteen parts.

Later on in this discussion we will come back to this organization, looking at how the illustrators

reinforce it with their paintings.

The revenge sought by a "woman scorned" is an age-old theme. It appears in Persian

literary tradition, for example in the story of Sudaba in the *Shahnama*,[94] as well as in Indic

literature, as in several South Indian oral traditions and literary works.[95] For our purposes it is

interesting to note that a spurned woman appears in a number of Telugu texts in a period roughly

contemporary with (as well as after) the period of this study. The *Manucaritramu* by Peddana,

for example, written during the reign of Vijayanagara ruler Krishna Raya (r. 1509 – 1529), is a

poetic masterpiece that relates the story of a Brahmin householder who is propositioned by a

celestial nymph. When he turns her down, she tries to prevent him from going home. In the

subsequent Nayaka period, a number of related texts were composed. One example is the

Sarangdharacaritramu by Cemakura Venkatapati, in which a step-mother tries to seduce her

step-son, a prince. After she is rejected by him, she tries to convince the prince's father to

execute him.[96]

In light of the sheer popularity of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, it is not surprising that an

illustrated copy was produced at the Golconda court. The *Sindbadnama* is a much less well

known text, however, and the popularity of similar texts in the Telugu-speaking region may

therefore have something to do with the manuscript's production. For whatever reason, interest

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[94] Abu'l Qasim Firdawsi, *Shahnameh,* trans. Dick Davis as *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* (New York: Viking, 2006), 217-28.

[95] Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Dean Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Symbols of Substance, Court and State in Nayaka Period Tamilnadu* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 125.

[96] Clouston, Falconer, and Scott, *The Book of Sindibad*, xxx; Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam, *Symbols of Substance*, 125-43.

in the stories of Sindbad was clearly present in Golconda, confirmed by a prose version of the *Sindbadnama* that was copied for Muhammad Qutb Shah in 1622, which is also held in the British Library.[97] The colophon of this un-illustrated copy makes clear that it is a royally-sponsored work of book production.

Illustrating the *Sindbadnama*

I am aware of only two other illustrated manuscripts of the *Sindbadnama*. One is an anthology produced around 1436 in Shiraz probably for the Timurid ruler Ibrahim-Sultan.[98] The manuscript contains five illustrations depicting episodes from the *Sindbadnama* in a style associated with Timurid Shiraz. Although four of the five illustrations in the manuscript illustrate stories that are also illustrated in the BL manuscript, they have virtually no stylistic or compositional similarities to our manuscript. The second is an illustrated manuscript of a Turkish version of the *Sindbadnama*, now housed in the Walters Art Museum.[99] This manuscript, produced under the Ottomans around 1540 contains six illustrations which seem to be based on local models for the depiction of court scenes, hunting scenes, etc.[100]

Based on the scarcity of *Sindbadnama* manuscripts today, it seems likely that relatively few were produced and thus that the question of the transmission of pictorial cycles from manuscript to manuscript that so dominates discussion of the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* need not

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[97] British Library, London: Or. 255. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 2, 748.

[98] Suleymaniye Library, Istanbul: MS Fatih 3682. It is discussed in detail by Grube and Sims in two adjacent articles in Robert Hillenbrand, *Persian Painting: From the Mongols to the Qajars: Studies in Honour of Basil W. Robinson*, Pembroke Persian Papers, vol. 3 (London: I.B. Tauris in association with the Centre of Middle Eastern Studies University of Cambridge, 2000). This manuscript contains a prose version of the *Sindbadnama* (probably the Samarqandi version but possibly another version by Shams al-Din Daqa-iqi) along with two other texts (*Kalila wa Dimnah* and *Marzuban-nama*).

[99] Walters Art Museum, accession number W. 662.

[100] Gunsel Renda, "'Sindbādnāma:' An Early Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript Unique in Iconography and Style," *Muqarnas* 21, Essays in Honor of J. M. Rogers (2004).

arise here. This supposition is reinforced by evidence – to be presented below – that the *Sindbadnama's* imagery was generated through a quite thorough understanding of the text on the part of the artists, rather than through the employment of a pre-established pictorial cycle.

The Manuscript: Basic Features

The British Library manuscript contains one hundred and sixty-six folios of roughly the same size – 245 by 150 millimeters – as the folios of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.[101] Because there are less than half as many folios in the *Sindbadnama*, however, it appears at first to be a much less imposing work. The text boxes are 168 by 80 millimeters and contain two columns with sixteen lines of *nasta'liq* surrounded by gold rules. Most of the folios are made of smooth brown paper, although a number are of blue paper of a shade similar to that of the blue pages in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*. It contains a *shamsa*, a double-page frontispiece, and a single *'unwan* at the beginning of the text, in addition to seventy-two illustrations. The manuscript also contains a large number of illuminated rubrics, many of which are cleverly integrated into the paintings.

On the first recto (folio 1r) is a small but good quality *shamsa* comprised of a gold scalloped-edge circle within a roughly diamond-shaped cartouche (fig. 4.30). The cartouche, which also has a scalloped edge, is blue overlaid with red and white flowers on a golden vine scroll. The gold circle inside may have originally been intended as the spot for a title that would have been written in white pigment, but if so it was never executed.[102] Several inscriptions have been placed beside this *shamsa*. Two Persian inscriptions record the title of the work in different ways: "*Sindbadnama*" and "*Masnawi-i Sindbad* " (lit. "poem of Sindbad") while a Kannada

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[101] A hand written note dated 1884 now placed at the front of the manuscript describes a series of lacunae in the manuscript, in addition to places where the pages have been bound out of order. To my knowledge, these problems have not been rectified.

[102] It is not uncommon to find "empty" *shamsa*s like this. The phenomenon is discussed in Elaine Julia Wright, "The *Shamsa* in Iranian Illuminations," (thesis, University of Victoria, 1988), 8-9.

inscription reads "*surya*." (These inscriptions will be dealt with in detail below.) Below and to the upper left of the *shamsa* there are the remains of several seal impressions, the significance of which will be touched on in the following section.

After this simple but beautiful page the viewer is perhaps surprised to find a fantastic frontispiece (folio 1v-2r) with all the dense imagery and colorful vibrancy of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*'s opening pages, but having endured none of its damage (fig. 4.31 – 4.32). Solomon (on the right, verso, side) and the Queen of Sheba (on the left, recto, side) sit enthroned before verdant hills, surrounded by animals, mythical beings and angels. The paintings are surrounded by matching gold and blue illuminated borders. Like two paintings in the illustrated *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, which will be discussed in Chapter 5, the compositions follow the model of Solomon and Bilqis (as the Queen of Sheba is known in the Islamic world) frontispieces that were popular in Shiraz during the sixteenth century.

Recent research on these frontispieces allows us to determine the model used by these artists relatively precisely. The placement of Solomon and Bilqis on thrones supported by demons suggests that they follow a model common in the first half of the sixteenth century. Lale Uluç has shown that after 1565 the "formula" changes and the thrones of the rulers come to rest on the ground.[103] Thus, a very close comparison can be made with a Shirazi frontispiece dated 1525 now in the Topkapi Museum Library (fig. 4.33).[104] The poses of the rulers and subordinate figures are nearly identical in both compositions, as are the surrounding illuminated borders of blue and gold. The most significant difference between the Golconda and Shiraz versions is that

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[103] Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors*, 300.

[104] Ibid., fig. 228.

of palette: the *Sindbadnama* relies heavily on red and green, while these color are scarce in the Persian example.

The *'unwan* (on folio 2v) with which the text opens is rather generic in format and style, without distinguishing features like the blue band around the text box that appears in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*. The palette and drawing of the floral scrolls is close to that on the *Sindbadnama'*s *shamsa*, and it was surely the same artist who produced both. Underneath the *'unwan*, interlinear gold illumination with flowers and vines adds visual appeal to the text.

After this *'unwan* the text follows, interspersed regularly by illustrations. As in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, the style of the illustrations is closely connected to stylistic features of painting in 1540-60's Shiraz, though some features appear to have roots in earlier Shirazi painting and may represent awareness of Sultanate painting.[105] Some features of the illustrations are close enough to those in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* that it is reasonable to conclude they were produced by the same artist, but other features are unique. We do not know their identities, but as with the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, it is likely that the artists were not Persian immigrants. Rather, they might have been Deccani Muslims or even Hindus who had been trained to work in a Persianate style.

One significant difference between the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Sindbadnama* is that their paintings appear to have been made with different types of pigments. This can most easily be seen in the condition of illustrations with a great deal of red pigment. While the red pigment in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* has over time turned powdery and chalk-like, the red areas in the *Sindbadnama* paintings have not undergone this change. As the manuscripts are otherwise in

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[105] Losty, for example, sites Turkman Shiraz circa 1500 – which was one of the major "ingredients" in Sultanate painting of the early sixteenth century – as the basic stylistic material upon which the *Sindbadnama's* illustrations were founded. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 70.

fairly comparable condition, it is likely that the variations in pigment condition reflect differences in the materials and techniques used in their making.

Dating and Attribution

Unfortunately, the BL *Sindbadnama* has no colophon, nor does it contain a date. Its first appearances in scholarship are, as a result, quite similar to those of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, with which it was compared at an early date. The *Sindbadnama* was catalogued in Hermann Ethe's 1903 *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office*[106] but not discussed in depth again until 1951 when Robinson described it as a work of the mid-sixteenth century "in a provincial style which may perhaps be assigned to South Persia."[107] Stchoukine, in 1959, was in agreement with the others as to the place of production of the manuscript, although he dated it slightly later, to circa 1575.[108]

The contention that it was produced in Iran was challenged a few years later, however, when the *Sindbadnama* was mentioned alongside the *Anvar-i Suhayli* by the authors of the catalog of the Chester Beatty Library as perhaps having been produced in Golconda.[109] As with the *Anvar-i Suhayli,* it since has been accepted by virtually all scholars as produced by artists in Golconda.[110] Several pieces of evidence have been proffered in support of this attribution. First,

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[106] Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office*, 714.

[107] Robinson, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Persian Miniature Paintings from British Collections*, 34.

[108] Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, 137 and pls. LXXVIII-IX.

[109] Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, vol. 3, 35-36. Robinson repeated this theory in Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from Collections in the British Isles*, 113.

[110] Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 54, 70-71; Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 156; Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 95; Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 299-302, fig. 1 and 2. Only Robert Skelton did not include the manuscript in his article about Golconda's early painting, but he has since decided that the Indian attribution is correct. Personal communication, 2009.

one of the seals to the upper left of the *shamsa* could well be Qutb Shahi, though in its damaged state it is difficult to be sure about this. Second, the stylistic and physical similarities between the *Sindbadnama* and *Anvar-i Suhayli* seem to demonstrate that they were made in the same place. Third, the Kannada captions suggest that the manuscript was in the Deccan early on (although not necessarily in Golconda itself, as some scholars – believing the notations were in Telugu – have suggested).

Losty, the last scholar to write substantially about the BL *Sindbadnam*, dated it to circa 1575. While this may well be correct, I suggest that a date of 1575-1585 might be better in that such a range leaves open the possibility that the *Sindbadnama* was produced before *or* after the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.

Scholarship on the *Sindbadnama*

As with the *Anvar-i Suhayli,* the earliest scholarly discussions of the *Sindbadnama* were focused on style as a tool for attribution to a particular geographical location. The first scholar to comment in any length on the nature of the *Sindbadnama* was Ivan Stchoukine. While he concurred with others that the paintings were in the style of a "provincial Persian" school, he noted their idiosyncratic nature: "The style of these compositions is very curious. They bear the characteristics of a popular art, free from all academic constraints, spontaneous and irregular in their design, but not empty of charm in their naïve primitivism."[111] After the Chester Beatty catalogue noted the hot color scheme and unusual representations of figures and landscape elements, the next scholar to explore the manuscript was Losty, who pointed out several more

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[111] Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis*, 137, no. 96.

features. Some of these were traits the *Sindbadnama* has in common with the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, like oriel windows on brackets in margins, while others were unique.[112]

Whereas the *Anvar-i Suhayli* received further attention from scholars interested in exploring pictorial "cycles" and the relationship between various illustrated copies of the same text, the *Sindbadnama* has not received examination from any other angles. In its most recent treatment, the manuscript was discussed by Losty as containing stylistic features that were to become characteristic of the emerging "Golconda style."[113]

The Illustrations

It has already been mentioned that the illustrations in the *Sindbadnama* possess stylistic affinities with mid-sixteenth-century Shirazi painting, and that they incorporate some unusual motifs also found in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*. Some examples of features that illustrations in the two manuscripts share include oriel windows on brackets in margins; tall date palms; faces with "protruding noses"; buildings made of pale pink bricks oriented in multiple directions; brown doors with gold or black handles and small blue merlons; and larger bands of merlons on low walls serving as backdrops to action (fig. 4.34- 4.35). While a number of these features are idiosyncratic, most unusual is the "protruding nose," and it is this feature which most strongly leads me to suggest that there was at least one artist who worked on both manuscripts.

In addition to these commonalities, there are a number of important differences between the two manuscripts' illustrations. First, although both sets of paintings employ some of the same methods of arranging imagery and text on the page, the illustrations of the *Sindbadnama* correspond to the third section of illustrations of the other manuscript. In other words,

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[112] Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 299-302.

[113] Ibid.

illustrations throughout the *Sindbadnama* consistently extend into the margin and are not enclosed by any outer borders (4.36).[114]

Second, the *Sindbadnama*'s paintings have some distinctive stylistic traits. They are denser in composition, and use a palette with more red and blue than do the *Anvar-i Suhayli* paintings (fig. 4.37). Furthermore, the paintings in this manuscript are more consistent and more carefully executed than those in the V&A manuscript. The *Sindbadnama* illustrations are, in general, tightly composed, vibrantly colored and delicately drawn.

One also finds minor but equally intriguing features that are unique to the *Sindbadnama.* One, first noted by Losty, is that many figures in the *Sindbadnama* wear a sash around their waists (fig. 4.38). Losty refers to this as "Deccani" costume, and it is indeed true that one of the components of early modern costume in the Deccan was the *patka*, a sash or waistband that was tied in front, with its ends invariably hanging down.[115] The *patka* was not unique to Deccani costume, however: it was worn in Mughal India as well. Nevertheless, it is an Indic garment as opposed to a Persian one, which is intriguing. As mentioned above, the frame story is set in India and thus at least in terms of the text, Indian costume is not out of place in the *Sindbadnama's* illustrations. On the other hand, Safavid-style baton turbans also appear several times (see fig. 4.32, 4.34, etc.), which would seem to suggest that the figures were simply shown in a wide variety of costumes current in Persianate societies.[116]

One last feature found in the *Sindbadnama* but not in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* is a unique method of depicting rocks. Best illustrated by folio 54v (fig. 4.39), the rocks are shown as

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[114] One might point to this as a reason to date the *Sindbadnama* after the *Anvar-i Suhayli.* There are, however, other possible explanations for this practice.

[115] It can be seen in a number of other Golconda paintings, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum's portrait of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah (I.S. 18-1980). See Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, fig. 150.

[116] In addition to the frontispiece, they appear in the illustration on 36v, 40v, 43r, 68r, 106r, 114v, etc.

blocky forms in pink, blue and yellow, with horizontally- and vertically-oriented "u"-shaped marks indicating the roughness of their surfaces. Animal faces are discernable in some of these rocks in a simplified but still charming version of the "grotesques" found in Safavid paintings of rocky landscapes.[117]

As with the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, in a few illustrations the artists incorporate their preferred stylistic features into "classic" compositions; in the case of the *Sindbadnama*, however, these compositions have been pulled from a storehouse of imagery not associated with any one text. Two such paintings (folios 76r and 78r) depict a story told by the fourth vizier about a bath-keeper who invites the prince of Kanauj to make love to his wife while he looks on (fig. 4.40-4.41).[118] As pointed out by Norah Titley, the compositions of these two paintings are based on a model established in depictions of another bathhouse story: Harun al-Rashid and the barber, from the *Khamsa* of Nizami.[119] Lale Uluç's recent study of bathhouse compositions makes it possible to take Titley's observation a bit further, and to see exactly how Golconda's artists adapted this common composition to suit their own purposes.[120]

Uluç shows that in the sixteenth century, bathhouse scenes became very popular in Shirazi painting and began to appear in illustrated copies of many different texts. A reference to Firdawsi having visited a bathhouse, for example, was seized by artists as an excuse to add a

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[117] For an example from the *Shahnama* made for Shah Tahmasp, see Stuart Cary Welch, *A King's Book of Kings: The Shah-Nameh of Shah Tahmasp* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; distributed by New York Graphic Society, Greenwich Conn., 1972), 91.

[118] Clouston, Falconer, and Scott, *The Book of Sindibad*, 61; Falconer, "The Sindibad Namah," *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China, and Australia* XXXVI (1841): 14.

[119] Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 95, 184.

[120] Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors*, 274 – 83.

bathhouse scene to *Shahnama* manuscripts. The composition also appears in copies of the

Zafarnama, illustrating Timur's trip to a bathhouse. In order to transpose this composition into

new narrative contexts, the figures were changed but the setting remained largely constant. This

kind of appropriation and re-purposing of imagery is not uncommon and it can be seen in the

work of artists across the Persianate world[121] so it should not surprise us that the wide popularity

of the bathhouse composition extended into India. Golconda's artists surely had access to

manuscripts containing such scenes and/or pounces of these compositions.[122]

Early in the sixteenth century, Uluç demonstrates, Shirazi depictions of bathhouse scenes

tended to be confined within the text box and the outer margin of the page. They usually

depicted the interior of the main chamber of a bathhouse, and perhaps also a small portion of the

exterior with a doorway (fig. 4.42). After the mid-sixteenth century these images expanded into

the upper margins of the page and began to include representations of subsidiary rooms and

goings on outside of the bathhouse.[123] In the *Sindbadnama* paintings, however, action is limited

to a single main chamber (though the upper margin is utilized for architectural forms) and as

such they seem to have most in common with the earlier bathhouse scenes. This is in accord

with the conclusions drawn above in reference to the frontispiece which seems to take inspiration

from Persian frontispieces of the first half of the sixteenth century.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the *Sindbadnama*'s deployment of this model is

the way in which the upper margin is used in the two folios. In the latter half of the century,

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[121] This phenomenon was recently discussed in reference to Ottoman painting in Serpil Bağci, "Old Images for New Texts and Contexts: Wandering Images in Islamic Book Painting," *Muqarnas* 21, Essays in Honor of J. M. Rogers (2004).

[122] A pounce of this scene can be found in Phillipp Walter Schulz, *Die Persisch-Islamische Miniatur-Malerei* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1914), vol. II, pl. 78.

[123] Uluç suggests that this change may have been initiated by the bathhouse painting in Ibrahim Mirza's *Haft Awrang*. Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors*, fig. 218.

bathhouse scenes began to frequently include a row of three niches in the rear of the central bath chamber, the domed roofs of which were decorated with colored dots (fig. 4.43). In the upper margin of the *Sindbadnama* paintings are three semi-circles outlined in red and filled with colored circles. These semi-circular forms clearly owe their origins to the bathhouse niches, but they are rotated 180 degrees and the thin diagonal lines that had conveyed the contours of their vaulted spaces are left out. In fact, they no longer seem to represent niches. Did the Golconda artists alter the niche motif in order to adapt it to an architectural form they had in mind? Or did they merely like the motif's appearance and decide to use it decoratively? It is difficult to know for sure. Still, there are few opportunities to see so clearly the creative alterations by which these artists generated new imagery.

Text and Image in the BL *Sindbadnama*

The text-image relationship in the *Sindbadnama* is quite distinctive from that of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*. It has been overlooked in previous studies of this manuscript, perhaps because these studies tend to look at the illustrations in isolation from the text. A quick review of the structure of the second portion of the narrative is necessary in order to make the manner of text-image connection clear. As noted above, in the latter part of the story, seven viziers stand before the king and tell moralistic stories intended to convince him to be merciful to his son. After each vizier speaks, the king relents and cancels his execution order, prompting the concubine to approach the king and tell her own stories designed to convince the king that he should have the son killed after all. Just as he does after listening to the viziers, the king relents after listening to the concubine and sends his son back to the gallows. The story swings back and forth, pendulum-like, for seven full repetitions of this cycle.

Unlike the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, in which there are only two images of the frame story, almost all of the encounters between the king and vizier/concubine in the *Sindbadnama* are illustrated. Of the fourteen scenes in the text in which a vizier or the concubine addresses the king, the manuscript (in its current state) contains paintings that depict the first, second, fourth and sixth viziers before the king, and six of the seven scenes in which the concubine comes before the king. It is possible that the four absent illustrations have now been lost, since some pages do appear to be missing.

In addition to this tendency to depict events in the frame story, these illustrations are depicted in a consistent manner. The illustrations in which a vizier or the concubine speaks before the king are, for example, composed with the same characteristics (fig. 4.44 - 4.45). The paintings fill the center of the text box and the outer and upper margins, and the palace is always shown as constructed of blocks of red, blue and pink tile and brick, topped with a dome of some kind. The king is shown seated on a golden throne inside the text box, while the speaker is either near or within the margin. When it is her turn to speak, the concubine comes forward dressed in a combination of blue, purple and red robes with her hair flowing down her back.

The same point can be made in relation to images of the king's son at or on his way to the gallows, another type of scene which demarcates the boundaries of a unit of the narrative (fig. 4.46 – 4.47). Although there are only three images of such scenes in the manuscript in its current state, each one of these is easily identifiable as such since the scene is painted in the outer margin only.

This type of consistent treatment is not seen in the depiction of nested stories. Since each one is unique and unrelated to the others, it would in fact be nearly impossible to paint them in a single manner or format. In general, however, one can say that the nested stories are simply

composed, employ lighter palettes, and tend to be largely confined within the boundaries of the text box (fig. 4.48 – 4.49).

We can compare this to manuscripts of other texts with similarly regular structures like the *Tutinama*, in which a parrot tells a woman stories each night for fifty-one nights. The text is naturally divided into fifty-one more or less equal sections, each of which begins with the parrot and the lady in conversation. The Cleveland *Tutinama*, an early Mughal copy of the text, also depicts a large number of frame stories but it uses a great deal more variety in the depiction of such scenes (fig. 4.50 - 4.51).[124] Thus, while both manuscripts place great emphasis on the frame story, only in the *Sindbadnama* are the illustrations of the frames stories identifiable as such without looking at the text. The structure of the narrative is thus made apparent to the viewer in visual form.

This close engagement of the illustrations with the text, and the absence of scribal notations like those found by Seyller in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, suggest that the artists who worked on the *Sindbadnama* were aware of the text to a more significant degree than appears to have been the case in the production of the other manuscript. This does not mean that each and every artist read the text himself, but it points to a different approach to the production of an illustrated manuscript, one which placed a great emphasis on correlating the images with the substance and structure of the text.

The *Sindbadnama's* Reception: Kannada Notations

Although my analysis of text-image relations in the BL *Sindbadnama* suggests that (at least) the supervisor of the manuscript had a considerable grasp of Persian verse, the Kannada

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[124] Pramod Chandra, *The Tutinama of the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Origins of Mughal Painting* (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck, U. Verlagsanstalt, 1976).

notations that we find on its early folios indicate that it did not circulate only among those for whom Persian was the primary language.[125] These notes appear in the margins of the folio before the *shamsa*, on the *shamsa* folio itself, and in the margins of the first eight illustrations. As mentioned above, they have never before been studied, so it has not been revealed that they are in Kannada, much less that the type of script in which they are written is roughly datable to the sixteenth century and thus to the period of the manuscript's production. [126] With these two points established, we can delve into the content of the notes and their implications for the reception of the BL *Sindbadnama*.

With the exception of the first two instances in which they appear, the basic purpose of the Kannada notations seems to be to sum up the contents of each illustration in terms of Indic people, things and concepts, presumably for a Kannada-speaking audience. This sort of translation/summation is related to a number of documented instances of the use of Indic terminology in the state of Vijayanagara to make concepts and institutions that were associated with the "Turks" more familiar to Indic viewers.[127] In reference to the Vijayanagara occurrences, this apparent ease with which Turkic or Islamicate cultural practices were made intelligible has been interpreted by Wagoner as suggesting that Hindu elites in that region did not, by and large, view Islamic and Turkic concepts and institutions as fundamentally incommensurable with their own world.

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[125] A transcription and translation of these notations are included in Appendix I. Thanks to Dheerendra Jahagirdar (a manuscript scholar based in Bangalore), Phillip Wagoner and Katherine Kasdorf for their crucial assistance with these texts.

[126] Personal communication, Dheerendra Jahagirdar, June 2010.

[127] The term "Turk" was used in much of the early modern subcontinent to refer to the Muslim rulers and inhabitants of the Bahmani and later Deccani kingdoms. Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 440.

Wagoner makes a further distinction between the *substitution* of Persian or Arabic terms with words from an Indic language and the *transliteration* of Persian or Arabic words, asserting that in this distinction we can identify shades of meaning in these acts of cultural translation. To my knowledge, there has been no similar study of how Kannada-speaking elites within the Deccani sultanates viewed their Turkic compatriots, perhaps because evidence is not easy to come by. The Kannada notations in the *Sindbadnama*, therefore, offer a rare opportunity to consider the perceptions of these elites and the linguistic and conceptual mechanisms by which they shaped and expressed these perceptions.[128]

The note on folio 14v is representative of the character of a number of the notations in that it substitutes an Indic concept for a Persian one (fig. 4.52-4.53). On the folio is painted an image of the seven viziers seated on a hillside, engaged in learned discussion and consulting texts. In its right margin is a Kannada notation that reads: "the seven *pandits* consult their *shastras*." The word *pandit* in Kannada – and in Sanskrit – refers to a learned man. The word *shastra* refers to a treatise relevant to secular or religious spheres, and is here used to describe the books the wise men consult. By making these substitutions, the notation implicitly claims that the Persianate people and things depicted have counterparts in the Indic sphere.

This sense of commensurability is found in several of the other notes, such as one that uses the word *tapas* (Hindu religious austerities) to describe the king's prayers (folio 11v) and another in which the word *shringara-vana* or pleasure-garden is used to describe a garden (folio

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[128] The captions may perhaps also be seen within the context of what seems to be a rather widespread South Indian "caption practice," in which brief glosses in Indic languages are placed above, below or near individual painted scenes within murals, manuscripts or scrolls. Mural sites can be found with Telugu, Kannada and Tamil captions, while manuscripts such as the Ramayana in the Andhra Pradesh State Museum contain short Sanskrit captions in Telugu script. J. C. Nagpall, *Mural Paintings in India* (Delhi: Gian Pub. House, 1988); Jagdish Mittal, *Andhra Paintings of the Ramayana* (Hyderabad: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1969).

21v). In some cases the word that is substituted has a very close meaning to the Persian word,

while in other cases, the annotator has had to reach further to find an adequate substitute.

Not all of the notations imply parity or comparability between the Indic and Persianate

spheres, however. For example, we see transliteration rather than substitution in the note on

folio 13v which uses the Kannada word *mashiti* – which refers to a mosque and derives from the

Arabic word *masjid* – to describe a building the notation writer took for a mosque.[129] The choice

to transliterate "mosque" rather than to substitute a word used to describe places of worship in

the Indic context (for example, temple) may indicate that the note-writer felt there to be

significant differences between these two types of sacred spaces.[130] Interestingly, this is the only

note in which an object associated with Islam, rather than with Persianate society, is mentioned.

Another case of transliteration is the repeated appearance of the term *badshah*, which

comes from the Persian word *padshah* or king. As with *mashiti*, this use of transliteration seems

to indicate that a Persian king was seen by the note-writer as distinct from an Indic king, who

might be referred to as a *raja* or *maharaja*. In some cases, for example on folio 11v, the term

badshah is extended by a suffix by which borrowed words can be assimilated into a Kannada

sentence: *aru*. The use of this suffix carries an interesting connotation: it is the nominative

plural ending and when used to refer to a single person it indicates respect. The character in

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[129] The notation-writer has actually misunderstood the painting, which represents a palace rather than a mosque. As demonstrated by this notation, the degree to which the note-writer understood the text varies. For example, on folio 18v the painting shows Sindbad promising the king that he will teach the prince everything he knows. The Kannada note, however, summarizes the illustration thus: "Sindbad tells a story to the emperor concerning strategies of ruling." This was not a bad guess since so many stories from both the *Sindbadnama* and the *Panchatantra* concern the challenges that a successful ruler must overcome, but it is not correct.

[130] The term *mashiti* is found in epigraphic inscriptions recording the construction of mosques in the Deccan, such as that built in Burhanpur in 1590 by 'Adil Shah Faruqi. See Hira Lal, "Burhanpur Sanskrit Inscription of Adil Shah, Samvet 1646," *Epigraphia Indica*," (1907-08): 306-10. There are, however, examples of inscriptions which label mosques using Sanskritic terminology, such as the mosque of Ahmad Khan in Vijayanagara in which a Kannada inscription describes the building as a *dharmasale*. Wagoner, "Fortuitous Convergences and Essential Ambiguities: Transcultural Political Elites in the Medieval Deccan," 250-53.

these stories might not have been seen as an Indic king, but he is nevertheless figured as a person deserving of respect.

The meaning of the very first notation of the manuscript, which appears on an otherwise blank page, is the most obscure of them all. It seems to read "the king (*badshaharu*) is in the court assembly." It is possible that this note was intended to function as a title (there is no Kannada title on the *shamsa* page which has the two Persian titles) but the absence of Sindbad's name is curious. Another possibility is that it refers to the manuscript having been given to a king at a court assembly. The translation must remain unresolved for now, but hopefully future research will allow for a more clear interpretation.

Most interesting for the study of manuscript production is the notation that appears on folio 1r, the page with the *shamsa* (fig. 4.30). In the bottom right corner is a Kannada inscription comprised of a single word: *surya*. In Kannada and Sanskrit, the word *surya* can refer to the sun itself or to the Hindu sun god. It is possible that the term *surya* was used as a label for the *shamsa* because the gold circle at its center has some resemblance to the sun, but the *shamsa*'s stylized form makes this somewhat unlikely. Another possibility is that *surya* was inscribed on the page as a substitution for the term *shamsa*. *Shamsa* refers to this particular type of manuscript illumination, but it comes from the Arabic word for sun: *shams*.[131]

If the latter interpretation is correct, the notation writer or someone who instructed him must have been familiar with Persian illumination and its terminology, enough so that he or she was able to create a Kannada correlative for *shamsa* based on the fact that both terms can denote the sun. Alternatively, it is possible that the notation writer was simply employing one of a set of

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[131] Elaine Wright has shown that *shamsa's* connection with the sun is an important part of its meaning, arguing that it symbolizes "the sun that shown from the head of Sasan, grandfather of Ardeshir, founder of the Sasanian dynasty, indicating one who has captured the Royal Fortune (*farrah*) and thereby rules by divine right." Wright, "The *Shamsa* in Iranian Illuminations," ii-iii.

locally-generated terms that speakers of Indic languages had created in order to describe Persianate artistic forms. This would suggest that there was a considerable population of Indic-language speakers with serious interest in Persianate manuscripts in the region, a notion that is very much in accord with what we know of the cosmopolitan society of early modern Golconda.

What can we make of these unique messages left behind by a Kannada-speaking viewer? First, we can conclude that the predominant disposition of the notations is towards assimilation of the perceived subjects of the Persian text and imagery into familiar, Indic, terms. We can therefore posit a social context in which Kannada-speaking readers found themselves well able to relate to the content of Persian manuscripts, whether religious or political. Second, the appearance of these notations indicates that manuscripts like this one circulated among people for whom Persian was not the primary language. As Bernard O'Kane observes in relation to captions in Arabic manuscripts, marginal notations like these can sometimes "benefit the less than fully literate, serving as a précis of the stories and their key points."[132] In this case the note-writer was clearly literate, but was probably more conversant in Kannada than Persian. Third, the notes hint at the existence of a parlance that had evolved in the region, by which Kannada-speakers could refer to the components of Persian manuscripts. Since illumination does not have a natural counterpart in indigenous art forms it is not surprising that a certain creativity would have been necessary to derive terms for its various parts.

Finally, we must consider what the notes suggest about the life and history of use of this particular volume. One possibility is that these notes were added in Golconda by a Kannada-

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[132] Bernard O'Kane, "The Uses of Captions in Medieval Literary Arabic Manuscripts," in *Arab Painting: Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts*, ed. Anna Contadini (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 142-3.

speaking member of the Qutb Shahi court who was part of the larger, multi-lingual community that took root there. Another conceivable scenario is that the notations were added to the manuscript outside of Golconda, for example at a place like the court of Bijapur where Kannada and Persian (as well as Marathi and Dakani) were used.[133] It could have been given as a gift to a Bijapuri noble or even to the 'Adil Shahi sultan during one of the many fleeting moments of harmony between Golconda and its neighbor. Although more work needs to be done on this topic, the exchange of manuscripts between nobles or rulers appears to have been a common practice in the Deccan. A beautifully illuminated manuscript of a panegyric *masnawi* dedicated to 'Abdullah Qutb Shah, for example, was written by Mulla Nusrati, a favorite poet of the Bijapur ruler 'Ali 'Adil Shah II. The manuscript was presumably made in Bijapur as a gift for the Qutb Shahi sultan.[134]

The exact context in which the notes were added to the *Sindbadnama* is impossible to determine as of yet, but there is little doubt that the manuscript circulated within a network that ranged across the Deccan in which individuals from different linguistic backgrounds participated in a common discourse relating to the production and appreciation of Persian manuscripts.

Reflections on the BL *Sindbadnama*

Stylistic evidence strongly suggests that *Sindbadnama* was produced by the same group of artists (with some changes) and in approximately the same period as the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*. The exact order of these manuscripts' production is difficult to determine with any degree of certainty, but it is unlikely that a significant period of time elapsed between their

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[133] Sherwani, Yazdani, and Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724*, vol. 1, p. 395, 399.

[134] British Library, Or. 13533. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 109.

making since they share many stylistic and iconographic features. It is, therefore, reasonable to date the *Sindbadnama* to 1575-85.

In some respects the BL manuscript is more sophisticated than the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*. For example, it appears to have been made with a consistent conception of how the paintings were to be arranged on the page, avoiding the gradual expansion that we saw in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*'s illustrations. This does not mean, however, that it is less deeply engaged with Persian painting. On the contrary, the manuscript's close relationship to Persian paintings is evident in the way that it appears to "quote" from Persian paintings of the first half of the sixteenth century. It is not slavishly indebted to these images, however, making changes to suit local interests and occasionally even adding local elements such as the waist belt or *patka* of Indic costume.

So few illustrated copies of any *Sindbadnama* survive that it is impossible to know whether the program of illustration of the BL manuscript reflects conventions associated with this text or whether it was completely locally-generated. I would venture to guess, however, that this particular versified text was rarely illustrated and that the close text-image relationship we see in this manuscript – in which the images reflect not just the events of the text but also mirror its narrative structure – was the fruit of an effort of this particular workshop. It is possible that the artists worked without a single illustrated copy of the text upon which to base their paintings.

Finally, the Kannada marginal notations in this manuscript offer a brief but telling glimpse into the reception of this manuscript around the time of its production. They make clear that the audience for such an object was not limited to the Persian diaspora, nor to those Deccanis for whom Persian was the primary language, but rather that the manuscript circulated among those for whom Indic languages were foremost. What is more, they suggest that although some of the Persianate/Islamicate characters, objects and concepts were more difficult to

translate into Indic terms than others, they were all ultimately translatable and thus

comprehensible.

It is useful to consider this in relation to a similar case, examined by Barbara Zeitler, in

which annotations in Latin were added to a fourteenth-century illustrated manuscript in

Slavonic.[135] Zeitler regards the notations as "cross-cultural interpretations of imagery" and

emphasizes the two Latin annotators' frequent misunderstandings of the Orthodox Christian text

and the illustrations that accompany it. It is not clear from Zeitler's discussion what proportion

of the annotations reflect misunderstandings, but the degree of difficulty that the annotators had

appears to be significantly greater than that which the *Sindbadnama*'s Kannada annotator faced.

This applies both to comprehension of particular imagery and comprehension of how imagery

relates to the text to which an illustration is adjacent.

Although some of the Kannada captions do contain misinterpretations of the manuscript's

imagery, we do not find such consistent mismatching of images and captions in the Golconda

manuscript. In fact, rather than giving us the impression of an annotator trying in vain to make

sense of an "alien culture," the *Sindbadnama* captions convey remarkable comprehension and

comfort with the imagery they label. The notation on the page of the *shamsa*, in particular, hints

that Persianate texts and illustrations may have been so familiar that an established vocabulary

by which Kannada-speakers could discuss the basic forms of Persianate manuscripts had

emerged.

Although there is not enough information to hypothesize the place of these notes'

production with any certainty, a possible scenario is one in which a Golconda courtier presented

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[135] I refer here to the second example discussed in Barbara Zeitler, "Cross-Cultural Interpretations of Imagery in the Middle Ages," *Art Bulletin* 76, no. 4 (1994).

the *Sindbadnama* to a noble from a region in which Kannada was commonly used. Perhaps the lucky recipient added the notes as he perused its pages.

Khamsa of Nizami

The last manuscript in this second group is Ms. P 1432 of the Andhra Pradesh State Museum, a *Khamsa* of Nizami about which very little has been written. In 1953, when Muhammad Ghause catalogued the museum's Arabic, Persian and Urdu manuscripts, he included this *Khamsa* and devoted a few lines to its contents.[136] His interest was mainly in the text, however, and he seems to have made only a cursory study of the paintings. Ghause suggested that the manuscript contained eight Akbar-period Mughal paintings, but he did not reproduce them or list their subjects or placement. Perhaps because of the relative obscurity of the collection and catalogue, and the lack of reproductions, the manuscript has received no further attention.

Although we are greatly indebted to Ghause for including this manuscript in his catalog, his knowledge of Indian painting seems to have been somewhat rudimentary; the illustrations have very little in common with Mughal painting. Since they do not share any of its most fundamental characteristics – naturalistic color, volumetric modeling or illusionistic space – this attribution is simply not credible. A careful examination reveals this manuscript to be the product not of the Mughal court but of two different groups of artists in two different cities. Its story is rather complex and will be traced in the following section.

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[136] This institution was then known as the Hyderabad Museum. Muhammad Ghause, *Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts in the Hyderabad Museum* (Hyderabad: Archaeological Department, Government of Hyderabad, 1953), 12-15.

In brief, the illumination and script clearly identify the manuscript as the product of an early fifteenth-century Shirazi workshop. The seven paintings one finds among its folios (at least one painted folio having been lost) are not, however, painted in a style known to have been in use in Shiraz at that time. Comparison with the illustrations in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama* discussed in the previous two sections of this chapter makes clear that the illustrations of this *Khamsa* were created by the same artists who worked on these other two Golconda manuscripts. The appearance of a Qutb Shahi seal further supports this hypothesis. This section will argue, therefore, that the manuscript was transcribed and illuminated in Shiraz and then transported to India, where about one hundred and fifty years later, it was illustrated in Golconda.

Although it is still a relatively new topic of scholarly conversation, the re-use and refurbishment of manuscripts at Persian, Central Asian, Ottoman and Indian courts is now acknowledged to have been a major artistic phenomenon of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries.[137] One might take as exemplary an anthology copied and partially illustrated under the Muzaffarids in fourteenth-century Shiraz, to which illustrations were added in fifteenth-century Herat and again in sixteenth-century Tabriz before it joined the Ottoman royal library in Istanbul.[138] This is a rather complex example, but even the simplest cases of re-use offer rich opportunities to consider how artists of a particular moment positioned themselves in relation to past and present traditions. The interstitial and modest nature of the additions to this *Khamsa* – the specific character of which will be elucidated below – suggests a tentative and perhaps early

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[137] For discussion of Mughal, Ottoman and Persian examples, respectively, see John Seyller, "Overpainting in the Cleveland Tutinama," *Artibus Asiae* 52, no. 3/4 (1992): 292; Zeren Tanindi, "Additions to Illustrated Manuscripts in Ottoman Workshops," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000); Soudavar, "Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition," 40-50.

[138] H. 1510. Filiz Çagman, Zeren Tanindi, and J. M. Rogers, *The Topkapi Saray Museum: The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts*, 1st U.S. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1986), 149.

attempt on the part of its creators to master the process of Persian manuscript production, and thus a rather uncertain sense of connection to the Persian past.

The Text

The *Khamsa* of Nizami is one of the great masterpieces of Persian literature.[139] It is a posthumous collection of five narrative poems (*khamsa* means five in Arabic) written by Nizam al-Din Ilyas ibn Yusuf (known as Nizami Ganjavi) in northwestern Iran during the late twelfth century. The *Khamsa's* five *masnawis* (poems comprised of rhyming couplets) were written over the course of two decades for several different patrons and later compiled into a single work. It has been said that in them, Nizami "set new standards…for elegance of expression, richness of characterization, and narrative sophistication."[140]

With the exception of the first poem, which contains short didactic episodes with mystical and practical messages, the poems in Nizami's *Khamsa* are romantic epics. The author adapted these well-known stories about lovers and warriors from various sources including the *Shahnama*. His work has, as a result, sometimes been described as a synthesis of Persian literary achievements up to his time. Although all of the poems are *masnawis*, they use different meters and thus are distinct from one another not just in content but also in form.

Since it was first composed, the *Khamsa* has been widely studied, praised and emulated across the Persian-speaking world. In India, evidence of interest in the text dates from shortly after its completion. Amir Khusrau Dehlavi, the most famous poet of the period of the Delhi Sultanate, composed his own version of the *Khamsa* around the turn of the fourteenth century, as

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[139] Francois De Blois, *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1994), vol. v, part 2, 438-95.

[140] Kamran Talattof, Jerome W. Clinton, and Kenneth A. Luther, *The Poetry of Nizami Ganjavi: Knowledge, Love, and Rhetoric* (Houndmills, Balsingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, 2000), 2.

would many others after him.[141] Amir Khusrau's *Khamsa* contains the same stories as Nizami's, but they are deeply inflected by the local socio-cultural environment in which he wrote. Alyssa Gabbay, who has recently studied these works from the perspective of Indo-Persian culture, has shown that the author intentionally strove to write in a way that would weave together strands from Persian and from local Indic culture.[142]

In the Mughal period the *Khamsa* continued to serve as a focal point within Indo-Persian society. In the *A'in-i Akbari* Abul Fazl reports, for example, that Nizami's *Khamsa* was one of a small group of texts read aloud to Akbar.[143] The poems clearly appealed to the Qutb Shahi sultans as well. One indication of their interest in it is their ownership of one of the most important copies of the *Khamsa* to ever have been produced in the Persian world: a heavily illustrated copy made in 1431 for the Timurid ruler Shahrukh.[144] While seal impressions of at least two different Qutb Shahi rulers tell us that the manuscript was in the royal library, a hand written inscription by Muhammd Quli's successor, Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612-1628), further indicates the special attention that was paid to this exquisite object.[145] One indication that it was the text as much as the paintings that Muhammad Qutb Shah appreciated is the fact

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[141] See Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusraw: The Poet of Sufis and Sultans* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005); Alyssa Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance: Amir Khusraw and Pluralism* (Routledge, 2009).

[142] Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*.

[143] Abu al-Fazl ibn Mubarak, *A'in-i Akbari,* trans. H. Blochmann as *The A'in-i Akbari*, 2nd ed., Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927), vol. 1, 110.

[144] Hermitage museum, Inv. No. VP-1000. A. T. Adamova, *Persidskaia Zhivopis' I Risunok XV-XIX Vekov V Sobranii Ermitazha: Katalog Vystavki* (Sankt-Peterburg: AO "Slaviia", 1996), cat. 1; ———, "The Hermitage Museum Manuscript of Nizami's *Khamseh*, Dated 835/1431," *Islamic Art* V (2001): 53-132.

[145] The compositions of the paintings in the Andhra Pradesh State Museum *Khamsa* have little in common with the illustrations of the Hermitage *Khamsa*. The Timurid manuscript does not seem, therefore, to have been used as a model by the Golconda artists. Muhammad Qutb Shah and 'Abdullah Qutb Shah's seals are readily visible on the *shamsa* of the Hermitage manuscript. (Adamova mistakenly refers to Muhammad Qutb Shah as Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah here.) There may also be an impression of Abu'l Hasan Tana Shah's seal. Adamova, "The Hermitage Museum Manuscript of Nizami's *Khamseh*, Dated 835/1431," 56. Muhammad Qutb Shah's inscription is reproduced in ———, *Persidskaia Zhivopis' I Risunok XV-XIX Vekov V Sobranii Ermitazha: Katalog Vystavki*, 93.

that he placed his seal at the beginning of each of the five poems as opposed to on the illustrated pages.[146]

Illustrating the *Khamsa*

It is difficult to overstate the role played by manuscripts of the *Khamsa* in the history of Persian manuscript production. More copies of the *Khamsa* of Nizami have been illustrated than any text other than the *Shahnama*.[147] Copies were produced in Iran continuously from the late fourteenth to seventeenth centuries at all levels of production.[148] Many royal patrons ordered *Khamsa* manuscripts made and the famous Persian painter Bihzad is thought to have worked on at least two copies of the text in Herat during the late fifteenth century.[149]

These deluxe manuscripts and their less impressive cousins share a number of basic characteristics. They tend to contain illustrations of all five poems in the *Khamsa*, although the most popular story for illustration is that of *Khusraw wa Shirin*, and sometimes there are no illustrations at all for the *Makhzan al-Asrar*.[150] In many cases, the manuscripts begin with an illustrated frontispiece placed after the *shamsa* (although it can also appear before the *shamsa*).[151] Certain scenes are more popular than others, so it is very common to see illustrations of Khusraw discovering Shirin bathing, Layla and Majnun in school, and Bahram

[146] Adamova, "The Hermitage Museum Manuscript of Nizami's *Khamseh*, Dated 835/1431," 55.

[147] Peter J. Chelkowski, Priscilla Soucek, and Richard Ettinghausen, *Mirror of the Invisible World: Tales from the Khamseh of Nizami* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975), vii.

[148] A list of important *Khamsa* manuscripts is found in Ibid., 116-17.

[149] British Library Add. 29500 and Or. 6810. For details, see Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts: A Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India, and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum*.

[150] Priscilla Parsons Soucek, "Illustrated Manuscripts of Nizami's *Khamseh*, 1386-1482" (dissertation, New York University, Graduate School of Arts and Science, 1971), 285.

[151] Serpil Baǧci , "A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The *Divan* of Solomon," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 101.

Gur in his pavilions. These episodes have been so often illustrated that the imagery used has become somewhat standardized; as with the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, however, the less-frequently depicted scenes allow significant room for artists to incorporate local stylistic and compositional conventions.

The *Khamsa's* popularity among producers of illustrated manuscripts reached far outside of Iran. As Titley has observed, the full range of painting styles in the Persian world during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries "can be demonstrated by illustrated copies of the *Khamsa* of Nizami."[152] In India it was illustrated at least by the fifteenth century, as a copy in the Uppsala University Library dated 1439 and another in the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi dated 1440 attest.[153] The text continued to appeal to patrons and artists in India during the sixteenth century, leading to the creation of manuscripts like a celebrated *Sharafnama* (the first part of the fifth of Nizami's poems) in the British Library made for the sultan of Bengal in 1531-2.[154]

Later in the sixteenth century several copies of Nizami's *Khamsa* were produced by Mughal artists. The most well known one is perhaps that which was produced for Akbar by artists of the imperial atelier in 1595, during a period when the court was based at Lahore.[155] This manuscript originally contained forty-two illustrated folios painted by top artists of the Mughal workshop.[156] The paintings are full-page compositions, containing no text or just a few

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[152] Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 254.

[153] The Uppsala manuscript is in the Royal University Library, Tornberg 151. The Topkapı manuscript is Hazine 774. More *Khamsa* manuscripts from the Sultanate period are discussed in Eloise Brac de la Perriere, *L'art Du Livre Dans L'inde Des Sultanats* (Paris: Presses de l'Universite Paris-Sorbonne, 2008).

[154] British Library Or. 13836 Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting*, 179-82, pl. 32.

[155] British Library, Or. 12208. Barbara Brend, *The Emperor Akbar's Khamsa of Nizami* (London: British Library, 1995), 8.

[156] Interestingly, the manuscript contains few of the most iconic scenes. Perhaps episodes were chosen for illustration based on the interest of the artists or for some other reason. Further study of this manuscript might provide ideas.

lines which are fully subsumed within the painting field. The illustrations place the events of the *Khamsa* into fully imagined and three-dimensionally rendered scenes, in accordance with the Mughal style, and the costumes of the figures are Mughal and Central Asian, suggesting that the characters in the stories are re-imagined as people present in the Mughals' own court.

No other *Khamsa* is currently known to have been produced in the Deccan during the sixteenth century, but there are later indications of interest in the text in this region. For example, the Brooklyn Museum owns a leaf from a *Khamsa* that is thought to have been made in the Deccan in the seventeenth century (fig. 4.54). The folio, which has been subject to a certain amount of alteration, contains a painting depicting Layla and Majnun in peculiar but possibly Deccani style.[157] An eighteenth-century dispersed copy of the *Khamsa* perhaps made in Golconda suggests the longevity of interest in the *Khamsa* in this region (fig. 4.55).[158]

The Manuscript: Basic Features

The 349 folios of the State Museum *Khamsa* are 238 by 162 millimeters, relatively close in size to the folios of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*. Unlike the other two manuscripts, however, there are no blue papers included amidst the light brown, shiny, folios. A modern red leather binding with gold stamp-work (unfortunately in very poor condition) loosely holds the folios together, although one folio is now completely separated from the rest and sits tucked in between the cover of the binding and the first folio (fig. 4.56). Its text pages contain twenty-one lines of an early form of *nasta'liq* in two columns as well a third in the margins within which the text is written diagonally (fig. 4.57). This arrangement of text is common

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[157] Amy G. Poster, *Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum* (New York and Lanham, Md.: Hudson Hills Press in association with the Brooklyn Museum, 1994), p. 108, no. 60.

[158] For the most up-to-date list of references for this manuscript, see Drouot Richelieu, Paris, 15-16 October 2005, lot 58.

among fifteenth-century Persian manuscripts. The manuscript's illuminations include a *shamsa*, five *'unwans*, and many illuminated thumb pieces.

The text is close to complete; only the first page of the *Iskandar Nama* is missing. The only other part of the manuscript which has clearly been disturbed is the loose folio mentioned above. The recto side of this loose page is blank, with the exception of three seal impressions and an inscription in the bottom left corner (fig. 4.58).[159] The largest is an impression of a circular seal from the period of the eighteenth-century Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah, and one of the smaller ones is also from an eighteenth-century seal, while the last is unknown.[160] The slightly damaged inscription reads: "This book of the *Khamsa* of Nizami, gold work (illumination), in an Iranian hand (*be khatt-i velayat*) was purchased in the city of Muhammad Pur through ... Shaykh Miran at the price of .... rupees." Although the date of this inscription is unknown, the reference to Muhammad Pur – a version of the name Muhammadnagar, used to refer to Hyderabad as early as the mid-sixteenth century – indicates that the manuscript was in Hyderabad for some time before it entered the Andhra Pradesh State Museum. On the verso side of this folio (fig. 4.56) is a full page painting marked in pencil with the number "1" in the margin. The painting depicts a couple seated in a palace, being entertained by dancers and musicians. The folios' pictorial content and original position in the manuscript will be addressed below.

There are six more full-page paintings interspersed through the bound pages of the manuscript, all of which have numerals written in pencil in the margins. The numbers that

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[159] These seal impressions and the inscription have in fact been written on a plain piece of paper which was pasted on top of another piece of paper. Faintly visible on the lower (covered) piece of paper is a diagram of boxes containing numbers. Future studies should be attempted in order investigate this curious substrate.

[160] Many thanks to Manijeh Bayani and John Seyller for their assistance in reading these seals.

appear on them are 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, indicating that – as Ghause recorded – there were once

eight paintings, but the painting with the number "2" in the margin is now lost.

To return to the illumination in the manuscript, the first folio contains a *shamsa* that

functions as a contents page (or *fihrist*), above which is an impression Muhammad Quli Qutb

Shah's seal (fig. 4.59). The *shamsa* itself is of a form familiar from manuscripts produced in

Shiraz in the beginning of the fifteenth century. At the center are six small circles, each one

containing the title of a name of a story from the *Khamsa*.[161] In the space formed by this ring of

small circles the title of the work is written. The circles are contained within a single larger

circle which is itself contained within a square. Triangular cartouches protrude from the top,

bottom and left side of the square. All of these areas have either black or blue backgrounds and

are covered with small gold and red flowers and vines.

As Priscilla Soucek has shown, *shamsas* that double as contents pages were common in

Shiraz around 1400, although they can appear as early as 1370 or as late as the mid-fifteenth

century.[162] She offers an example of a *fihrist* from a *Kulliyat* of 'Imad al-Din Faqih, made in

Shiraz in 1370, which is similar to the one in the State Museum *Khamsa* (fig. 4.60).[163] The same

format appears in the *Kulliyat*'s *shamsa*: a ring of roundels – each containing the title of a

section of the text – contained within a square. Like the *shamsa* in the State Museum

manuscript, there are borders around the upper, lower and left hand margins only. This tells us

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[161] As is often the case in copies of the *Khamsa*, the fifth story is split into two parts: the *Iskandarnama* and the *Iqbalnama*.

[162] Priscilla Soucek, "The Manuscripts of Iskandar Sultan: Structure and Content," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture, ed. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 119.

[163] *Kulliyat* of 'Imad Faqih, 772/1370, Saltykov-Schedrin State Public Library, Leningrad, Dorn 406. Shiraz. Folio 2a is a *fihrist* with the title of the work and eight circles, inside each of which is the name of the story. These circles are contained in a square, not a larger circle. Reproduced in black and white in Akimushin and Gray, *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, figure 20.

that they are probably both the left half of double-page illuminated compositions. The right half would have looked like a mirror image of this half, though the small circles would no doubt have contained different text.[164] The location of the folio with the right half of the *shamsa* of the State Museum manuscript is not known.

The five surviving *'unwans* in the manuscript[165] (all on versos) are also quite similar to those in late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century Shirazi manuscripts, such as the *Kulliyat* of 'Imad Faqih[166] or the 1411 miscellany in the Gulbenkian Collection (fig. 4.61).[167] The *'unwans* (fig. 4.57, 4.62) are comprised of cartouches inside a rectangular with a blue or black background and gold floral decoration. Around each rectangle is a fairly wide gold band, an identifying mark of illuminations from this period. Above this are two decorative rows: the lower one contains a delicate pattern described in white against blue, while the upper one contains a row of gold, flame-like motifs. The delicacy and density of the patterning is a typical feature of Shirazi "Muzaffarid-style" illumination which was produced in the latter half of the fourteenth and the early years of the fifteenth century.[168] Each of the *'unwans* is unique, though they all contain the same basic elements. It is a mark of the skill of the illuminators that they were able to vary slightly the arrangement of these elements to create the maximum visual

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[164] Ibid., fig. 20. Another similar example is a ca. 1350 *Kulliyat* of Sa'di in the Chester Beatty Library. Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, vol. I, no. 113.

[165] There is one *'unwan* missing. This is the *'unwan* for the *Iskandarnama*. The text of that poem begins with the second page, so there is only one page missing. The line at which the poem begins can be found in Nizami Ganjavi, *Kulliyat-i Nizami Ganjavi: Shamil-i Makhzan al-Asrar, Khusraw Shirin, Laylá va Majnun, Haft Paykar, Sharafnamah, Iqbalnamah* (Tihran: Intisharat-i Zarrin, 1980), 697, line 21.

[166] An *'unwan* from this manuscript is reproduced in Akimushin and Gray, *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, pl. VII.

[167] Gulbenkian Foundation, L.A. 161. Soucek reproduces an *'unwan* from this manuscript in Soucek, "The Manuscripts of Iskandar Sultan: Structure and Content," fig. 5.

[168] Wright, "The Look of the Book: Manuscript Production in the Southern Iranian City of Shiraz from the Early-14th Century to 1452," vol. 1, 53-58.

interest while maintaining consistency. Other areas of illumination in the manuscript include gold and blue thumb pieces that appear on the *'unwans* and the folios opposite them, and small illuminated headings that appear at the beginning of the marginal text on the first page of each new chapter.

Finally, there is one illuminated element in the manuscript that is not typical of Shiraz circa 1400: the fairly wide illuminated borders surrounding each illustration, containing various combinations of blue and gold lozenges decorated with floral and vine patterns (fig. 4.56). The absence of black and the presence of bright orange in these borders differentiate them from the illumination of the *shamsa* and the *'unwans*, as does the relatively large size of the flowers they contain. I will argue below that these illuminated borders were created at the same time that the illustrations were made, long after the text was first inscribed and decorated with *'unwans* and a *shamsa*. This notion is further supported by the similarity of these borders to those that surround many paintings in the second section of the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli*. These bands will be discussed in more detail below, as they play an interesting role in the organization of the paintings.

Organization of the Manuscript

The State Museum *Khamsa* has been altered several times since its original creation. It was transcribed and illuminated at one moment, illustrated at another, and then subject to losses at a still later point in time. It is possible, nevertheless, to get a fairly good idea of its form at each period through codicological examination and comparison of the manuscript with other copies of the *Khamsa.* It will be helpful to first understand the manuscript as it was when it was initially transcribed and illuminated and then to explore the second phase, during which it was illustrated. A visual representation of these phases can be found in the diagram in Appendix II.

As mentioned above, it is likely that the manuscript began with a double-page *shamsa* of which only the left half survives. The first poem (*Makhzan al-Asrar*) begins on the verso of the *shamsa*, its opening accentuated by an *'unwan* (fig. 4.62). The text of this poem occupies about thirty folios and comes to an end on the recto side of a folio. The next *'unwan* could easily have been placed on the verso of this page, but instead the text skips one verso and one recto, and then begins again with the *'unwan* for the next poem: *Khusraw wa Shirin*.

It is difficult to say definitively why this space was left between the two poems, although in the period when this manuscript was written, it was not very unusual for manuscripts to contain some blank pages. For example, since it was normal to start a new section of text on a verso, in cases where the text of a previous section ended on a verso, the subsequent recto page would be left blank so that the text could begin again on the next verso.[169] Even when the text did end on a recto, scribes would sometimes skip pages. For example, in the Shirazi miscellany mentioned above, one section of text comes to an end on the recto side of a page but the next section begins not on the following verso but instead skips two pages which were then filled with decorative elements.[170] In this case, Soucek suggests that the space was left in order to emphasize the different literary form of each group of texts.[171] Another reason for leaving blank pages in between sections might be that the sections were transcribed at different places or times and then assembled, like building blocks, into a complete manuscript.

It is unlikely that blank pages left between chapters or sections of text were originally intended to be filled with illustrations, since virtually all illustrated Persian manuscripts have

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[169] Ibid., 93-94.

[170] Again, this is Lisbon 161. Ibid., 93.

[171] Soucek, "The Manuscripts of Iskandar Sultan: Structure and Content," 122-3.

illustrations embedded in text pages rather than located in between text sections. The State Museum *Khamsa* contains no paintings within its text pages, nor does it contain empty spaces within the text block for which paintings might have been intended. This is not unusual: well known texts like Nizami's *Khamsa* were frequently copied but only sometimes in illustrated form.

This pattern – in which the text of one poem ends on a recto followed by two blank pages before the next poem begins – occurs three times in this *Khamsa*: between the 1st and 2nd; the 2nd and 3rd; 3rd and 4th poems. It is likely that it also occurred between the 4th and 5th poems, but since the *'unwan* at the beginning of the 5th poem is lost, one cannot be absolutely sure. The only place where this pattern was not applied is between the 5th and 6th poems. Here, the text ends on a verso. The scribe skipped only one page (the next recto) and began again on the following verso. The text of the *Khamsa* eventually comes to an end on a verso.

In its second phase, this manuscript was enhanced with at least eight paintings which were executed on the blank pages left by the scribes between the poems. With the exception of the paintings that once appeared before the *shama*s (which I will come to below), the paintings are located on the blank pages immediately before the *'unwan* of the poem they illustrate. Therefore, they appear either on the recto of an *'unwan* or on the verso of a text page.

There are no paintings illustrating *Makhzan al-Asrar* (the first poem), perhaps because it begins immediately after the *shamsa*.[172] Before the next poem, *Khusraw wa Shirin*, however, there are two paintings. The first of these depicts the moment when Khusraw discovers Shirin

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[172] It is not unusual for the first poem of the *Khamsa* to be given the least attention by artists. There are relatively fewer illustrations of this poem in the *Khamsa* manuscripts studied comprehensively in ———, "Illustrated Manuscripts of Nizami's *Khamseh*, 1386-1482."

bathing (fig. 4.63). (In the outer margin this painting is marked number "3," which tells us that there were once two paintings before this one. I will return to the issue of these numbers below.) Facing this is a painting (labeled number "4") depicting Khusraw visiting Shirin's palace (fig. 4.64). The two paintings illustrating episodes from *Khusraw wa Shirin* are tied together visually through the use of matching borders. Both paintings are surrounded on three sides by borders with six lozenges: four with gold backgrounds and two with blue backgrounds. On both, the blue lozenges are placed at the outer corners of the painting. When placed side by side, these borders bind the paintings together as two halves of a symmetrical whole.

In the two blank pages left by the scribe before the next poem – *Layla wa Majnun* – the artists placed just one illustration (fig. 4.65). This recto painting (labeled number "5") depicts Layla encountering Majnun in wilderness. Its borders, which are made up of lozenges with blue backgrounds only, do not appear around any other painting currently in the manuscript. It seems that the artists either intended to paint a match for this illustration but never got around to it, or were simply satisfied with the single painting.

Moving forward in the manuscript, one finds another set of two paintings illustrating the next poem: *Haft Peykar* (fig. 4.66 – 4.67). The painting on the right side (labeled number "6") depicts Bahram Gur in the orange pavilion, while the painting on the left (labeled number "7") shows him in the green pavilion. As with the first pair of paintings, these illustrations are united by matching borders that form a symmetrical whole. In this case, however, the borders are composed of nine lozenges which alternate between blue and gold backgrounds.

At the time it was painted, there would probably have been another double-page spread after *Haft Peykar*. Unfortunately, only the painting on the verso side survives (labeled number "8") (fig. 4.68). It depicts Iskandar hunting and is surrounded by another unique border

composed of five lozenges, alternating between blue and gold backgrounds. The lozenges at the corners are blue. It is likely that there would have originally been a painting opposite this one with matching borders, with the *'unwan* at the beginning of the *Iskandarnama* on its verso. As mentioned above, this *'unwan* has been lost.[173] Instead, the *Iskandarnama* begins abruptly with the second page of text and there are no paintings in the remainder of the manuscript. As mentioned above, between the end of the *Iskandarnama* and the beginning of the *Iqbalnama* (the second part of the last of Nizami's five poems) there is a single, non-illustrated page.

It should by now be clear that the artists inserted one or two paintings between each of the five poems of this *Khamsa*. These interstitial paintings account for six of the eight paintings mentioned by Ghause. I believe that the other two paintings were originally placed before the *shamsa* as a double-page illustrated frontispiece. This would explain why the first painting now bound into the manuscript has a number "3" in the margin: the right side of this frontispiece (labeled number "1") survives in the form of the loose folio mentioned above (fig. 4.56), while the left side (which would have been labeled number "2," and was on the recto of the right half of the double-page *shamsa*) is missing.

The painting that remains (fig. 4.56) depicts a generic courtly scene. Similar examples can be found in many copies of Nizami's *Khamsa*. Soucek has documented that copies of the *Khamsa* frequently open with paintings depicting a reception near a palace, a prince hunting with his entourage, a prince feasting with attendants or an open air reception scene.[174] In this case, the painting shows a royal couple feasting and enjoying music and dance inside a place. The

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[173] It was already lost when Ghause published his catalog. See his note on the condition of the manuscript in Ghause, *Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts in the Hyderabad Museum*, 15.

[174] These subjects are listed in the catalog provided in Soucek, "Illustrated Manuscripts of Nizami's *Khamseh*, 1386-1482," 578-623.

borders around this painting are comprised of gold and blue cartouches of a unique size and shape, a matching set of which were once surely to be found around the now-missing second painting. Unfortunately, Ghause did not list the subjects of the paintings, so we can only guess what the second painting might have depicted. Another scene of royal merriment is not unlikely.

Style of the Illustrations

Stylistic evidence suggests that the illustrations whose placement is discussed above were painted not just later but in an entirely different place and time than that of the illumination and inscription of the text. In this section I will argue that they were created in sixteenth-century Golconda, by some of the very same artists who worked on the two manuscripts presented in the preceding sections of this chapter. The strongest stylistic connections are to be found between this *Khamsa* and the BL *Sindbadnama*, although there are some features that link all three manuscripts to one another. Similar choices were made by the artists of these manuscripts in regard to several different dimensions of the illustrations including depiction of landscape, architecture and animals as well as proportion, palette, and certain decorative motifs.

As with the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*, paintings from mid-sixteenth-century Shirazi manuscripts offer the closest comparisons to the State Museum *Khamsa* illustrations. Some pictorial elements within the *Khamsa's* composition, however, are less common and appear to be locally-favored motifs. Many of these find close counterparts in paintings from the *Sindbadnama*. A rocky outcropping in the *Khamsa*'s illustration of Khusraw discovering Shirin bathing (fig. 4.63) is nearly identical to that found in an illustration from the *Sindbadnama* of a story told by the second vizier about a partridge that killed its mate (fig. 4.39).[175] In both, the rocks are roughly rectangular pink and blue protrusions that are marked with pairs of small

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[175] *Sindbadnama* folio 54v.

horizontal marks in black and white as well as vertically-oriented black "u"-shaped marks. In addition, both paintings place the rocks along the horizon line, in a wedge-shaped area adjacent to a grassy hillside.

The depiction of architecture in the *Khamsa* is also quite similar to the rather idiosyncratic architectural structures found in illustrations of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*. The palace shown at the left of an illustration depicting Khusraw visiting Shirin's palace (fig. 4.64), for example, is represented by such elements as blocks of pale pink bricks oriented in multiple directions, brown doors with gold handles, plaques above doors with white and blue epigraphic panels reading "*al-sultan al-'Adil*," and blue merlons along the roofline. One can also point to the depiction of multiple narrow brown doors adjacent to one another within a single narrow building, another unusual architectural motif that appears in all three manuscripts.[176]

A rather uncommon manner of depicting clouds is yet another feature that appears in both the *Sindbadnama* and the *Khamsa*. These clouds, which appear in the *Khamsa* painting of Iskandar hunting (fig. 4.68), are pink and filled with step-fret designs demarcated with darker pink lines. The rigid form of these designs, their color, and the awkward shape of the trailing wisps of cloud are too similar to clouds in certain *Sindbadnama* paintings (fig. 4.69) be coincidental.[177]

As mentioned briefly above, the blue and gold borders that surround each of the surviving illustrations call to mind those surrounding illustrations in the second section of the *Anvar-i Suhayli*'s pictorial program. Such borders are not frequently seen in Persian

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[176] See for example folios 28r and 45r in the *Sindbadnama* and folios 226v and 411r in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*.

[177] Examples in the *Sindbadnama* appear on folio 20v and 134v.

manuscripts, where thin gold, black or colored lines are usually used to form the borders of text boxes and illustrations. In the *Khamsa,* the blue borders lend cohesiveness to the pairs of paintings that appear in between sections of the text. They also complement the fifteenth-century *'unwan*s, each of which contains a unique configuration of forms from a basic vocabulary of blue, white and gold floral and geometric motifs. These functions differ from that served by the borders in the *Anvar-i Suhayli*, most of which effectively contained the burgeoning form of the illustrations as they extended beyond the text box, but it is nevertheless notable that artists working on both manuscripts should have employed similar borders in these novel ways.

The *Khamsa'*s illustrations also share with those of the other two manuscripts in this section a tendency to incorporate some elements taken from Indian painting during the time of the Delhi Sultanate. Most obvious in this case is the appearance of clouds of unusual form. A white band of clouds runs across the top of the painting of Khusraw visiting Shirin's palace (fig. 4.64), for example, which is simplified and stretched out horizontally. It is reminiscent of the clouds in fifteenth-century manuscript illustrations such as a folio of the *Khamsa* of Amir Khusrau in the Freer Gallery of Art (fig. 4.70).

Having demonstrated that there are strong similarities in the paintings in the *Khamsa*, *Sindbadnama* and *Anvar-i Suhayli,* it is necessary to point to certain telling differences. One is the absence of any figures with the "protruding nose" in the *Khamsa'*s illustrations. This probably indicates that at least one of the artists who worked on the other two manuscripts did not also work on the *Khamsa*. While the absence of protruding noses might be construed as an improvement, in other ways the artists who worked on the *Khamsa* appear to have been less skilled than those who created the other manuscript's illustrations. The *Khamsa* compositions have none of the more exuberantly original features that surprise and delight the viewer of the

Sindbadnama and *Anvar-i Suhayli* such as elaborate and fanciful architectural decoration, oriel windows teetering over the margins on decorative brackets, and fabulous tableaux of greenery.

A final difference between the *Khamsa* on the one hand and the *Sindbadnama* and the *Anvar-i Suhayli* on the other hand is in the appearance of blue and white epigraphic panels in the depiction of architectural structures. All three manuscripts contain these panels, placed over doorways, which virtually always read "*al-sultan al-'adil"* or "the great sultan." In the *Sindbadnama* and the *Anvar-i Suhayli* the words inscribed on these panels are usually correctly spelled, although in a few instances the final "l" in *'adil* is omitted. This is a common omission in Persian manuscripts, where artists often ran out of space for the full phrase.[178] In the State Museum *Khamsa*, not only is the final "l" in *'adil* omitted, but the "l" and "t" in the word *sultan* are also left out on a number of the paintings. Misspellings of a word as basic as *sultan* are not common, and likely indicate that the artist who painted these images was not as familiar with the Persian language as those who worked on the other two manuscripts.

Reflections on the A.P. State Museum *Khamsa*

On the basis of the stylistic relations outlined above we can conclude that it is very likely that the State Museum *Khamsa*'s illustrations were produced by at least some of the same artists who worked on the *Sindbadnama* and the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and therefore that the *Khamsa* was painted at roughly the same time as these other manuscripts. The appearance of an impression of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah's seal indicates that the manuscript eventually came to be held in the royal Qutb Shahi library (as was the *Sindbadnama)*. Finally, the misspellings and stylistic features suggest that like the other manuscripts in this chapter, the State Museum *Khamsa* was

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[178] One of many possible examples can be found in Sheila R. Canby, *Princes, Poets & Paladins: Islamic and Indian Paintings from the Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan* (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1998), no. 12.

probably made for elites, but not necessarily those who identified with the Persian diaspora. Rather, they may have belonged to a multi-lingual elite well aware of, but not primarily identified with, Persian culture.

It has also been shown that there are major differences between the *Khamsa* and the other two manuscripts explored in this chapter. Most important among these is the fact that the *Khamsa* is not a manuscript that was constructed wholesale in Golconda, but rather one that was made in Iran and enhanced in Golconda. As a result, its program of illustration is more limited in scope and less sophisticated. On the basis of these two factors, we can reasonably hypothesize that the *Khamsa* was the first of the three to be produced: the earliest known project of Persian manuscript production taken on by this group of artists. It could therefore be tentatively be dated to circa 1575.

It is possible that the artists who added paintings to the State Museum *Khamsa* chose to enhance an existing manuscript rather than create one anew because they were not yet confident of having all the skills necessary for book production. It is also feasible, however, that they simply sought the most cost-effective and efficient method of creating a deluxe manuscript. It is not difficult to imagine that these artists were responding to temporal and material limitations when they chose to add a small number of paintings to a beautifully illuminated and inscribed manuscript, ultimately producing an attractive object in far less time than it would have taken to create a new object from the beginning.

There may, however, have been additional reasons for and resonances in their choice. For a greater understanding of these layers of meaning, we can look to the larger context of manuscript re-use in India in this period. While no other examples of refurbished or re-used manuscripts produced in the Deccani sultanates are currently known, many have been identified

from the Mughal court. Mughal artists often added new paintings to or altered existing paintings in manuscripts from Iran and Central Asia, and at least one scholar has suggested that this may have been a means of "maintaining a prestigious Central Asian connection"[179] at a court where the rulers' roots in Central Asia were a critical part of their royal identity.   It is certainly possible that something similar was happening in Golconda, where many of the most powerful nobles were immigrants from Iran. The re-use of a Persian manuscript in this courtly community may thus have functioned as a claim to prestige and pedigree by the sponsor or owner of the manuscript.

The particular characteristics of a re-used manuscript can tell us more about the specific nature of such claims. If we compare the State Museum *Khamsa* with Mughal re-used manuscripts, we tend to find differences in the way that old and new elements are integrated. Take, for example, a Mughal *Bustan* of Sa'di that was originally produced in the mid-sixteenth century in Bukhara and then was repainted by the Mughal artist Bishandas around 1620.[180] The repainted volume was one of Emperor Jahangir's most precious possessions. He himself wrote on one of its first pages that this copy of the *Bustan* "is a second garden of paradise and one of the rarities of the age with respect to calligraphy and depiction."[181] It is not clear from this note, however, whether Jahangir placed different value on the "old" and "new" parts of the manuscript or how aware he was of these distinctions. Indeed, artists working for the Mughal court painted often added to manuscripts in such a way as to blur the lines between the original and the added elements. For example, in a re-used copy of the *Jamiʿ al-Tawarikh*, an historical text, Persian

[179] Natif, "The SOAS *Anvar-i Suhayli*: The Journey of a 'Reincarnated' Manuscript," 355.

[180] Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Cambridge, Mass. Ms. 1777.20

[181] Seyller, "The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts in the Imperial Mughal Library," 281.

and Mughal elements are both visible on any many pages and it takes a trained eye to differentiate them.[182]

In contrast, there are no pages in the State Museum *Khamsa* on which one can find both Persian and locally-produced elements; some pages have new paintings, others have text and illumination, but none have both. As a result of this separation, no older elements are covered over or obscured in any way by elements added in Golconda. Rather, the fifteenth-century components appear to have been carefully preserved during the manuscript's enhancement. In what seems almost a paradoxical task, the Golconda artists apparently sought to improve the *Khamsa* manuscript while also maintaining its "original" form unchanged.

In sum, if the re-use of a Persian manuscript always says something about the relationship between the society in which the manuscript was originally made and that in which it was re-furbished, then the Mughal and Golconda examples offer differently inflected messages. Mughal re-use tended to imply that Mughal society had absorbed Persian culture and improved upon it, while the Hyderabad manuscript treats Persian culture as something separate and distinct from Golconda's own cultural fabric, while also claiming that local artists were capable of matching the sophistication of Persian artists.

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[182] Rampur Raza Library P. 1820, Acc. no. 85. Schmitz and Desai, *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur*, cat. no. IV.1. This manuscript is the subject of a study by Yael Rice, whose initial findings can be found in Rice, "Modernizing or Historicizing? Mughal Interventions in the Rampur *Jami al-tavarikh*" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Philadelphia, PA, 2010).

Reflections on Manuscript Group 2

The production in Golconda of three manuscripts in a similar style is significant for our understanding of early artistic production in Golconda. It has long been thought that in this period there was no single "coherent" style of painting at Golconda.[183] The addition of the *Khamsa* to the corpus allows us to identify enough important similarities between the *Anvar-i Suhayli, Sindbadnama* and *Khamsa* to show that there was, in fact, a certain amount of continuity in this period's artistic production. These manuscripts include many common motifs and materials, and employ a similar manner of representing figures and landscapes. There is no doubt that certain artists worked on two or more of these manuscripts.

This is not meant to say, however, that Golconda in this period had its own "local style." Such a statement, I believe, would make too much of a link between the Qutb Shahi sultanate and this small group of manuscripts. There is no reason to believe that the artists who worked on these manuscripts did not also work in a similar style outside of the political boundaries of Golconda at points in their careers, or in a different style within its boundaries. It is not, therefore, a "Golconda style" that can be identified in this group of three manuscripts, but rather a style generated by a group of artists and sponsors who shared a set of interests and attitudes.

It is my belief that these sponsors and artists belonged to the community surrounding the Qutb Shahi court, but were not part of the Persian diaspora. The strongest evidence that these manuscripts circulated among non-Persians is the set of marginal notations in the *Sindbadnama*, which tell us that Kannada-speakers viewed the manuscript and also that they felt comfortable explaining its contents in their own terms. It also points to a wide interest among Kannada-speaking communities in Persian manuscripts, to the extent that a local vocabulary may have

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[183] Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 304.

existed by which Kannada speakers could describe forms specific to the Persian context. Based on the stylistic commonalities between all three manuscripts, we can hypothesize that all three were made within the context of this courtly community: a group of people who had knowledge of Persian language and culture, but who were not recent immigrants from Iran or Central Asia.

Members of this community seem to have had notions about what illustrated Persian manuscripts "ought to look like," but these notions were apparently loose enough to allow room for exploration and innovation. One might summarize their various explorations by noting that while the *Khamsa* paintings seem to assert the capacity for local artists to illustrate classic Persian texts, the *Anvar-i Suhayli* extends this claim to the creation of entire manuscripts and elaborates upon the way their illustrations depict architecture and vegetation, and the *Sindbadnama* refines this process of production and advances the extent to which manuscript illustrations reflect the narrative structure of the text.

In addition to indicating changes in the goals of the artists and perhaps their sponsors, the differences between the three manuscripts also appears to indicate changes in the organization and perhaps also the size of the workshop that produced these two manuscripts. The appearance of scribal notations in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and not the other two manuscripts in particular suggests that these artists were experimenting with different ways of working together. Physical differences suggest additional changes over time, as the artists adopted and discarded materials and techniques.

The content of all three manuscripts requires one final note of conclusion. The *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Khamsa* are both Persian classics, and although the versified version of the *Sindbadnama* in the British Library manuscript is unique, the literary lineage to which it belongs is a venerable one. Thus, the texts of all three manuscripts are almost archetypal works of

Persian literature. These three manuscripts could together have constituted the core of a very respectable Persian library. At the same time, two of the three texts have literary roots in Sanskrit literature, and many of their stories would have been familiar to individuals aware of early Sanskrit and contemporary Telugu literary traditions. Even when the stories were not recognizable as counterparts to stories in an Indic text, viewers with Deccani rather than Persian roots found it possible to assimilate the stories to local cultural contexts, as the Kannada captions in the *Sindbadnama* demonstrate. It seems quite feasible, therefore, to conclude that these three manuscripts were produced by and for a community with both Indic and Persian affiliations, and that the manuscripts were seen as a product of both of these overlapping cultural spheres.

Chapter 5: Manuscript Group 3

Most discussions of early manuscript production in Golconda transition smoothly from discussing the V&A *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the BL *Sindbadnama* to discussing the first manuscript to be dealt with in this chapter: an illustrated copy of the collected poems of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. There are good reasons to do so, given that this manuscript – like those of the previous chapters – is a codex containing a verse text in the Arabic script, ornamented by illuminations and illustrations that conform to the basic characteristics of Persian manuscripts. At the same time, however, there are at least two fundamental differences between the manuscript of Muhammad Quli's poetry and those discussed above. First, it contains a Dakani rather than a Persian text, and second, it was produced for a Qutb Shahi sultan by his own artists. These two facts also apply to the second manuscript to be examined in this chapter: a calligraphic album of Muhammad Quli's poems on Shi'ite themes.

It will be argued below that consideration of the language and patronage of these two objects is essential if we are to fully understand them, for these aspects illuminate the cultural world to which the manuscripts belonged. On the most basic level, the use of Dakani tells us that this world was much smaller and more local than that of the other manuscripts, which simply by their literary content claimed a place within a trans-regional Persianate sphere that included Iran, Central Asia and North India. The royal patronage of the manuscripts narrowed this world further still, locating this manuscript within a matrix of very specific court politics, dynastic ambitions, and a continually evolving royal cultural identity.

This cultural context informs my analysis of these two manuscripts' modes of engagement with the conventions of Persianate (and Ottoman) manuscript production. In particular, it reveals a link between their use of the format of the Persian *diwan* and the Ottoman

calligraphy album, and the need to legitimize Dakani as a linguistic pillar supporting an

emergent elite culture. Ultimately, it becomes clear that these manuscripts are no less engaged

than the others with manuscript traditions of the Persianate *ecumene*, but rather are more

strategic in their engagement, appropriating manuscript types with high status to support a royal

cultural initiative.

The backdrop against which this appropriation must be seen is that of burgeoning royal

patronage of art and architecture in the early years of the second millennium in the Muslim

calendar. Although Qutb Shahi sultans sponsored architectural monuments throughout the

sixteenth century, and there are some hints of patronage of arts of the book on the part of Qutb

Shahi sultans before 1590, it seems that a new era in royal patronage dawned in the 1590s.[1]

Most important among these new developments is Muhammad Quli's founding, in 1591, of a

new capital city: Hyderabad. Located to the east of Golconda fort, Hyderabad was built on the

model of nearby Warangal, once the capital city of the Kakatiyas.[2] The centerpiece of the new

city was – and still is – an enigmatic building known as the Charminar (fig. 5.1), the form of

which seems to be an amalgamation of a pre-sultanate Indic building type known as a *chaubara*

and a Persian building type referred to as a *chahar taq*.[3] In addition to the Charminar,

Muhammad Quli built several other major monuments at the time of the city's founding

including a hospital and an *'ashur khana* (a building for use by Shi'as during the holy month of

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[1] Folio 3v (fig. 5.26) of the Chester Beatty Library album (Persian Ms 225) is dated 1584, Golconda, and as such it hints at pre-1590 patronage by the Qutb Shahis. See part two of this chapter for more on this folio.

[2] The Qutb Shahis had controlled Warangal since 1579. Phillip B. Wagoner, "The Place of Warangal's *Kirti-Toranas* in the History of Indian Islamic Architecture," *Religion and the Arts* 8, no. 1 (2004): 25-29; Wagoner and Eaton, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600 (Typscript Version)*, ch. 6, p. 2.

[3] Wagoner, "The Charminar as *Chaubara*: Cosmological Symbolism in the Urban Architecture of the Deccan."

Muharram).[4]

Previous Qutb Shahi sultans had used architecture and other public means of expression (e.g. royal edicts and epigraphic inscriptions) to assert links with past Deccani rulers and to project an inclusive cultural identity for the sultanate. Muhammad Quli seems, however, to have refined the means by which these messages could be expressed. Compare, for example, Sultan Quli's 1518 mosque – into which a Hindu temple door is embedded (fig. 2.2) – with the Charminar. The former is a more coarse conjunction of the region's subcultures than the latter, in which the seams between them have become nearly invisible. The new city Muhammad Quli built and its monuments appear, I would suggest, to have moved towards the creation of a unified cultural identity for the local elite within which each of the Golconda court's sub-groups could find a meaningful place.

Muhammad Quli's use of Dakani makes sense in this light as well. Dakani is one of many regional vernaculars that emerged in India in the early centuries of the second millennium C.E. through the patronage of small states as well as through devotional literature sponsored by localized religious movements.[5] An early form of what would later come to be called Urdu, Dakani – which is written in the Arabic script – combines words, syntax and ideas from Persian and Arabic as well as from Sanskrit, Telugu and Old Punjabi.[6] Dakani was originally spoken by

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[4] Bilgrami, *Landmarks of the Deccan*, no. 5-6; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 313-15.

[5] The overarching phenomenon in which Sanskrit gave way to vernaculars is explored in Sheldon Pollock, "India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500," *Daedalus* 127, no. 3 (1998).

[6] There is no consensus as to how to spell the name of this language. It can be referred to also as Dakhni or Deccani. Discussions of Dakani can be found in: D. J. Matthews, "Eighty Years of Dakani Scholarship," *The Annal of Urdu Studies* 8 (1993); Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, "A Long History of Urdu Literary Culture, Part 1: Naming and Placing a Literary Culture," in *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, ed. Sheldon I. Pollock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Sumit Guha, "Transitions and Translations: Regional Power and Vernacular Identity in the Dakhan, 1500-1800," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 2 (2004); Richard Eaton, "The Rise of Written Vernaculars in the Deccan, 1400-1650," in *After Timur Came* (Department of Languages and Cultures of South Asia, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2007).

Deccanis (elite and non-elite, Hindu and Muslim) but by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

it had begun to receive substantial patronage by the urban elite and rulers of Bijapur and

Golconda as well as in centers of Sufi practice.[7] Like many other vernaculars that formed at this

time, the emergence of Dakani echoed the emergence of a new regional culture which, as

Sheldon Pollock has written, transformed "heterogeneous practice into homogenized culture."[8]

Although Muhammad Quli (and the Qutb Shahi rulers after him) continued to employ

Persian, Arabic and Telugu for administrative purposes (e.g. Arabic legends on coins and

bilingual royal edicts in Persian and Telugu), he chose to compose his poetry in Dakani,

becoming one of the earliest major poets of the language. His choice is telling. To quote

Pollock once again, the decision to employ a vernacular is a "declaration of affiliation" with

regional culture, in this case that of the Deccan, and a reflection of an author's attempt "to

reshape the boundaries of their cultural universe…in full awareness of the significance of their

decision."[9]

Muhammad Quli's commitment to Dakani as a locally-constructed means of self

expression seems, therefore, very much in keeping with the regionally-rooted nature of his new

capital's plan and major monuments. It also seems to echo the political climate of the period

(described in Chapter 2), as exemplified by Muhammad Quli's passing up of an opportunity to

marry his daughter to one of the sons of Shah 'Abbas in order to wed her to his preferred

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[7] During the Bahmani period Dakani appears to have been identified as the language of Deccani Muslims as opposed to Westerners, but this division had apparently become less political in Qutb Shahi times. No doubt, Persian immigrants continued to compose literature in Persian, but there is no indication that Muhammad Quli's adoption of Dakani was a signal of his preference for the Deccani rather than Westerner political faction. Some poets mixed Dakani and Persian in their compositions, and others – even Muhammad Quli himself – composed poems in Dakani as well as in Persian. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 330-31.

[8] Pollock, "India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500," 42.

[9] ———, "Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History," 592.

successor. If, as Sherwani has argued, he did so in order to strengthen the line of succession, then it seems as though in politics as well as in the realm of art, the local had come to the fore.

It is within the context of these cultural trends that the manuscripts dealt with in this section can be most effectively seen. In this light it becomes apparent that in the *Diwan* and the album, forms derived from the Persianate and Ottoman manuscript traditions neither served to signify the secular achievements of Persian civilization (and by inference the skills of Persian immigrants to Golconda), nor functioned as a platform upon which artists and patrons could explore Persian literature and the production of Persianate illustrated manuscripts. Rather, these forms and formats supplied a literary, physical and visual context within which Muhammad Quli's literary contributions to the construction of a locally-based elite culture could be both situated and legitimized.

The *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah[10]

Muhammad Quli is the first Qutb Shahi ruler whom we know to have definitely supported a royal workshop. According to Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, this workshop may have been located in a palace called the *Khuda Dad Mahal* which was the site of all manner of book production activities: paper-making, manuscript illumination, gilding and painting.[11] The

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[10] Although several scholars have referred to this manuscript as a *kulliyat*, I use the term *diwan* here for several reasons. (The term *kulliyat* refers to a complete poetic compilation, whereas *diwan* merely refers to a collection of poems.) First, the Salar Jang Museum manuscript itself employs the term *diwan* on its opening page. This usage may be an indication that it was not intended to contain and indeed did not contain all of Muhammad Quli's Dakani poems. Second, the term *diwan* is specifically used by Dr. Zore to refer to this particular manuscript in his edition of the complete poems, in the making of which he examined all known volumes of Muhammad Quli's Dakani oeuvre and was in a position to know well which volumes were complete collections and which were partial. Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah* (Hyderabad: Maktabah-i Ibrahimiah Mashin Press, 1940), 335.

[11] Presumably Zore was basing this conclusion on hints in Muhammad Quli's poems. Unfortunately he does not cite any particular poem. Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah,* 120. According to Sherwani, this palace was constructed in 1610. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 308.

manuscripts themselves offer the best evidence of the human makeup of this workshop, suggesting that it was multicultural and multilingual; without doubt the workshop included both locals and immigrants, including scribes adept at Persian, Arabic and Dakani. It is unfortunate that only two manuscripts from what was surely a prolific workshop seem to have survived.

One of these is a sumptuous illustrated copy of the *diwan* (poetic collection) of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, now in the Salar Jang Museum in Hyderabad.[12] In addition to being the earliest known illustrated Urdu *Diwan*, it is also the earliest known royal Qutb Shahi illustrated manuscript, having apparently been made for the author himself. In its formal characteristics it is a regal manuscript indeed: its 138 folios intersperse expertly inscribed poems with eight vibrant paintings and a series of creatively illuminated margins and headings.

In publications since 1963 several art historians have focused on the paintings, noting their distinctive style and deliberating on how they might figure into the development of painting in Golconda.[13] During the same period, literary scholars have refined their views of the text and produced new translations and analyses of it.[14] Combined, the work of these two groups of scholars comprises a firm foundation for the discussion below, which considers not only the style of the paintings or the form and meaning of the text but also how the manuscript works as a whole.

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[12] Salar Jang Museum, Urdu Ms. 153. Nasiruddin Hashimi, *Kutub Khanah-yi Navvab Salar-i Jang Marhum ki Urdu Qalmi Kitabon ki Vazahati Fihrist* (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Estate Committee, 1957), no. 375; Karl J. Khandalavala and Rahmat Ali Khan, *Gulshan-e-Musawwari: Seven Illustrated Manuscripts from the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad* (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Museum, 1986), 40-47.

[13] These publications will be reviewed in detail below.

[14] Two recent and useful publications include Carla Petievich, *When Men Speak as Women: Vocal Masquerade in Indo-Muslim Poetry* (Oxford University Press, 2007); Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*.

The Manuscript: Basic Features

Of the eight manuscripts of Muhammad Quli's *diwan* that survive today, only the Salar Jang copy is illuminated and enhanced with paintings.[15] Currently encased in a modern binding, the manuscript is relatively small, with folios only 260 x 147 mm. This binding in fact holds two texts, both in Dakani: the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli (r. 1580-1612) and that of a later Qutb Shahi ruler, Abdullah Qutb Shah (r. 1626-72).[16] The pages of these poetry collections are somewhat out of order, having been rebound several times. Despite these inconsistencies, it is easy to differentiate the two *Diwans*.[17]

Within the pages of Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* one finds eight paintings, a double-page illuminated frontispiece, a *sarlawh* (double-page illuminated frame) around the opening of the text and three less elaborate *'unwans* (headings) at later points.[18] Five of the eight paintings also have sumptuously decorated margins in a variety of styles. Despite the care lavished on the manuscript by its scribe, illuminator, and artists, it was never completely finished. Early pages have gold rules and gold speckled paper, but by folio six the rules are only partly complete, and by folio eight there are no rules at all. Nevertheless, the total effect is one of extreme luxury,

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[15] The locations of the other seven manuscripts are: 1) the manuscript collection of the *nawabs* of Lucknow, known as the *Shahan-i Awadh ke Kutub Khane*, now in Calcutta; 2) the manuscript library of Tipu Sultan, Mysore (now dispersed); 3) Asiatic Society of Bengal; 4) Asafiyah Library, Hyderabad; 5 & 6) Salar Jang Museum manuscript library, Hyderabad (one basically complete, one just a few pages); 7) a copy of the manuscript described in this chapter, in the possession of one Mr. Hyder Hussain, Hyderabad. Further details about these manuscripts can be found in Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*, 330-52.

[16] That 'Abdullah Qutb Shah also chose to compose in Dakani is quite interesting, particularly in light of the fact that Muhammad Qutb Shah – who ruled in between Muhammad Quli and 'Abdullah – composed a Persian *diwan* (Salar Jang Museum, Ms. A/Nm 639). Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 531.

[17] 'Abdullah Qutb Shah's poetry begins on folio 105r and continues to the end of the manuscript, folio 138v. Unfortunately there is currently no *'unwan* to mark the beginning of the text. It is possible that this portion of manuscript was created specifically for inclusion with the earlier sultan's poetry. The paper, calligraphic hand, and proportions and size of the text box within which 'Abdullah's poems are written are, however, somewhat at variance with those of Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* and are clearly the product of a different time.

[18] These *'unwans* appear on folios marked according to the Salar Jang Museum notation system as 101, 102 and 103.

making this manuscript one truly fit for a sultan.

Various inscriptions and dedications reinforce the impression that this is a royal manuscript. First, the title of the *Diwan* appears on folio 3v, inscribed in white on a blue medallion (fig. 5.2). The title can be translated as: '*Diwan* of the Solomonic royal highness, may God perpetuate his reign.'[19] The royal epithets in this title suggest that the manuscript was copied during the reign of Muhammad Quli, as it is unlikely that the author would have been referred to in this manner during the reign of a successor.[20]

Second, an inscription on a flyleaf at the beginning of the manuscript records the identity of the calligrapher. According to this admittedly damaged Urdu inscription, the fourteen lines of *naskh* (a calligraphic script commonly used for Arabic and Persian text) that appear on each text page of the *Diwan* were inscribed by Zain ud-Din 'Ali, a prominent Qutb Shahi scribe who also produced many of the calligraphic specimens in the Chester Beatty Library album.[21] The inscription reads: '…Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah…with four '*unwans* and *sarlawhs* and paintings, in the writing of Moulana Zain ud-Din 'Ali Khushnawis…in the Dakani language.'[22]

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[19] Thanks to Yael Rice for assistance with this translation.

ديوان اعليحضرت سليمانى خلد الله ملكه

[20] This argument is put forth by Hashimi, *Kutub Khanah-yi Navvab Salar-i Jang Marhum ki Urdu Qalmi Kitabon ki Vazahati Fihrist*, 376.

[21] Chester Beatty Library, Per 225. More information on Zain ud-Din 'Ali, some of it speculative, can be found in James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 244-45.

[22] A reproduction of this inscription can be found in Satya Prakash, "The *Kulliyat-i-Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*: An Outstanding Piece of Deccani Art and Literature," *SJM Research Journal* VI & VII (1974-5): fig. 18. It is erroneously recorded as including the *nisba* "Shirazi" in James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 245. The actual text of the inscription is transcribed below:

وى محمد قلى قطبشاه
ثانى بچهار لوح و سرلوح...
با تصوير بخط مولانا زين الدين على خوش
نويس حضور
بزبان دكنى

Unfortunately, we do not know when this inscription was added to the manuscript or by whom.[23] Zain ud-Din 'Ali's dated calligraphic work in the Chester Beatty album bears a close resemblance to the calligraphy in this manuscript, however, and since it is very likely that the *Diwan* and the album were produced for the same patron, this inscription can nevertheless be considered fairly reliable.

The third inscription, on folio 3v, contains the name of an individual who was likely the manuscript's illuminator but perhaps also its illustrator. It can be translated as:

> This work, o' king, you entrusted to me. May it exalt you.
> May these ten ornamented tablets be worthy of your poetry.
> This is our prayer, that in the two worlds
> Allah, Muhammad and 'Ali shall be your friends.
> The least of your slaves, the humblest of the humble, Qasem 'Ali al-Mudhahhib.[24]

These lines are written in minuscule white *nasta'liq* on a blue border that runs around the bottom half of the text block. The *laqab* (descriptor) al-Mudhahhib' suggests that its author was an illuminator, a notion supported by the fact that this is the conventional place for illuminators to sign their work.[25]

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[23] Since Dakani at first was called Hindi or Hindvi and began to be referred to as Dakani in the seventeenth century, we can at least conclude that the inscription was added after the sixteenth century. Eaton, "The Rise of Written Vernaculars in the Deccan, 1400-1650," 6.

[24] My thanks to Dr. Ghazzal Dabiri of Columbia University for her assistance with this translation. A complete transcription is below.

<div dir="rtl">

بکاتبه شاها سپرد بمن تو بردار تو باد

زینت ده لوح قلم اشعار تو باد

اینست دعای ما که در هر دو جهان

الله محمد و علی یار تو باد

کمترین بندگان محرومترین محرومان قاسم علی المذهب

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[25] A slightly different conclusion is reached by Sadiq Naqvi, who refers to Qasem 'Ali as the illustrator. This is indeed a possibility, as the paintings often seem to verge on illuminations, but it cannot be confirmed. Naqvi, *The Iranian Afaquies Contribution to the Qutb Shahi and Adil Shahi Kingdoms*, 213.

Currently there is no colophon at the end of Muhammad Quli's text, nor are there relevant seals or dated inscriptions.[26] The inscriptional evidence reviewed above suggests, however, that this was Muhammad Quli's own copy of his *Diwan,* produced during his rule. Since he was only fifteen at the time of his accession, it is not likely that he would have written his *diwan* and ordered such a manuscript made before about 1590. Considering that Zain ud-Din 'Ali is known to have been working for Muhammad Quli between 1591 and 1605 (based on signed and dated pages of calligraphy in the Chester Beatty album), it is most likely that the manuscript was produced between 1590 and 1605.[27]

Scholarship on the Salar Jang Museum *Diwan*

The Salar Jang *Diwan* was first brought to the attention of art historians in 1963 in a seminal issue of *Marg* entitled *Deccani Kalams.*[28] From this very first publication, the focus of discussion was identifying the stylistic "roots" of the illustrations and determining the extent of their originality" or "dependence." In his contribution to the issue, Stuart Cary Welch wrote that although the *Diwan*'s paintings were "indebted" to painting styles from Iran (specifically Bakharz, Khurasan[29]), they were nevertheless impressively original and sumptuous.[30] Ten years later Robert Skelton's discussion of the *Diwan* in 1973 found only "some traces" of original

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[26] Since the manuscript has been rebound, possibly several times, it is quite likely that a page with a colophon was once included but is now lost.

[27] Other scholars have come to roughly the same conclusions about the dating of the *Diwan*. Mittal offered ca. 1590, Khandalavala circa 1595, Skelton 1600, and Hashimi circa 1610.

[28] Mulk Raj Anand, ed. *Deccani Kalams*, vol. XVI, Marg (1963), 10.

[29] Welch did not provide a reference to any particular manuscripts here, but it is likely that he was thinking of a group of manuscripts in the Bibliotheque Nationale de France produced in Bakharz between 1550 and 1570. Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Safavis de 1502 à 1587*, nos. 190, 191, 194.

[30] Welch, Ettinghausen, and Mittal, "Portfolio," 10. Welch mistakenly records that the *Diwan* contains seven paintings when in fact it contains eight.

stylistic elements and put greater emphasis on Khurasani and Bukharan features in the

manuscript's paintings.[31] Future scholars would contribute to this discussion about the degree of

the paintings' stylistic dependence or originality.

The difficulties attendant upon the use of this binary notion of artistic production become

more obvious in two publications in the 1980s. In 1983, Mark Zebrowski posited that an Indian

artist executed the first six of the eight paintings in a strongly "Indian" style, and that the

Persianate nature of the paintings was due to a superficial attempt by the artist to conceal his

Indian training "beneath an acquired Persianate façade."[32] In what almost amounts to a mirror

image of Zebrowksi's argument, Karl Khandalavala argued three years later that the paintings in

the *Diwan* were made by a Persian artist who had immigrated to the Deccan and adopted the

local style of his adoptive home.[33]

These two authors' difference of opinion clearly stems from the fact that the

dependence/originality binary implies that the tradition which is "original" – the one upon which

artists from other regions draw – is the superior one. The tradition which is dependent is at best

a passive receiver and at worst, a slavish imitator. Artists whose work is deeply engaged with

earlier or foreign traditions are therefore fundamentally weak. Using this logic, Zebrowski and

Khandalavala's disagreement about who is "dependent" on whom (does an Indian artist need to

imitate Persian painting, or does a Persian artist seek to master Indian styles?) conceals a broader

debate about which tradition is superior. It is notable that of the four scholars whose work has

been reviewed here, only the scholar from India suggested that the Indian tradition is the one

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[31] In his estimation, these traces of originality include "denseness of modeling" and the occasional Indian costume detail. Skelton, "Early Golconda Painting," 189.

[32] He referred to this artist as the "Hyderabad painter." Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 160, 168.

[33] Khandalavala and Ali Khan, *Gulshan-e-Musawwari*, 40-47.

worthy of imitation.

When J.P. Losty discussed the *Diwan* in 1995, although he too engaged in the effort to pinpoint the exact ratio of originality and dependence, he also opened up the discussion to other issues.[34] He asked, for example, why artists in Golconda chose to employ Persianate forms in some of their work but not in others. Noting the extensive use of Persianate forms and compositions in Muhammad Quli's *Diwan*, he argued that: "[s]ince Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah was essaying in Urdu all the different formats of classical Persian poetry, together with the appropriate imagery drawn from that literature, it would follow that as old-fashioned and Iranian a style as possible was judged suitable for the illustrations."[35] Losty's insight – that the choices made by the artists were not merely due to "dependence" but rather had to do with the nature of the text their paintings were to accompany – is a fascinating one and the following discussion will attempt to explore its implications. The first step is to look more closely at the text itself.

The Text[36]

Both the language and the subject matter of Muhammad Quli's Dakani poetry suggest an author deeply embedded in Deccani regional culture. The local orientation of Muhammad Quli's poetry has been discussed by many scholars, who have pointed out that his poems vividly

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[34] The artist who created the *Diwan's* paintings, in Losty's estimation, was an Indian who was only superficially familiar with paintings from Persia. Where he did use Persianate (specifically Tabrizi) compositions or motifs he did so awkwardly, as he was more accustomed to the artistic world of the "extravagant" Hindu temples of sixteenth century south India. Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 302-3. The latter notion was first expressed by Zebrowski in Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 155. It was again included in Michell and Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, 193.

[35] Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 309.

[36] There are several published editions of his poems. The two primary ones are Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*; Sayyidah Ja'far, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah* (New Delhi: Taraqqi Urdu Board, 1985).

describe certain aspects of Qutb Shahi court culture.[37]   Many poems refer, for example, to

festivals that were celebrated in Golconda such as *Noruz* (Persian new year), *Shab-i Barat* (a

Muslim festival celebrated in India with unique traditions) and *Basant* (the Indian celebration of

spring). Others use metaphors inspired by Sanskrit poetry to lovingly describe women of great

beauty and the palaces in which they dallied with the sultan.[38]

In addition to subjects that reflect local society, Indic literary devices play a vital role in

Muhammad Quli's poetry. Carla Petievich has argued, for example, that the Indic tradition of

writing poetry from the point of view of a female longing for her lover (the *virahini*) – a

perspective frequently assumed by Muhammad Quli in his poems – was the "quintessential, and

distinctive, Indic element" in Dakani literature, as it was in other early forms of Urdu.[39]

Petievich locates the origins of this practice of writing in the feminine voice in an ancient Indic

literary tradition which found expression in North Indian Krishna *bhakti* poetry before it

appeared in Urdu in the sixteenth century. An example of Muhammad Quli's use of the *virahini*

is as follows:

> Sweetheart, don't jerk me around—
> I'm already your slave!
> I've embarked upon the FiveFold Path with ease.
>
> Day broke as I passed the time with you
> on Love's bed:
> my eyes are drunk on just your memory
>
> O you of consummate charm,
> see how enslaved this poor girl is to you!

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[37] For more on this, see Haroon Khan Sherwani, *Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah, Founder of Haidarabad* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1967), 49-51; Ali Jawad Zaidi, *A History of Urdu Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1993), 43; Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 38-43; Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature*, 35-36.

[38] Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 41-2.

[39] Petievich, *When Men Speak as Women: Vocal Masquerade in Indo-Muslim Poetry,* 8.

> It was clear you'd robbed her of her senses:
> on account of you the universe
> ceased to exist for her.
>
> By the grace of the Prophet
> you are Qutb's sweetheart:
> go ahead—adorn yourself
> in deceit and trickery![40]

Not only is Muhammad Quli locating himself within an Indic tradition by writing from the point of view of a female intoxicated and enslaved by love, but he also mentions the "FiveFold Path" which Petievich suggests may be a reference to an Ayurvedic practice of self-purification.

And yet, while Muhammad Quli's compositions were profoundly shaped by regional culture, his *diwan* nevertheless employed the framework of Persian literature. In Persian tradition, established as early as the eleventh century, a *diwan* is organized first according to the lyric form and then according to the *radif* or the morpheme repeated at the end of each verse. Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* follows these rules precisely. It contains the full range of poetic forms, organized according to the principles mentioned above. Muhammad Quli even reminds us that his Dakani poetry must be understood in relation to Persian literary tradition by describing himself in one poem as "the very axis of the school to which Khaqani and Nizami belonged."[41]

Petievich characterizes the relation of Dakani poetry to Persian by saying that Dakani *ghazals* (poems composed of rhyming couplets) emulate "core conventions of Perso-Arabic poetry" while simultaneously introducing "innovations [that] are both exuberant and

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[40] Ibid., 162-63.

[41] The word "axis" is a pun on Muhammad Quli's own name, since Qutb literally means axis. Sherwani, *Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah, Founder of Haidarabad*, 48.

expansive."[42] Another scholar makes the same point more poetically, claiming that the spirit of

the *nayika* (a courtly lover in Indic tradition) pervades Muhammad Quli's poems "even as the

poet concedes his debt to the wine-and-love lyrics of Hafiz."[43] I suspect that what we see here is

something akin to what Allison Busch has noticed in the development of Braj (a Hindi dialect)

poetry in the seventeenth century, which was "tapping into Sanskrit textual authority and

rescripting it to shore up the claims of vernacular writing."[44] Braj poets like Kesavdas, Busch

argues, asserted foundational connections with Sanskrit in order to lend legitimacy to the

innovative poetry they were creating in this vernacular language. Muhammad Quli's Dakani

poetry similarly uses the authority of Persian poetics to support its exuberant literary innovations

in Dakani.

Having established the basic nature of the text and explored the ways that it employs

Persian literary material and the reasons why it does so, we can now turn to the paintings.

The Paintings

In many ways, the paintings in Muhammad Quli's copy of his *Diwan* seem to follow the

conventions of Persian *diwans* quite literally. These visual conventions are not as well

understood, however, as are the literary conventions of a Persian *diwan*. Indeed, the history of

the illustrated Persian *diwan* has yet to be written.[45] One might locate the origins of this type of

illustrated manuscript in the early fifteenth century, when the Jalayirids (rulers of a region

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[42] Petievich, *When Men Speak as Women: Vocal Masquerade in Indo-Muslim Poetry,* 133.

[43] Husain, *Scent in the Islamic Garden: A Study of Deccani Urdu Literary Sources*, 41.

[44] Busch, "The Anxiety of Innovation: The Practice of Literary Science in the Hindi/*Riti* Tradition," 48.

[45] There is as yet no art historical text synthesizing material from the full range of illustrated Persian *diwan*s. This is, at least in part, because illustrated *diwan*s are less abundant than illustrated manuscripts of narrative texts. One of the few serious publications to explore paintings that appear in manuscripts of non-narrative *ghazals* is Priscilla Soucek, "Interpreting the *ghazals* of Hafiz," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 43 (2003).

comprised of modern-day Iraq and western Iran) sponsored several luxury copies of the *diwan* of Sultan Ahmad (r. 1382-1410).[46] These manuscripts do not contain paintings but rather marginal drawings of landscapes, hunting scenes, and vignettes of nomadic life. According to Thomas Lentz and Glenn Lowry, their subject matter derives not from the poems that they accompany but from contemporary life.[47]

The illustrated *diwan* continued to develop under the Timurids and later the Safavids. A fairly typical sixteenth-century example is a *Diwan* of Hafiz in the Rylands Library.[48] This manuscript contains four small but high quality paintings in a Shirazi style of about 1580. Its relatively sparse pictorial program is characteristic of illustrated *diwans*. The subjects of the paintings are as follows: a hunting party; dervishes dancing; a prince playing polo; a battle scene. Perhaps because the texts of most *diwans* do not provide continuous narratives, unique episodes of which could be illustrated sequentially, artists often depicted these kinds of generic scenes or episodes from well known stories.[49] The images are placed throughout the manuscript, providing the viewer occasional relief from the rigors of reading poetry.

These same conventions are also found in illustrated *diwans* in languages other than

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[46] One copy dated 1406 is in the Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi, Istanbul (2046) and another dated to circa 1405 is now in the Freer Gallery of Art (32.30-37). The former manuscript is discussed in Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Washington D.C. and Los Angeles: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), cat. no. 15. For the Freer manuscript, see Esin Atil, *The Brush of the Masters, Drawings from Iran and India* (Washington: Freer Gallery of Art Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 14-17, nos. 1-7.

[47] Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, 56-58. A rather different interpretation of these marginal drawings as depictions of the seven stages of the Sufi mystical journey can be found in Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, "A Sufi Theme in Persian Painting: The *Divan* of Sultan Ahmad Gala'ir in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.," *Kunst des Orients* 11 (1976-77): 65.

[48] Rylands Pers 945. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library: A Descriptive Catalogue*, 652-55.

[49] There are, however, exceptions to this rule. Soucek points out in regard to Hafiz that "some of the most widely used compositions in *diwans* of Hafiz appear to have been inspired by specific lines, or even a few words, from a particular *ghazal*." Soucek, "Interpreting the *ghazals* of Hafiz," 161.

Persian. For example, the *Diwan* of Khata'i now in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery was composed not in Persian but in Turcoman Turkish. This royal Safavid manuscript, dated circa 1520, is similar to Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* in that it too contains the poems of the ruler under whose auspices it was produced: Shah Isma'il Safavi, whose pen name was Khata'i.[50] Also like Muhammad Quli's text, although the poems are not in Persian they still employ conventions and genres of Persian poetry. Thus, Shah Isma'il's poems include the full range of poetic forms. Unfortunately, only three paintings survive from this *Diwan*. Wheeler Thackston has shown that while these paintings could easily be mistaken for generic scenes, they are in fact specifically related to the poems that they accompany.[51]

When we turn from this brief look at illustrated *diwans* in Persian and other languages to Muhammad Quli's *Diwan*, we quickly see that it follows many of the conventions of illustrated *diwans*. It opens with several elaborately illuminated pages, followed by text pages broken up by occasional ornamented headings and interlinear decoration. It has relatively few paintings which are dispersed throughout the text and which feature common subjects: a polo game, a scene from *Yusuf wa Zulaykha*, a king being entertained in his court, Solomon and Bilqis enthroned. Although there are occasional resonances, the paintings are not obviously connected to the text on each page.

One also finds continuity with Persian examples on the level of the composition and iconography of the individual paintings. This is exemplified by the first painting in Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* (on folio 5r) which depicts a polo match (fig. 5.3).[52] As in many paintings of polo

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[50] Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Ms S86.0060. Lowry and Beach, *An Annotated and Illustrated Checklist of the Vever Collection*, cat. no. 168.

[51] W. M. Thackston, "The Diwan of Khata'i: Pictures for the Poetry of Shah Isma'il I," *Asian Art* 1, no. 4 (1988).

[52] The poem on the verso of this page is *ghazal* number 10 in Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*.

matches from sixteenth-century Shirazi manuscripts of the *Shahnama*, the *Majalis al-ʿUshshaq* and Arifi's *Guy wa Chawgan*, among other texts, the painting depicts two polo teams in the midst of a match, accompanied by a band of musicians on the balcony of a *nawbat khana* or drum house (fig. 5.4).[53] One also finds two pairs of goal posts and a group of admiring onlookers. The polo players have been divided into a male and a female team, each with a crowned player at the centre. Polo matches between an all-female and an all-male team appear in several texts including the *Darabnama* and the *Khamsa* of Nizami.[54] This painting may be intended to allude to these one of these texts, or it may have been envisioned as a generic scene of the quintessential royal sport.[55]

Although the *diwan* painting does not diverge in any substantial manner from the compositional formula that emerged in sixteenth-century depictions of this subject, a few of its features do not appear in comparable Persian paintings. One is the palette, which relies heavily on the juxtaposition of bright blue and orange. In fact, every major figure in the painting is dressed in a combination of blue and orange. A second unique feature is the depiction of rocky protrusions on the horizon as pale violet mounds studded with bright orange and blue rocks (fig. 5.5). Features such as this one have usually been described in the literature on the manuscript as evidence that the manuscript presages the emergence of a distinctive and original "Golconda

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[53] For a comparable example, see a *Diwan* of Hafiz in the Rylands Library (Ryl Pers 945) which contains four paintings, one of which shows a young prince playing polo, accompanied by musicians. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library*, cat. no. 652-55.

[54] A painting of this subject can be found in the Mughal *Darabnama* produced around 1580 (British Library Or. 4615). See Bonnie C. Wade, *Imaging Sound: An Ethnomusicological Study of Music, Art, and Culture in Mughal India* (Chicago, 1998), p. 298, fig. 22:16. Another appears in a Mughal manuscript of the *Khamsa* of Nizami that can be dated to 1590-1600. For an image, see Sotheby's London, 14 April 2010, lot 83.

[55] Polo games are often depicted in illustrated manuscripts of the *Diwan* of Hafiz, as well as figuring in the poems themselves, where they serve as metaphors of sovereignty. The paintings appear in manuscripts made for royal patrons as well as ones made for the market. Soucek, "Interpreting the *ghazals* of Hafiz," 155.

style."[56] While I believe that this formulation is problematic because it assumes that

development towards a style of painting unique to Golconda is inevitable, it is no doubt true that

these features impart a distinct and coherent look to the manuscript.

The second painting in the *Diwan*, on folio 12r, also depicts a generic scene of courtly

life that is quite familiar from Persian manuscripts made in Iran (fig. 5.6). In fact, one can find

an analogue for virtually every element of folio 12r in paintings like one depicting Khusraw

listening to Barbad playing the lute in a *Khamsa* of Nizami produced for Shah Tahmasp – ruler

of Iran – in about 1540 (fig. 5.7).[57] In both paintings an enthroned ruler wearing a Safavid-style

baton turban sits within an *iwan* on the right side of the composition, in front of a courtyard with

a fountain.[58] On the left side of both is a palace topped by an open balcony under an ornamented

awning. A tree, suggestive of a garden behind the palace, peeks out from between or behind the

two buildings, which are connected by a stairway/railed path.[59]

Although they are extremely close in composition and subject matter, the intimate

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[56] Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 304; Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 160-61.

[57] Sheila R. Canby and British Museum., *The Golden Age of Persian Art, 1501-1722* (London: British Museum, 1999), fig. 36. There is a Mughal painting by Aqa Riza of virtually the same composition in the Gulistan Album. See A. K. Das, "Persian Masterworks and Their Transformation in Jahangir's Taswirkhana," in *Humayun's Garden Party: Princes of the House of Timur and Early Mughal Painting*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1994), 145, fig. 8.

[58] Such turbans were in vogue in Iran for the first half to three-quarters of the sixteenth century, but by 1600 they had been superseded by a new style, and no longer appeared frequently in painting. It is interesting to consider what this tells us about the models used by the artists in Golconda as they created their imagery. Sheila R. Canby, *The Golden Age of Persian Art*, 29. The anachronistic depiction of this headgear was noted by Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, 54.

[59] One difference between the *Diwan* painting and the Safavid one is the inclusion in the Golconda image of a figure reclining before the fountain. The inclusion of this figure is intriguing, as it obscures the meaning of the image somewhat. The identity of this reclining figure is not clear. It may be a second depiction of the same king who sits on the throne in the upper right quadrant of the page. Damage to the face of the enthroned figure makes it difficult to determine whether both figures have beards, which would help to clarify whether they are one individual or two. If they are both representations of a single king, it would seem that this picture employs a narrative structure described by Vidya Dehejia as "continuous narrative." This mode – which is frequently found in Rajput painting and rarely in Mughal or Persian painting – occurs when multiple moments from a story are told within a single pictorial frame. Vidya Dehejia, "The Treatment of Narrative in Jagat Singh's Ramayana: A Preliminary Study," *Artibus Asiae* 56, no. 3/4 (1996).

relationship between these two paintings is not obvious on first glance. This is due to the

dramatic suppression of depth in the Golconda painting, and its division into many separate

compartments.[60] This is accomplished in part by eliminating the horizon on the right side of the

page and including very few overlapping forms or diagonal lines. It is further flattened by the

use of a floral pattern over gold that forms the background *and the floor* of the scene on the right,

causing trees to meld into buildings and walls into carpets. Finally, a vertical white line divides

the painting into two unequal portions that do not easily read as contiguous space. The use of

gold and floral patterns, the segmentation of space through colored lines, and the flattening of the

overall image makes this one of the most likely paintings to have been executed by someone

trained as an illuminator.

In addition to this intriguing spatial compression and the use of the distinctive palette

described in reference to the first painting, there are a few other features that distinguish the

image of folio 12r from Persian examples like that from Tahmasp's *Khamsa*. For example, one

finds in these two paintings the appearance of an unusual technique: small pieces of marbled

paper have been pasted onto otherwise traditionally-painted pages.[61] These bits of marbled

paper are used to represent a variety of objects: for example, the inner robe of the figure resting

by the fountain in the bottom right (fig. 5.8) and a duck that sits on the fountain's other side.

Although marbled paper was used in the arts of the book all over the medieval Persianate world,

it seems to have been especially common in the Deccan, and this appliqué technique may be

unique to Golconda.[62]

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[60] A tendency of Golconda artists to divide paintings into compartments is noted in Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 303.

[61] Although Karl Khandalavala asserted that the technique of paper marbling was not used in this manuscript, recent examination suggests otherwise. Khandalavala and Ali Khan, *Gulshan-e-Musawwari*, 43.

The dramatically different manner of adapting standard Persian compositions for use in this manuscript that we see in these first two paintings is curious. There are two likely explanations. One possibility is that multiple artists with different backgrounds were working together on the manuscript. The second is that the same artist created the two paintings, but was experimenting with different approaches to the depiction of space. Consistencies in the manner of depicting figures suggest that the latter may be more likely, but it is difficult to be sure.

The next painting in the manuscript (on folio 24v) presents yet another aesthetic as well as a less familiar subject (fig. 5.9). Mark Zebrowski referred to it as "Lady Dozing in a Garden" while Karl Khandalavala suggested that it might represent a European mistress of Muhammad Quli.[63] In the lower two-thirds of the composition a bejeweled lady lies on a carpet within a low garden enclosure, surrounded by attendants who appear to be sleepy if not actually asleep. Across the top of the page runs a band of architectural forms suggestive of a nearby palace, through which breaks a fantastic blue-grey cloud. The red stone of the architecture and the treatment of the blanket covering the lady point to Mughal painting as a possible source of inspiration.

Mughal painting does in fact yield closely related images. A painting from a dispersed Mughal *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* of about 1635-40, for example, depicts Zulaykha slumbering, surrounded by sleepy handmaidens (fig. 5.10).[64] Their bodies mark out a circular space roughly

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[62] The only other instances of Indian paintings wherein traditional painting methods are combined with collage of which I am aware are pages from a widely dispersed group of paintings of the *Mahabharata* created in the seventeenth century around Mysore or Tirupati. One example from 1670 can be found in the San Diego Museum of Art (1990:1399), and another is reproduced in Michell, *Architecture and Art of Southern India: Vijayanagara and the Successor States, 1350-1750*, fig. 193.

[63] Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 160; Khandalavala and Ali Khan, *Gulshan-e-Musawwari*, 46.

[64] Sotheby's London, 16 October 1996, lot 82. This subject of a sleeping Zulaykha surrounded by attendants appears to have been popular with the Mughals. The Chester Beatty Library has a Mughal *Yusuf wa Zulaykha* which includes an illustration of "Zulaykha, dreaming of her ideal lover, sleeps before a pavilion fanned by a servant" and

analogous to the enclosure on folio 24v. The same composition is also found in a painting of

Nushaba recognizing Iskandar from the early fifteenth-century "Cartier" Khamsa (fig. 5.11).[65]

Here the garden enclosure, arrangement of figures, and foliage are almost identical to the

Diwan's. Yet another similar enclosure can be found in the *Khamsa* of Nizami in the Hermitage,

produced for the Timurids and later owned by the Qutb Shahis (fig. 5.12).[66] The one feature that

seems to be totally unique in the *Diwan* painting is the extraordinary cloud at its top which

billows forward as though a great gust of wind is about to sweep across the page. This motif

might perhaps be rooted in a conflation of Shirazi clouds with the wind blown red curtains often

seen in Mughal paintings and occasionally appearing in the *Sindbadnama* and *Anvar-i Suhayli*.[67]

This image is unique in the *Diwan* for the extent to which it juxtaposes motifs from the

Mughal and Persian traditions. It recalls paintings from the Rajput court of Mewar in which

artists combine features from different styles of painting. Molly Aitken has shown that in the

case of Mewar, many artists were conscious of the different styles available to them, and they

applied different modes of representation as appropriate for different subjects.[68] Such evidence

has not yet been unearthed in Golconda, but this painting hints at a similar awareness of style.

Stylistic juxtapositions like the ones we see here may be more meaningful than we realize.

The fourth and fifth paintings in the manuscript (folios 29v and 53v) are similar to the

first painting in terms of the ease with which an admirer of Persian manuscripts can recognize

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another of "the lovesick Zulaykha sleeps watched over by her nurse and an attendant." Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 606.

[65] Arthur Upham Pope, Phyllis Ackerman, and Theodore Besterman, *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), vol. IX, plate 855 and vol. V, page 1846.

[66] This painting shows Majnun dying on Leila's grave, however, and does not include the sleeping figures which lean against the wall in the "Cartier" and the Salar Jung manuscript paintings. See Adamova, *Persidskaia Zhivopis' I Risunok XV-XIX Vekov V Sobranii Ermitazha: Katalog Vystavki*, cat. 1, fig. 26.

[67] *Sindbadnama*, folio 45r; *Anvar-i Suhayli* folio 296v.

[68] Aitken, *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting*, 36 ff.

the subject matter and how closely they follow a pattern set in manuscripts made in Iran (fig. 5.13 – 5.14). Solomon appears on folio 29v, enthroned outside and surrounded by his courtly retinue of human beings, animals and demons. A host of small birds and a *simurgh* swirl about in the sky above. Bilqis, the queen of Sheba, is depicted on folio 53v in a palatial setting, being entertained by dancers and musicians while angels dive down towards her carrying emblems of rule. A brief reference to King Solomon in the poem adjacent to folio 29v aids but is not critical to identification of the subject of the painting since both it and 53v follow almost exactly the iconography and composition codified in sixteenth-century Shirazi manuscripts for the depiction of Solomon and his consort (fig. 5.15).[69] One significant difference is that 53v shows a prince rather than a queen, but close examination shows that the prince is a later addition, painted over the figure who originally occupied the center of this composition (fig. 5.16).[70]

Although the appearance of Safavid turbans in this and other paintings suggests that the artist or artists who worked on these images were aware of comparable Persian paintings made before 1550, there are other aspects of the paintings that indicate the artists' awareness of Shirazi painting from the latter half of the sixteenth century. Lale Uluç has shown, for example, that the placement of Solomon and Bilqis' thrones on the ground – rather than on the backs of demons, as we saw in the *Sindbadnama* – was common in Shiraz manuscripts made after 1565.[71] Uluç also points out that after this time Bilqis's throne takes on a particular character, which we see in the *Diwan* as well; its superstructure becomes a large pyramidal ornament with colored bands.[72] The combination of out-of-date headgear and up-to-date compositional elements hints at the

[69] Bağcı , "A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The *Divan* of Solomon."

[70] A crown of gold and purple is visible underneath the chipping paint of the turban.

[71] Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts*, 300.

[72] For a Shirazi example, see Ibid., fig. 229.

process of visual selection being performed by the artists of the Golconda manuscript.
Apparently, the artists were pulling their imagery from a range of manuscripts made at different
times.

One of the most curious and as-yet-unacknowledged aspects of these two paintings is
their placement in the manuscript. As was explained in Chapter 4, it was extremely common for
Persian manuscripts of the sixteenth century to place paintings of Solomon and Bilqis side by
side as a frontispiece, with Solomon on the right and Bilqis on the left.[73] The paintings would
typically be surrounded by identical illuminated margins. In this latter respect the *Diwan* does
not disappoint: both folios have typical Safavid-era Shirazi margins of blue and gold. The only
difference between them is that the margin around Bilqis contains tiny faces, now in very bad
condition but still visible.

In terms of placement, however, the paintings are quite unusual. They do not appear in
the front of the manuscript, nor are the two paintings adjacent to do one another. What is more,
they do not include one recto and one verso but rather are both versos. The re-contextualization
of these images alters their usual function as a pictorial introduction to the world of the
manuscript.[74] Separated from the image of Solomon, the painting of the Queen of Sheba was
probably seen as a stand-alone enthronement scene by a later viewer who felt it was more
appropriate for such a composition to represent a male rather than a female ruler, and thus chose
to re-paint the figure.

As with the first two paintings in the manuscript, the pictorial strategies that underlie the
paintings of Solomon, Bilqis and the lady sleeping in a garden differ considerably from one

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[73] Bağci , "A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The *Divan* of Solomon," 101-11.

[74] There are no signs that the paintings have been altered or repositioned.

another. When we look at all five of these paintings together, we find a wide range of approaches to the challenge of constructing an image: the polo match and Solomon-Bilqis enthronement scenes overlay standard Persianate compositions with unusual colours and painting techniques; the scene of court life flattens and compartmentalizes a generic scene; and the sleeping lady combines motifs associated with Mughal and Persianate painting. Again, this variety may reflect the membership of the workshop. Whether the images were done by one artist or several, however, it is notable that the finished manuscript contains a set of paintings that are diverse in their adaptation of Persianate pictorial material.

There are three more paintings in the manuscript. The painting on folio 87v is badly damaged and those elements still visible share qualities noted above in several other paintings (fig. 5.17).[75] The last two paintings – on folios 93r and 97v – are in a very different style than the previous six, much closer to sixteenth-century painting in Bukhara (fig. 5.18-5.19).[76] The painting on 93r appears to represent a generic court scene in which a lord and lady sit together on a throne while dancers and musicians entertain them. That on 97v is a more enigmatic subject. It depicts an enthroned man attended by angels and men, in front of whom sit a group of wise

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[75] Despite the damage it is possible to see that it depicts a group of male figures in a landscape dominated by a rocky outcropping and a grove of now almost completely lost trees, behind which rises a dense city. Fortunately the pieces of marbled paper out of which stones in the foreground and parts of the city walls in the background are made have survived. The preference for blue and orange in the clothing of the figures is in evidence as well. J.P. Losty noted the compositional resemblance of this painting to that of *Haftvad and the Worm* (ca. 1535, at one time in Shah Tahmasp's *Shahnama*), and also pointed out that a Mughal version of the Safavid painting appears in a Jahangiri album. The appearance of a Mughal version suggests that drawings of the Safavid image were in circulation in India during the period, some of which could easily have ended up in Golconda. Losty, "The Development of the Golconda Style," 303.

[76] Zebrowski suggested that the artist who worked on these two paintings – whose subjects cannot be definitively identified – was from Bukhara on the basis of style. One interesting feature of these paintings is the appearance on folio 93r of two figures holding tambourines made out of marbled paper. The marbled paper used here incorporates white and peach pigment rather than the darker colors that appeared in the appliquéd paper of the paintings discussed above, a difference that supports the notion that this painting was created during a second phase of production but with an intention to create the appearance of belonging. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 160.

men. It has been suggested that the painting may represent a *sama'* or mystical gathering.[77] As the proportions, palette and margins of these paintings are also different than the others in this manuscript, it is likely that these last two were added some time after the other components were assembled. For these reasons, these three paintings are not included in this analysis.

Reflections on the Salar Jang *Diwan*

As mentioned above, previous scholarly discussions of this manuscript have tended to focus on determining which schools of Persian painting could be seen as the "source" of the imagery and stylistic features in the *Diwan*'s paintings. The discussion in this dissertation has largely eschewed that kind of analysis in favor of a focus on the nature of and limitations upon artistic innovation in this manuscript.

As previous scholars have noted, the eight paintings in the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah include features that are familiar from Persian paintings of various regions. Some of the paintings are virtually copies of well-known paintings. Others are much more innovative, however, re-inventing or re-contextualizing selected Persian motifs or compositions. Some include technically innovative elements, while others insert unique iconography. This sort of picking and choosing among visual prototypes is well-attested in the study of medieval manuscripts from the Mediterranean,[78] and it has more recently been shown to have played a role in some Indian paintings as well.[79] In all of these cases it is clear that artists were faced with a considerable degree of choice and exercised creativity in the selections they made.

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[77] Khandalavala and Ali Khan, *Gulshan-e-Musawwari*, 45.

[78] See for example, Hugo Buchthal's discussion of the multiple sources brought together in the illustrations of a dispersed Dioscorides from thirteenth-century Baghdad. Hugo Buchthal, "Early Islamic Miniatures from Baghdad," in *Art of the Mediterranean World, A.D. 100 to 1400* (Washington, D.C.: Decatur House Press, 1983).

[79] Aitken, *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting*, ch. 2.

And yet, despite the diversity of motifs and styles, all of the paintings in the *Diwan* clearly convey their membership within the Persian cultural sphere. In other words, despite the many innovations and adaptations the artists have made to the Persian and Mughal paintings with which they were obviously familiar, the results of their work is a group of images that fall well within the framework of the illustrated Persian *diwan*.

Why is it that the paintings are tethered to Persianate tradition so much more tightly than the poems they accompany, which forge many new literary pathways? Wouldn't a text as seminal as Muhammad Quli's Dakani *Diwan* be best accompanied by a set of equally mold-breaking paintings? Here it is helpful to recall discussions of the emergence of vernacular languages in India during this period. Allison Busch has argued that vernacular languages like Dakani or Braj tend to face a paradoxical situation: new literary traditions often arise from a "Great Tradition" like that of Sanskrit or Persian, from which the new tradition simultaneously derives legitimacy and aims to depart.[80] Innovation, when legitimized by the assertion of belonging to a respected tradition, is sharply limited.

If Muhammad Quli's ground-breaking Dakani poetry had been accompanied by paintings that bore little resemblance to those found in most Persian *diwans*, the manuscript might no longer have been recognizable as an illustrated *diwan*. Creating a wholly new physical and visual context for the poems was not, it seems, a goal of the artist or artists who created the Salar Jung *Diwan*. Instead, their intention seems to have been to appropriate the format and pictorial/decorative features of illustrated Persian *diwans* to endow Muhammad Quli's Dakani compositions with all prestige of a collection of Persian poems by Hafiz or Khaqani.

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[80] Busch, "The Anxiety of Innovation: The Practice of Literary Science in the Hindi/*Riti* Tradition," 50.

Calligraphic Albums of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah

Within a few years of the production of the *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, an album of calligraphy was made for the same sultan. This album, no longer bound, constitutes one part of a larger group of folios held in the Chester Beatty Library as Persian Ms. 225 (Per 225).[81] Despite the fact that it was very likely produced in the same workshop and by some of the same individuals that produced the *Diwan*, it has not been included in any of the art historical surveys of early Golconda manuscripts. The primary reason is that its folios contain no paintings and therefore fall outside of traditional articulations of art history's purview. Recent work on albums in Persian and Indian contexts has, however, brought to light the many intersections and areas of overlap between albums and more conventional illustrated manuscripts. It is now clear that a study of early manuscript production in Golconda cannot exclude this important specimen.

The following discussion focuses on those pages in Per 225 that can be directly tied to Golconda. There are also three folios that do not have a clear link to the Qutb Shahi context, and these are excluded from the chapter's analysis (with one exception). All, however, are listed in Appendix III. The group of Golconda-related folios can be divided into two groups. First, there are a small number of relatively early folios (from the 1580s and 90s) containing Arabic and Persian texts and which share certain compositional principles. Second, there is a larger group of later folios (apparently produced as a group in 1605) in which Dakani has taken the place formerly occupied by Arabic and Persian, and the compositional principles of the earlier pages have been refined and standardized.

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[81] See Appendix III for a list of all folios, with details about their content. According to David James, the album was purchased in two batches in 1927 and 1930. James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 243. There is at least one additional page in existence, recorded in Sherwani, Yazdani, and Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724*, vol. 2, p. 421 and pl. 82a. This page is noted as being in the "Hyderabad Museum" and I have not yet located it.

The first group of folios is extremely interesting in that they greatly widen our view of royal manuscript production at the end of the sixteenth century. We learn from them about the continued use of Golconda as a workshop site even after the founding of Hyderabad, about the identity of some late sixteenth-century calligraphers, and about the types of texts and formats that were of interest in this workshop. The second group is quite different in that its folios clearly form part of what was once a larger calligraphic album that is modeled after Ottoman albums of Arabic calligraphy. In this album fragment we again find artists in the employ of the Qutb Shahi court appropriating a manuscript format generated elsewhere to set Muhammad Quli's Dakani poetry with a meaningful and visually compelling context.

CBL Per 225 – basic characteristics

Per 225 is comprised of fifteen large, stiff folios of approximately 390 by 270 millimeters.[82] Twelve of the fifteen can be directly linked to Golconda through firm evidence: ten of the twelve contain Dakani poems by Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah and the remaining two contain other kinds of Golconda-specific information. These twelve also share a number of formal qualities, the most unusual of which is their horizontal orientation. Finally, they have the same kind of borders, indicating that at some point in time they must have been treated as a group.

Beginning with these borders helps to clarify what we do and do not know about the history of these pages. The borders are in the style of Mughal album borders, though the plant

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[82] There is a possibility that the famous Chester Beatty *Yogini* (In. 11A.31), today believed by most scholars to have been produced in Bijapur around 1600, was bound together with the pages that comprise Per 225 at one time, which would bring the total number to sixteen. This possibility in presented in James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 248. The folio on which the painting of the yogini appears is of the same dimensions as the folios of Ms. 225, but its borders are extremely different. In addition, it is possible that more folios from this album are in the Polier collection, as Linda Leach suggests, but this has not been confirmed. Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 914.

forms that decorate them are larger in scale and not as carefully rendered as those one sees in the pages of the Minto Album, for example.[83] They are very difficult to date, but are probably from the late seventeenth or eighteenth century, significantly later than the period in which the calligraphic specimens they surround were produced.[84] As Mughal-style borders were created all across the Mughal empire, there is no particular reason to believe these were done in the Deccan.[85]

This is not intended to imply that the folios were gathered together for the first time in the late seventeenth or eighteenth century. On the contrary, I would suggest that their innermost portions were probably made within a short span of time around the turn of the seventeenth century and that most or all of them were kept together as a group from that time. To be more precise, they seem to have been made during a twenty-one year period between 1584 and 1605. One plausible scenario is that these (and perhaps more) folios came into the position of the Mughals in the 1680s when they defeated Golconda, and that their current borders were added at that time.[86]

The borders of the three folios (numbers 1, 4 and 5) that are now part of Per 225 but do not contain references to the Deccan, to Golconda, or to Muhammad Quli are the only vertically-oriented folios in Per 225. In light of the ease with which album pages can be added or removed,

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[83] See Elaine Wright, Susan Julia Stronge, and W. M. Thackston, *Muraqqa': Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin* (Alexandria, VA: Art Services International, 2008), 82-105.

[84] Great thanks are due to Elaine Wright for sharing her opinions about these borders, and also for pointing out that they are oriented vertically while the calligraphies are oriented horizontally, another indication that they are not contemporary.

[85] David James suggested specifically that the borders of one of these folios (4r) were made in the Deccan on the basis of their symmetrical organization, which he asserts is typical. James does not speculate as to the time or place of production of the other borders.

[86] Linda Leach makes this suggestion in Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 912.

it is difficult to argue with conviction that these three pages belonged with the other twelve in the time of Muhammad Quli.

Scholarship on the album

Per 225 was first published in the 1959 catalog of Persian manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library.[87] It is described there as an "album of calligraphic specimens" and its contents are briefly listed. No mention of Golconda or Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah is made, although the scholars noted that on some folios there are inscriptions saying they were made in Hyderabad. It is not clear that the authors of the catalog were aware that the album was made in India.

In 1987, David James produced the first and only thorough study of album. He discussed its contents in detail, established its Indian origins, and bestowed upon half of its pages an alluring title: the "Millennial Album."[88] Although it leaves a number of interesting points unexplored, this article is of great use, particularly in regard to establishing the content of the album's pages and identifying the calligraphers whose work is included. James' main argument – that the first half of Per 225 constitutes a single album, made in honor of the millennium, and the second half constitutes another album – is an intriguing one and will be explored below.

A few other scholars contributed to the discussion after James. In 1995, Linda Leach suggested that it may have originally been organized like many Mughal albums in which facing pages of calligraphy alternate with facing pages of paintings or drawings.[89] She did not provide

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[87] Arberry et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, vol. 3, p. 4.

[88] James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah." Although very useful, there are a number of errors in this publication. James erroneously states that Muhammad Quli's "*Kulliyat*" is in Persian, for example. Not all of these errors are corrected here, as the focus of this section is on understanding the format and meaning of the album. A future publication should, however, address each problematic point.

[89] Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings*, vol. 2, 912. Leach, like James, believed that the famous Chester Beatty Library *Yogini* may once have been part of Per 225, presumably because of its dimensions and its Deccani content.

evidence for this claim, however, merely stating that more pages of the album were to be found

"in the group of pictures partly from the Mughal imperial family which was compiled by

Antoine Polier," with the implication that these other pages led her to conclude that Per 225

originally included a substantial amount of pictorial material.[90] These pages have not, as yet,

been identified.[91] If they come to light in the future, they will alter our sense of this album

considerably, but for now we must consider what material is known and within it I see no sign

that the calligraphic folios once alternated with pictorial ones.

Since Leach's publication the album has only been referred to in passing, most notably

by Sheila Blair in *Islamic Calligraphy*.[92] Blair's discussion focuses on the second half of Per

225 and analyzes one page in detail, paying particular attention to the nature of the calligraphy

and its relation to calligraphic practices in Islamic societies in general. Her observations about

the relationship between the two primary calligraphers are particularly interesting, and will be

explored further below.

In addition to these sources, this section draws upon recent work on albums in India and

Iran. David Roxburgh's work on Persian albums has brought to light the sense in which all

albums tell us as much about their album's compilers as they do about the creator or creators of

each folio.[93] The albums that Roxburgh explores are collections of disparate material rather than

groups of work by one or two calligraphers, however, and as such they are fundamentally

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[90] Leach further states that "the Deccani folios were probably in north India before Polier's time; they may well have been part of the booty accruing from Deccani campaigns in the late seventeenth century." Ibid.

[91] Malini Roy, who has done significant work on the Polier albums, has suggested that two albums in the Museum for Islamic Art in Berlin (Inventory MIK I 4589 and I 4590) might contain relevant material.

[92] Sheila S. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 542-46.

[93] David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400-1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

different from those explored here. More recently, Elaine Wright has collaborated with a

number of scholars to study Mughal albums, focusing on the holdings of the Chester Beatty

Library.[94] The resulting volume offers a look at how this genre developed over the late sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries, further illuminating the ways in which albums – with their wide-

ranging contents – can function as a kind of portrait of the world in which they were made.

These relatively few sources constitute all of the literature that is of immediate relevance

to a study of Per 225. It is likely, however, that studies of albums will be increasingly

undertaken, as more art historians begin to explore these intriguing objects.

Before we can delve into the folios themselves, it is necessary to return briefly to James'

1987 article in which he suggests that Per 225 actually contains two albums, both made for

Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. In his view the first album is comprised of the first six folios and

the recto side of the seventh (1r to 7r), while the verso side of the seventh and the rest of the

folios are part of a second album (7v to 15v). The basis for this division into two groups is the

fact that there is considerable variety among the first half of the folios in terms of content,

language, format and date, while in the second half the folios mostly contain Dakani poems

inscribed in a single format by two Qutb Shahi calligraphers.

James' first album contains specimens of calligraphy dated as early 1554 and as late as

1591, by both contemporary Qutb Shahi scribes and Persian scribes from earlier generations. He

dubs this album the "Millennial Album" on the basis of his reading of folio 7r, which contains a

large panel inscribed by one Muhammad Riza. According to James, the poem on this page

"records the arrival of the Millennium in the form of a prayer marking the arrival of the eleventh

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[94] Wright, Julia Stronge, and Thackston, *Muraqqa': Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin*.

Muslim century."[95] The album, he suggests, was probably assembled to celebrate the arrival of the millennium, an event which was marked in Golconda in many ways, not least by the founding of Hyderabad.

James' second album contains pages with poems on Shi'ite themes, mostly in Dakani, by Muhammad Quli. James speculates that the album was created in 1605 on the basis of the one dated folio in the group (14v). As all of the specimens on these pages are written by two calligraphers – Muhammad Riza and Zain ud-Din 'Ali – in similar formats, it is not difficult to imagine that they do indeed belong together and were produced around 1605.

I would suggest that James' explanation of what he calls the second album is rather more convincing than that of the first or "millennial" album. While it is certainly plausible that an album of calligraphies and drawings would have been assembled to celebrate the millennium, the codicological transformations through which the album has gone have rendered its original contents and state difficult to determine with any certainty. One issue of concern is that although James claims that all but one of the folios can be directly connected to Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah,[96] my analysis would suggest that three of the six-and-a-half folios in the first album show no evidence of such a connection. As one of these folios also has dramatically different borders than the rest, it would seem that this page at least was surely a later addition.

In addition to this problem, there is considerable doubt as to James' interpretation of the poem on folio 7r. My own examination of the page's content has not identified a "prayer marking the arrival of the eleventh Muslim century" but rather invocations based up on sayings

[95] James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 247.

[96] Ibid.: 244. I would argue that in fact folios 1, 4 and 5 have no connection to Muhammad Quli.

of the prophet Muhammad and prayers for mercy and for aid in maintaining a safe and peaceful existence in the face of evil and difficulties in the world.[97]

Finally, it seems to me to be impossible to fully clarify the original context of the first six folios without careful study of these pages using advanced measuring devices and paper sampling. In lieu of such an examination, which the scope of this dissertation does not allow, the following discussion will instead focus on the artistic and literary content of those pages that can definitively be connected to the Qutb Shahi court. As explained above, this group includes twelve folios, all of which contain signed panels by calligraphers known to have worked in Golconda. For convenience, I will refer to these as the Qutb Shahi folios.

The Qutb Shahi Folios

Literary content

The Qutb Shahi folios contain calligraphic specimens in three languages: Dakani, Persian and Arabic. The three languages are not, however, evenly distributed throughout the folios; on the contrary, each one seems to have been put to different – though overlapping – purposes. The Dakani texts which dominate the Qutb Shahi folios are mainly poems about Shi'ite themes by Muhammad Quli. Arabic texts appear on a smaller number of folios and contain religious poems of unknown authorship and short religious texts such as *hadith* (traditions of the prophet Muhammad), sayings of 'Ali (the prophet's son-in-law, revered by Shi'ite Muslims) and blessings and praise of Muhammad. Persian appears the least often in these pages, and almost always in combination with Dakani or Arabic. It is used mainly in colophons and inscriptional notes, although Persian verses also appear on a few folios.

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[97] There is a reference to the number 1000 on the page, but this is within the context of a passage that offers "a thousand greetings" to Muhammad, his household and his companions. Thanks are due to Dr. Shakir Mustafa and Z.A. Shakeb for help in verifying the content of this page.

Unfortunately, no literary study of the Dakani poems in the Qutb Shahi folios has as yet been published, though some of these poems are included in Zore's edition of the Muhammad Quli's *Diwan*.[98] Their primary subjects are, however, quite clear: the poems concern Shi'ite holy occasions and periods. Some are celebrated by all Muslims in more or less the same manner – for example *Muharram* and *Ramadan* – while others are of unique significance to Indian Muslims.

Shab-i Barat – the fourteenth or fifteenth day of the month of *Sha'aban* – is one of the latter holy days and it takes particular pride of place in the Qutb Shahi folios, being the subject of five poems.[99] Although the middle of *Sha'aban* is observed in numerous countries, it is observed in the subcontinent in unique ways as a day for making offerings in the name of the dead, distributing food to the poor, eating sweets and enjoying fireworks.[100] Several scholars have noted the close relationship between the customs with which *Shab-i Barat* was celebrated in Golconda and the customs associated with the Hindu festival of *Diwali*. In Sherwani's words, the Muslims celebrants of *Shab-i Barat* had "taken a leaf out of the calendar of the Hindu festivals."[101]

The folios include several different types of Arabic texts. In general, they are considerably more formulaic than the Dakani verses. The *hadith* passages or sayings of 'Ali, for example, naturally do not contain the same kind of localization that we see in the Dakani poems.

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[98] James points out in his article that the poems on folios 9v, 10v, 11v and 13v appear, respectively, in Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*, 23, 38, 102, 294. The poems have also been translated by Z.A. Shakeb, though his translations have unfortunately not been published.

[99] About ten poems relating to this festival are found in Muhammad Quli's complete poems. Zore discusses them Zore, ed. *Kulliyat-i Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*, 180-90.

[100] Tassy Garcin de, *Muslim Festivals in India and Other Essays* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 76.

[101] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, 335.

There are, however, a few poems in Arabic, and a close study of these folios by an Arabic scholar is sorely needed. The other appearance of Arabic is in Muhammad Quli's titles, which are inscribed on folio 6 verso.

It is only on one side of one folio that Persian appears in isolation.[102] This is folio 2a, which contains two monumental lines of *nasta'liq* which read "Among the kings of all the world, my king is the lord of all and the crown upon their head." In other places where it appears, Persian texts annotate texts in other languages. On folio 7r, for example, a short Persian inscription offers the following instruction: "at the time of the change of the year, [this poem] should be read one hundred times."

Whichever language is used, and whatever the content, Muhammad Quli's name or the name of the dynasty of which he was a member tends to appear in some form. In some cases his name in included in the last line of a poem, a standard way of "signing" poetic texts in Persian. On such panels polychrome ink is often used to make his name stand out from the rest of the text. In other cases the dynastic name appears in the form of an appellation of the calligrapher Zain ud-Din 'Ali, who calls himself "Qutbshahi" (i.e. of the court of the Qutb Shahs). Finally, there are cases in which Muhammad Quli is glorified in a more oblique manner. The final line of the poem on folio 7v illustrates this well. It can be translated as: "God has given special merit to the name Muhammad / Among kings you shine like the chief of them." Whether Muhammad is here to be understood as the name of the Prophet Muhammad, or simply as Muhammad Quli's own appellation, is not made clear.

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[102] Folio 8v might be said to be in Persian *or* Arabic. It reads: غلام على ولى قطبشاه. "Qutb Shah, the slave of 'Ali, the friend of God."

Formal characteristics

The most striking characteristic of the Qutb Shahi folios is their horizontal orientation (fig. 5.20) which is in contrast to calligraphic album pages produced in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Mughal India and Safavid Iran, which tend to be oriented vertically (fig. 5.21). Surprisingly, one finds close parallels to the format of the Qutb Shahi folios not in albums from these expected places but rather in calligraphic albums containing Arabic text from Ottoman Turkey.[103]

The calligraphic album pages closest to the Qutb Shahi folios are Ottoman pages of Arabic calligraphy known by the term *kit'a* (modern Turkish plural: *kit'alar*): a single-sided page containing a horizontally-oriented panel of calligraphy (fig. 5.22, 5.24).[104] In making a *kit'a* a calligrapher juxtaposes large lines of certain scripts (mainly *thulth* but occasionally *muhaqqaq*) with smaller lines of others (especially *naskh*), leaving room for square or rectangular illuminated panels to each side known as *koltuk* (lit. armpit) in Turkish. These pages were typically bound in an accordion format.[105] A late seventeenth-century album in the Sabancı Collection exemplifies this tradition (fig. 5.22), though the format was in use as early as the fifteenth century.[106]

Calligraphic album pages with short poems made in Iran are known by the same name, though they tend to contain Persian rather than Arabic texts. (In the Persian context the term for these pages is often spelled *qit'a*. Both *kit'a* and *qit'a* come from the Arabic root that means to

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[103] As Sheila Blair has explained, Ottoman specimens of *Persian* verse were typically oriented vertically, while calligraphic specimens in Arabic verse or prose were horizontal. Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 499.

[104] M. Ugur Derman, *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakıp Sabancı Collection, Istanbul* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Distributed by H.N. Abrams, 1998), 26-28.

[105] An image of an intact accordion format album can be found in Ibid., fig. 16.

[106] Sabancı Collection, no. 391. See Ibid., cat. no 10.

cut, disjoin or separate. For simplicity, I will use *kit'a* for both.) Persian examples follow a

somewhat different set of formal principles from Ottoman *kit'alar*. In addition to usually being

oriented vertically, a Persian *kit'a* is inscribed with approximately six lines of text – most often

in *nasta'liq* – written diagonally. Triangular spaces above and below these lines of text are

usually filled with text: at the top, the scribe's name, and at the bottom, a short phrase (fig.

5.21).[107]

    Horizontally-oriented *kit'alar* containing Persian text from Iran can be found as well,

though not in as great numbers as vertical panels. One example, in the Chester Beatty Library, is

an album of specimens of *nasta'liq* by the great calligrapher Mir Ali.[108] Each rectangular panel

on the albums folios is divided into two portions, the lower of which contains lines written

horizontally.[109] Like Ottoman albums of *kit'alar*, the album is bound in accordion format.

    Kit'alar were also made in India. Mughal albums, for example, contain many vertically-

oriented specimens of *nasta'liq* in the Persian format (fig. 5.23). Much more rarely is the

Ottoman-style *kit'alar* found in India. Indeed, the only examples of which I am aware are those

in CBL Per 225, the loose pages from this group that are now dispersed (such as one in an

unknown Hyderabad collection, see footnote 81 in this chapter) and two related pages in the

Khalili Collection, attributable to Hyderabad.[110]

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[107] This distinction in the handling of *qit'a/kit'a* in the Persian and Ottoman contexts is noted in Mary McWilliams and David J. Roxburgh, *Traces of the Calligrapher: Islamic Calligraphy in Practice, c. 1600-1900* (Houston and New Haven: Museum of Fine Arts; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2007), n. 87.

[108] Chester Beatty Library Per 219. Elaine Wright, *Muraqqa': Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library*, no. 4.

[109] The lines of text in the upper portion of each panel are inscribed diagonally in much the same manner as is seen in most Persian *kit'alar*.

[110] Ibid., cat. no. 72 and 73. These pages are both dated 1590 and are signed by a calligrapher who calls himself 'Abdullah. Safwat suggests that both Khalili pages were originally part of Chester Beatty Ms. Persian 225, linking them to the pages by Haji 'Abdullah. (He mistakenly records that Per 225 is in the Salar Jang Museum.) It is

The Ottoman *kit'a* seems, therefore, to have provided the template for the Qutb Shahi folios. Not only do we see the Ottoman-style horizontal orientation and use of particular script combinations, but the arrangement of these lines of text also seems to allude to Ottoman *kit'alar*. To be more specific, the calligraphers settled upon an organization comprised of four registers: two of large horizontal calligraphy (*thulth* or *muhaqqaq*) and two of small calligraphy (*naskh*, *tawqi'* or *riqa'*), one written horizontally and one written diagonally.[111] As in Ottoman examples, the format is subjected to a certain degree of variation: this manner of arranging text on the panel is used on both sides of eight of the twelve folios, while another two folios have one side organized this way. The remaining pages are also oriented horizontally and juxtapose different scripts, but they vary in their format.[112]

The resemblance of the Qutb Shahi folios to Ottoman album pages of Arabic calligraphy has not been explored in prior scholarship on this album.[113] There is no ready explanation for it, as the names of the calligraphers do not suggest Ottoman origins and there is little other evidence to suggest that artistic production of this period had affinities with Ottoman art.[114] Still, it is

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doubtful, however, that these two pages were ever bound in with Per 225 because they are much smaller in size. Nevertheless, they could certainly have been made in Hyderabad.

[111] The closest Ottoman *kit'alar* get to this precise formulation is in panels like those of a 1664 album now in Istanbul (Sabancı collection, Sabancı University) containing work by an Ottoman master calligrapher named Darvish Ali (d. 1673). Some panels in this album have two large lines of *thulth* in between which are inserted several lines in *naskh*. Several more lines of *naskh* appear below. Derman, *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakıp Sabancı Collection, Istanbul*, Cat. No. 10.

[112] An unpublished calligraphic album in the collection of Jagdish Mittal which may also be a product of the Qutb Shahi court is also arranged in this horizontal fashion. It is dated 1013 and signed by Shams-ud-Din 'Ali al-Shirazi. The fifteen pages in this album are simpler, with less gold than is found in the Chester Beatty album. The text is inscribed only in black and red ink, and appears to be calligraphic exercises rather than legible text.

[113] David James notes that these folios are oriented horizontally, but says that in doing so these folios follow "the tradition of such calligraphy found in most parts of the Islamic world." James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 244.

[114] There are a few thin threads linking Golconda and the Ottomans artistically. For example, it was suggested by Mark Zebrowski that a *Shama wa Parwana* manuscript in the Salar Jang Museum (Nm. 615) may have been the

quite likely that the Qutb Shahi sultans had diplomatic relations with the Ottomans just as the

Bahmanis did and an ambassador from Golconda might well have received an album of *kit'alar*

as a gift to take back to his sultan or even returned with an artist in tow.[115] Trade might also

have enabled this sort of exchange; it is not unlikely that *kalamkaris* and other locally-produced

textiles, for example, were exported to Ottoman Turkey.[116]

The other important formal characteristic that unites these pages is their extensive use of

polychromy in both ink and paper. Colors of ink used include black, white, green, blue, gold,

yellow and red. In many cases these colors are used in combination, for example on folio 10r,

where both of the two lines of *thulth* are written in black, but the *naskh* is written in yellow,

white, green and red. In some cases the colors seem designed to highlight certain words or lines

of text, while in others the variety simply functions to provide visual interest.

The distinctive effect these colored pigments create is further heightened by the use of

colored papers. Although colored paper had been in use in Persian and Arabic manuscripts for

centuries, it is not often that one sees such bright and unusual colors.[117] The most striking

instance of this is the recurrence throughout the Qutb Shahi folios of paper in an intense shade of

salmon-pink (fig. 5.25). Paper this color is also used in a seventeenth-century manuscript

containing an anthology of Shi'ite prayers that appears to have been made in Bijapur, so it may

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product of a Golconda workshop and that its paintings include Ottoman features. The evidence, however, is not adequate for us to hazard an attribution of this manuscript to Golconda. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 157.

[115] Letters between the Bahmanis and Ottomans document the extended diplomatic relations between them. Rogers, "'the Gorgeous East': Trade and Tribute in the Islamic Empires." Haroon Khan Sherwani, P. M. Joshi, and M. A. Nayeem, *Studies in the Foreign Relations of India, from the Earliest Times to 1947: Prof. H. K. Sherwani Felicitation Volume* (Hyderabad: State Archives, Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1975), 185 n 1, 397-8.

[116] This was certainly true for Mughal India, where textile exports to the Ottoman empire was a big business in the seventeenth century. Stephen Frederic Dale, *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600-1750*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 44.

[117] Sheila S. Blair, "Color and Gold: The Decorated Papers Used in Manuscripts in Later Islamic Times," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000).

represent a regional preference or innovation.[118] One also finds reddish-brown paper heavily sprinkled with fine gold. These folios stand out within the album as particularly colorful, but even those pages that have plain paper as the main ground employ colored paper borders (fig. 5.20).

It is worth noting that colored paper also appeared in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and *Sindbadnama* (fig. 4.13, 4.25, etc.). In those manuscripts, the primary support was sometimes blue but pink and brown do not appear. Nevertheless, it is possible that the use of colored paper was a technique particularly favored by artists in Golconda over several decades. At this time a firm argument cannot be made, but future work on this topic may be enlightening.

Having reviewed the general characteristics of form and content in the Qutb Shahi folios, we can now look more closely at the two groups within this category: those that were produced in the late sixteenth century and those that were made in 1605.

The pre-1605 Folios

Two of the Qutb Shahi folios contain dates prior to 1605 (folios 3 and 6), and a third (folio 2) is likely to also have been made before 1605, although this cannot be confirmed. These three folios contain Arabic and some Persian texts inscribed on panels which are oriented horizontally, though mostly not in the four-register format described above. This section will describe the dated pages as well as those undated folios that have features of particular interest.[119]

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[118] Khalili Collection, Mss 179. See J. M. Rogers, *The Arts of Islam: Treasures from the Khalili Collection* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2010), 267.

[119] I do not include here an extended description of 2r or 6r, since these two offer little additional insight into the album. The former contains an undated and unsigned Persian couplet (folio 2r) and the latter contains Arabic aphorisms and poems by a calligrapher named Muhammad Shirazi about whom nothing is known (folio 6r). James speculates about Muhammad Shirazi's identity in James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 246.

The earliest date appears on the verso side of folio 3, which is largely occupied by a horizontally-oriented Arabic decoupage specimen signed by the scribe Murad Dhu'l Qadr (fig. 5.26). Next to the decoupage specimen, on a *separate* piece of paper, is an Arabic inscription written on a slant in black ink which reads: "Praise and peace be upon Muhammad and his descendents during the last ten days of Ramadan, of the year 992 AH, the abode of peace, Golconda." Although James has interpreted this page as entirely produced in Golconda, I would suggest that the inscription mentioning Golconda may refer to the assembly of the page and not necessarily to the creation of the decoupage specimen. This casts some doubt upon James' conviction that the panel provides firm evidence of Turkman artists working in Golconda.[120] However, even if it – as I suspect – this panel does not firmly demonstrate the presence of Turkman artists in Golconda, since the page contains a date of 992 A.H. or 1584 C.E. it is nevertheless useful in providing information about album production in Golconda before the establishment of Hyderabad. Perhaps we will eventually locate an entire album that was produced in the 1580s.

The other early dated page is the verso side of folio 6, which holds a panel by Zain ud-Din 'Ali (fig. 5.27). The panel contains Persian verses in white and Arabic prayers in black ink, as well as two lines of large gold *thulth* that record in Arabic Muhammad Quli's titles and the year 1591 C.E. – the millennium in the Hijra calendar. Like folio 3v, this page is unique in the album in terms of its format (the large line of script appears at the bottom rather than the top of the page), but its horizontal orientation unites it visually with the other pages. It also features the salmon pink paper which seems to be associated with this region, and which plays a major role in the 1605 folios.

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[120] Ibid.: 246-7.

Folio 2v and 3r contains calligraphic specimens created by a scribe named Haji Abdullah (fig. 5.28-5.29). We know nothing more about Haji Abdullah than what he records on these pages: that he created his pages in Hyderabad "by the order of the king." It is likely that his pages were made after 1591 (by virtue of their references to Hyderabad) and before 1605 (since they are clearly not part of the 1605 album), but more information about the calligrapher would be needed in order to establish the date firmly. One of Haji Abdullah's pages (folio 2v) contains an Arabic prayer to the prophet Muhammad, while the other (folio 3v) contains an Arabic poem about the prophet's birthday. Both are oriented horizontally and show signs of connection with the Ottoman *kit'alar* – compare the Ottoman specimen in fig. 5.30 to folio 2v, for example – but they do not share a single format. Folio 2v is designed in a rather haphazard manner with two main registers that do not seem to have been made at the same time, while folio 3r follows the strict four register format described above.

Taken together, these folios give us a sense of a variety of formal strategies being used to create album pages in place in the early years of Muhammad Quli's reign. Clearly there was a preference for horizontally-oriented pages already established, and certain ways of arranging text on a page had come to the fore, but no single format had yet become the standard. The folios are also interesting for what they hint about the relative status of different languages at the Golconda court in this period. The predominance of Arabic and the secondary position played by Persian may simply indicate that Arabic was the preferred medium for religious poetry in album format – as in many Ottoman albums – but it is also suggestive of a period in which Dakani had not yet emerged as a major language for the expression of spiritual sentiments in verse.

The 1605 Folios

Folios 7 through 15 are dramatically different than those just examined. First of all, they contain calligraphic specimens by just two calligraphers: Zain ud-Din 'Ali and Muhammad Riza. The former is already known to us as the probable calligrapher of Muhammad Quli's *Diwan* (see the first section of this chapter) and the creator of the panel on folio 6v (fig. 5.27). Muhammad Riza is not currently known from any other source, but two of the folios he worked on include the statement that they were produced in "the beautiful city of Hyderabad" and on one of them he calls himself a servant of the court.[121] Clearly these were two important scribes at the Qutb Shahi court.

With the exception of one side of one folio, all of the panels on these nine folios are organized in the four-register format described above. There are small variations, but these do not alter the fundamental structure of the panels or disturb the impression of unity these folios convey. It is quite clear that these two calligraphers worked side by side, not only by their common usage of this format, but by certain pages that make this explicit.

Most impressive of these is folio 13v, which contains two panels: the top one by Zain ud-Din 'Ali and the bottom one by Muhammad Riza (fig. 5.31). On this page, the two calligraphers have copied out the *same poem* on almost the same shade of pink paper, but they have differentiated their work from one another through the use of different scripts and colored inks, as well as through the decorative elements with which they ornamented their work. Of the two registers of large script in Zain ud-Din 'Ali's panel, both of which are written in black, his first is in *thulth* and his second is in *muhaqqaq.* He uses color for two smaller lines of script (one white, one blue) but leaves the rest of the panel plain, with the exception of small areas of gold and

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[121] Folio 7r and 14r.

blue, and a few gold rosettes. In contrast to Zain ud-Din 'Ali's panel, Muhammad Riza's is a riot of color and form. Although he uses just *thulth* for the large lines of script rather than incorporating *muhaqqaq*, he creates visual variety through extensive use of colored text (sometimes switching color every word) and through the inclusion of a delicate gold arabesque which runs behind all registers of the text.

Sheila Blair points out, in a discussion of this page, that while Zain ud-Din 'Ali signed his panel with the word "*katabahu*" which means "he wrote it" and suggests that he designed the arrangement of the text on the page, Muhammad Riza signed his using the word "*mashaqahu*" which means "he copied it" and suggests that he may have borrowed the format from his colleague.[122]

As mentioned above, only one side of one folio in this group does not follow the four-register format. This is folio 8v, on which is a large blue horizontally-oriented inscription which reads: "Qutb Shah, the slave of 'Ali, the friend of God" (fig. 5.32).[123] Around the edges of this inscription are verses of Dakani poetry written in multiple colors. The panel is signed by Zain ud-Din 'Ali. As James pointed out, the blue inscription is written in split-*thulth*, a script devised for religious and dedicatory inscriptions in which the text is divided into two horizontal registers by the extension of certain letters.[124] That Zain ud-Din 'Ali had mastery over this as well as

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[122] Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 545.

[123] This is the page that James refers to as folio 8r, in error, probably because of the peculiar location of the signature.

[124] James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 245.

other scripts is not surprising, given the fact that he was obviously a prominent calligrapher at the Qutb Shahi atelier in this time.[125]

Although only one of these nine folios is dated (14v), three factors suggest that all the folios were made in the same year: 1605. The first is the fact that both sides of all nine (with the exception of 8v) share the same format. Second, the same two artists worked on all the folios, apparently in collaboration. And third, virtually all of the folios contain Dakani poems by Muhammad Quli. Thus, it seems that in 1605 a project was embarked upon to create an album of Dakani poetry on Shi'ite themes in a single visual style, related but not identical to Ottoman Arabic calligraphy albums.

The excluded folios

As mentioned above, there are three folios that do not contain any direct evidence of having been in Golconda: folios 1, 4 and 5. Five of the six sides of these folios are oriented vertically, which suggests to me that they may not have been conceived of as part of the album projects of the Qutb Shahi calligraphers discussed above. They contain verse and prose texts in Arabic and Persian which are arranged in a variety of ways on the pages. Some texts are cut out of their original paper and pasted onto a new sheet, some include a bunch of different calligraphic specimens laid side by side, and others include one specimen large enough to take up the whole panel.

Of these, folio 4 is of the greatest interest. It contains a drawing on its recto of a crane being attacked by a hawk in a wilderness setting (fig. 5.33). This is the only pictorial page in Per 225. As James notes, drawings like this one were produced in Turkman workshops of fifteenth-century Iran. He takes for granted, however, that the album's drawing was made in Golconda

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[125] Zain ud-Din 'Ali also uses this script on folio 6v.

itself. Mentioning the Qutb Shahi rulers' ties to Turkman Iran through the founder of the dynasty,[126] he offers this page as evidence that there were Turkman artists working in Golconda or at least that there were artists working in a "Turkman-inspired" mode there.[127]

That the drawing itself was made in Golconda is less certain than James admits. First, it is necessary to note that there are no other drawings in this style known from early Golconda. Second, this particular image appears to be a version of a famous composition used frequently for book bindings in sixteenth-century Iran. One example of a virtually identical composition is the binding of a *Kulliyat* of *Nawa'i* produced in the early sixteenth century by Muhammad Zaman ibn Mirza beg Tabrizi (fig. 5.34).[128] The image is reversed on this binding, but is otherwise almost identical to the drawing in Per 225. Another example of this same image can be found on the binding of a *Khamsa* of Amir Khusraw, also from the late sixteenth century.[129] Here again the image is nearly identical to the drawing except that it is reversed.

It is not difficult to imagine that this was a popular drawing and thus became a model for paintings, drawings or book bindings, but that in the process of transferring the original composition to a new surface the original image was reversed. The drawing on folio 4r is likely to be one of many copies of this composition. It is as or more likely to have been made in Iran rather than in India, and it thus cannot be used to sustain an argument for the presence of Turkman artists or Turkman style in Golconda.

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[126] James, "The 'Millennial' Album of Muhammad-Quli Qutb Shah," 246-7.

[127] Ibid.: 247.

[128] National Library of Russia (Inv. No. Dorn 558). Vladimir Grigorevich Lukonin and Anatoli Ivanov, *Lost Treasures of Persia: Persian Art in the Hermitage Museum*, 1st U.S. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Mage, 1996), Cat. no. 169.

[129] Sackler Gallery of Art (S1986.472). Lowry and Beach, *An Annotated and Illustrated Checklist of the Vever Collection*, vol. 1, no. 208.

Reflections on Chester Beatty Library Per 225

Having established the basic characteristics of the Qutb Shahi folios, we can now turn to considering what the folios tell us about manuscript production and royal culture in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Golconda. Their close relationship to the *Diwan* – on multiple levels – makes it clear that their non-pictorial nature should not cause them to be left out of the discussion of early book production in Golconda.

First, it seems that the pre-1605 folios tell us of early calligraphic album production in Golconda. By this time skilled calligraphers in Qutb Shahi seem to have been at work in both Golconda and Hyderabad. These artists appear to have already begun to develop the aesthetic principles that would eventually come to dominate their work, which favor horizontality and the juxtaposition of scripts of different size. They apparently saw Arabic and Persian as the most appropriate languages for an album of calligraphy, using them together in several instances.

In the 1605 folios we seem to have a fragment of a larger Dakani album. Even in its partial state these folios demonstrate the heights achieved in calligraphic arts during Muhammad Quli's time and under his patronage. Through their signed specimens, Zain ud-Din 'Ali and Muhammad Riza become visible to the viewer who peruses and compares their work, coming to recognize each calligrapher's unique style. Perhaps Muhammad Quli hoped that they would, in time, become as lauded as those Persian calligraphers whose work was collected in libraries like his own.

The pages also tell, of course, of the status which Dakani had achieved. Through the artful inscription of his poems, Muhammad Quli's literary work and the language that he chose to use, as well as his own status as a cultivated individual, are celebrated. Like the *Diwan*, this

manuscript appropriates for the display of Dakani literature a physical and literary framework

which had long been associated with Persian and Arabic.

The framework chosen probably had less to do with the particular status of Ottoman

poetry or art at the Qutb Shahi court than with the pragmatic concerns involved in the making of

an album of religious poetry. Ottoman albums of Arabic calligraphy provided just the right

model for this project, just as the illustrated Persian *diwan* supplied the needed framework for

Muhammad Quli's collected poems. The skill of the calligraphers who created the Qutb Shahi

folios is therefore not only to be found in their calligraphic work but also in their ability to locate

and adapt a prototype to their own particular ends.

Reflections on Manuscript Group 3

The two manuscripts discussed in this chapter probably represent the work of royal

workshops located in Hyderabad and Golconda. Although it is difficult to imagine that this

group of artists was occupied solely with the production of manuscripts of Muhammad Quli's

own literary works, no manuscripts with other content have yet been identified. Even if we

assume, however, that more than two manuscripts were made and that some of those contained

Persian and Arabic texts by other authors, there is no question that Dakani literature played a

major role in the workshop's efforts. This surely reflects the fact that Dakani was coming to be

seen as a respected literary language, but we might also wonder if the manuscripts themselves

helped to speed along the rise in status this language was experiencing.

Arabic and Persian were not, however, being completely displaced. Both the *Diwan* and

the Qutb Shahi folios suggest that literary modes and visual formats well-established in the

Persian *ecumene* were used to authorize new experiments in local literary culture, but these

experiments were undertaken more to appropriate these cultural frameworks for the new literary work than to break new artistic ground. The literary process of vernacularization was not, in other words, accompanied by a parallel revolution in the visual field.

This analysis runs counter to the traditional conception of the Salar Jung *Diwan* as indicative of the long-awaited release of Golconda's artists from their enslavement to Persian culture. Indeed, Persian culture was still vitally important in the period in which the *Diwan* and album were made to the projects of royal identity formation and the construction of an inclusive and local form of elite culture. Persianate forms of art and literature had not ceased to play a critical role in the artistic practice of Golconda's artists. Rather, the manner in which these forms could be used and the purposes to which they could be put had dramatically changed.

Conclusions

This dissertation has explored six illustrated and illuminated manuscripts produced within the courtly world of the Qutb Shahi sultanate. For the most part the manuscripts have been discussed in the order in which they were likely produced, but an effort has been made here to turn the focus away from issues of chronology and notions of continuous stylistic development. Instead, I have focused on modes by which the manuscripts engage with the traditions of Persian manuscript production and the extent to which they reflect the interests and aesthetics of three different sectors of Golconda's courtly sphere: the Persian diaspora, the broader multi-ethnic courtly community, and the royal house itself.

Grouping Golconda manuscript production into these three categories results from formal and textual analysis. In the first group (admittedly an impoverished one) we have only one manuscript: an illuminated medical encyclopedia with a colophon naming Golconda as its place of production and providing a date of 1572. This copy of al-Jurjani's *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* opens with a magnificent double-page *sarlawh* that is populated by a writhing, colorful menagerie. The *sarlawh* possesses all of the qualities of the most elaborate examples of Persian illuminated compositions of this type and was probably made by an illuminator trained in Iran. This artist appears to have aimed to maintain the working methods, compositions and motifs he learned in Iran, but he allows these forms to be slightly inflected by their local surroundings. As a result, the standard building blocks of a *sarlawh* are here amplified, intensified and condensed, resulting in an illuminated composition that is not quite like anything known from manuscripts made in the major production centers of Iran and Central Asia.

Although the manuscript was clearly made in Golconda, without some indication of the identity of the manuscript's owner or patron we can only speculate as to the more specific context in which it was produced. A possible scenario is that the manuscript was made within Golconda's Persian diaspora: a community of diplomats, intellectuals and merchants that settled in Golconda and formed a prominent sub-section of the courtly community, while also maintaining strong ties with Iran.

The members of this group found Golconda a hospitable host society in part because local custom placed great value on Persianate cultural traditions, and in part because they possessed skills and knowledge that were of particular use in the Qutb Shahi sultanate. This copy of the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi* impresses on both fronts. Its fantastic opening pages make obvious the remarkable refinement of Persian illumination, a tradition of two-dimensional ornamentation that had no correlative among the indigenous arts of India. Its text, copied out on more than six hundred pages, demonstrates Persian intellectual achievement in the form of mastery over Greek medical knowledge, a tradition that was highly respected in the Deccan and transmitted there largely through Persian translations and abridgments. The manuscript therefore embodies the valuable artistic and professional skills possessed by Persian immigrants in Golconda and would have made an appropriate possession for a Persian nobleman or a gift for the Qutb Shahi sultan.

Deccani and Islamicate traditions concerning a ruler's responsibility for the health of his citizenry may have further enriched the manuscript's reception. Both nobles and rulers in Golconda are known to have committed funds for the construction of hospitals and public gardens full of healthful plants, and for the copying of medical texts, so the manuscript may also

have resonated with these shared values. Even an object as "Persian-looking" as the *Zakhira-i Khwarizmshahi*, we must remember, may have had local meanings.

The second group of manuscripts explored in this dissertation contains three codices: an *Anvar-i Suhayli*, a *Sindbadnama*, and a copy of Nizami's *Khamsa*. This third manuscript, in the Andhra Pradesh State Museum, is a new addition to the early Golconda corpus, having previously been wrongly attributed to the Mughal court. Like the first group, these texts are in Persian: literary works – in verse or prose – that weave complex narratives heavily loaded with spiritual, practical and moral lessons. Also like the first group, their texts would have appealed to readers accustomed to Persian literature as well as with readers of tales in Indic texts, since many of the tales of the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama* originate in the Sanskrit *Panchatantra*.

These three manuscripts appear to have been produced by a single group of artists. The membership of this group was probably fairly fluid, and their working methods changed over time. Nevertheless, there are indications that the group developed and maintained certain stylistic habits. Thus, while the three codices share an allegiance to mid-sixteenth-century Shirazi methods of organizing a composition and representing human beings, animals and architecture as well as some stylistic traits, certain features appear in only one or two of the three manuscripts. The depiction of faces with a protruding nose, for example, is seen only in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* and the *Sindbadnama*.

Common to all three manuscripts is a tendency to experiment with the spatial and semantic relationships of images to text. In brief, paintings in the *Khamsa* are inserted between chapters and foreshadow often-illustrated moments in the stories, while those in the *Anvar-i Suhayli* appear throughout the text with little regard to key moments in the narrative. The

Khamsa paintings occupy full pages, while the *Anvar-i Suhayli* illustrations gradually expand from within the text block until they dominate the page. Unlike either of these two manuscripts, the *Sindbadnama* images are carefully and consistently placed throughout the manuscript in locations chosen to reflect the progress and content of the narrative.

This investigational approach to the organizing principles of illustrated Persian manuscripts, alongside the stylistic experimentation their paintings evince, leads me to conclude that they were likely illustrated (and perhaps also inscribed) by artists born in India. These artists would have had ready access to manuscripts made in Shiraz; such manuscripts filled the shelves of the libraries of nobility throughout India's Persianized courts, including that of the Qutb Shahs. The fact that the *Khamsa* is a re-used fourteenth-century manuscript demonstrates the accessibility of Persian models.

But it was not only the artists who were likely born in India. A series of marginal notations in Kannada on early pages of the *Sindbadnama* indicates that natives of the Deccan were also among the readers of these manuscripts. Probably written by a nobleman at the Qutb Shahi or 'Adil Shahi court, the notations suggest that this manuscript – and perhaps this whole group of manuscripts – circulated beyond the Persian diaspora and into the multilingual and culturally rich courtly world of the Deccani sultanates. In several cases the notations use Kannada words to refer to the objects, people and concepts that appear in the illustrations, apparently finding little difficulty in locating Indic equivalents for Persian terms. This implies that the Indic and Persianate worlds were seen as quite compatible. Such mutual understanding cannot be taken for granted.

The third and last group of manuscripts includes two codices: a *Diwan* of poems by Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in the Salar Jung Museum and an assortment of album pages

also inscribed with Muhammad Quli's poetry in the Chester Beatty Library. Unlike the manuscripts of the first and second groups, the *Diwan* and the album pages are in Dakani, and their texts represent some of the earliest attempts to establish Dakani as a language suitable for sophisticated poetry. In this new language Muhammad Quli fused elements of many different languages, constructing from Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and other Indic languages the foundations of a new literary medium uniquely fitted to the Deccan's particular cultural mix.

The Salar Jung Museum *Diwan* appears to be Muhammad Quli's own copy, and it is ornamented with rich paintings and elaborate illuminations fit for a king. Abundant applications of gold further underscore that it is a work of royal patronage, as do the bits of marbled paper innovatively applied to the painted page. As impressive as it is, however, close examination reveals that the manuscript does not represent a work of pictorial innovation on a par with the seminal character of its literary content. In other words, the poems take many risks, but the paintings take few.

It is my belief that this incongruity does not represent a failure on the part of the artists to create sufficiently original paintings, but a deliberate mode of engagement with Persian manuscripts. The artists sought not to explore and experiment with Persian pictorial content but rather to appropriate their most characteristic features. In replicating the customary imagery of a *diwan* the artists give credibility to the vernacular poetry they accompany and in so doing, as Allison Busch has put it, assuage the great "anxiety of innovation."[1]

In a similar sense, folios seven through fifteen of the Chester Beatty Album – which seem to constitute a single project of 1605 – adapt the characteristic features of Ottoman Arabic calligraphic albums to create a format in which to present a group of Muhammad Quli's poems devoted to Shi'ite themes. Unlike the format of the Persian *diwan*, which is conventionally used

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[1] Busch, "The Anxiety of Innovation: The Practice of Literary Science in the Hindi/*Riti* Tradition."

to present poems on a variety of subjects, Ottoman albums of the type the Chester Beatty pages

imitate tend to contain *hadith* or other texts directly related to Islamic texts and traditions. This

choice of format therefore seems to have been informed by thorough awareness of manuscript

genres in the Persian and Ottoman worlds and a desire to present Muhammad Quli's Dakani

poetry in a well-respected format.

Other folios that were at one time bound together with the 1605 pages represent earlier

album projects taken on in Golconda and Hyderabad in the last decades of the sixteenth century.

These pages are predominantly in Persian and Arabic, and while they utilize some of the features

of the Ottoman calligraphic album, the format of the calligraphic compositions does not appear

to have been standardized by this time. Although David James argued that these pages were

originally part of an album produced in Golconda in honor of the millennium, the evidence for

this is not secure. It is possible, however, that some of the pages were indeed made to celebrate

this event.

The establishment of a new capital city at the end of the sixteenth century and the

construction of major new architectural monuments at its center are more in keeping with the

two manuscripts just described than one might at first guess. Both the urban initiative and the

manuscript production are expressions of a cultural identity promoted by the royal Qutb Shahi

household which, though it partook of many traditions, was essentially rooted in and dedicated to

the local world of Qutb Shahi Telangana.

In sum, there are major differences in the ways that the three groups of manuscripts use

elements of Persian manuscript production. Painting in Golconda should not be conceptualized

as a homogenous tradition, and the notion of Persian influence is, I would argue, not especially

helpful to our efforts to understand the nature of the early manuscripts produced in the Qutb

Shahi sultanate. I believe a more productive approach is to think in terms of modes of

engagement with Persian manuscript traditions. In the first mode that I have identified in the

preceding chapters, the artist or artists replicate and aggregate Persianate forms, also at times

amplifying their impact through color or composition. The second mode is defined by a more

relaxed handling of stylistic and compositional conventions accompanied by experimentation

with the underlying structures that link image to image, and image to text. In the third mode

artists appropriate Persianate and Ottoman forms and formats, subtly altering them for use with

different literary content.

It may be possible to apply this approach beyond Qutb Shahi Golconda to other sites

within early modern India where manuscript production was informed by conventions of

Persianate manuscript production. The obvious place to begin would be with the early paintings

and manuscripts produced for the Mughal emperors Humayun and Akbar, which are deeply

engaged with Persian imagery. Such a study would then allow for comparative examination of a

kind not often taken on in current scholarship, which tends to treat the Deccani and Mughal

"schools" separately. It would also pave the way for a consideration of how contact between

Deccani and Mughal artists and patrons might have informed the specific modes of engagement

preferred at particular moments.

As discussed in Chapter 1, scholars often expect to find unique styles and methods of

painting in each and every politically-defined locality within sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

India. One result of this tendency is an exaggerated sense of the differences between manuscript

production in North and South India at this time. If the assumption that each polity will create its

own visual style is discarded, it becomes apparent that both Mughal and Deccani artists created

visual vocabularies for themselves through and not despite their use of pre-existing forms from other regions. Connectedness to multiple visual worlds is asserted in manuscripts produced throughout the subcontinent, though never in the same way twice. Studying the nature of this assertion can, I believe, help us to understand the way that a particular group of artists and sponsors perceived their own identity and their relation to other societies and traditions.

Although the paragraphs above present conclusions drawn from the primary analyses of this dissertation, an unexpected additional area of inquiry emerged as I considered the Kannada captions in the *Sindbadnama*. These notations offer information about the usage of the early manuscripts from Golconda and illuminate ways that early manuscripts from Golconda were perceived by individuals who did not identify primarily with Persian culture.

The reception of Persian manuscripts in India is a topic that has not received a great deal of scholarly attention. In the Mughal context, John Seyller has written about imperial manuscript collections, focusing on valuation and inspection notations that illuminate Mughal rulers' and courtiers' impressions of Persian manuscripts. He has also explored practices of over-painting that seem to reflect artists' responses to pre-existing imagery.[2] In terms of responses to Persian manuscripts on the part of those who *did not* identify with Persian culture, we have only Molly Aitken's and Andrew Topsfield's discussions of inventory lists from the Mewar court in Rajasthan, in which Persian paintings are labeled in ways that reveal something of how they were understood.[3]

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[2] Seyller, "The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts in the Imperial Mughal Library."; ———, "Overpainting in the Cleveland Tutinama."; John Seyller, "Recycled Images: Overpainting in Early Mughal Art," in *Humayun's Garden Party: Princes of the House of Timur and Early Mughal Painting*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1994).

[3] Molly Emma Aitken, "The Practiced Eye: Styles and Allusions in Mewar Painting" (2000), ch. 2; Andrew Topsfield, "The Royal Paintings Inventory at Udaipur," in *Indian Art and Connoisseurship: Essays in Honor of*

The Kannada captions offer a great deal more information on this topic. They make clear that the audience for Persian manuscripts was not limited to that portion of the courtly community in whose identity Persian language and Persianate culture played the primary role. On the contrary, it seems that in the multi-lingual and cosmopolitan society of Qutb Shahi Golconda and Hyderabad, Persian manuscripts were not only interesting but also intelligible to individuals with a variety of backgrounds. Certain captions even seem to suggest that a local idiom had emerged by which Indic-language speakers could refer to the different components of a Persian manuscript.

Though it should not surprise us that Persian manuscripts were not appreciated only by Persian immigrants and their descendents, it has never before been demonstrated that they were the subject of intense study by other groups. Future manuscript studies will need to conceive of these manuscripts as circulating among a wider range of peoples and places than we have in the past.

I have sought in this dissertation to demonstrate and analyze the diversity of Golconda manuscript production, and in so doing, to identify modes of engagement with Persian tradition and consider their meanings. One folio in particular strikes me as a microcosm of my project: folio 1r of the *Sinbadnama* (fig. 4.30). The expertly-executed gold and blue *shamsa* at its center speaks of the sophistication of artists in Golconda and their thorough understanding of Persianate forms. Its unfinished center reminds us of the complexities of patronage and the many stages of production through which a single manuscript passes. Its two Persian titles suggest the multiple ways in which Persianate traditions were given new life in early modern sultanates like

Douglas Barrett, ed. John Guy (Ahmedabad: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts with Mapin Publishing, 1995).

Golconda. The Kannada caption, apparently labeling the *shamsa* a sun with the Sanskrit and Kannada term *surya*, points to the wide variety of readers such a manuscript drew and the different ways they understood its contents. Like the early Golconda manuscripts more generally, the folio is both local and translocal. Its model comes from Persian manuscripts, but the particular form it takes is specific to its context and fully of its time. The *shamsa* page is overlaid with signifiers of its local meanings, though it is in no sense cut off from the worlds beyond.

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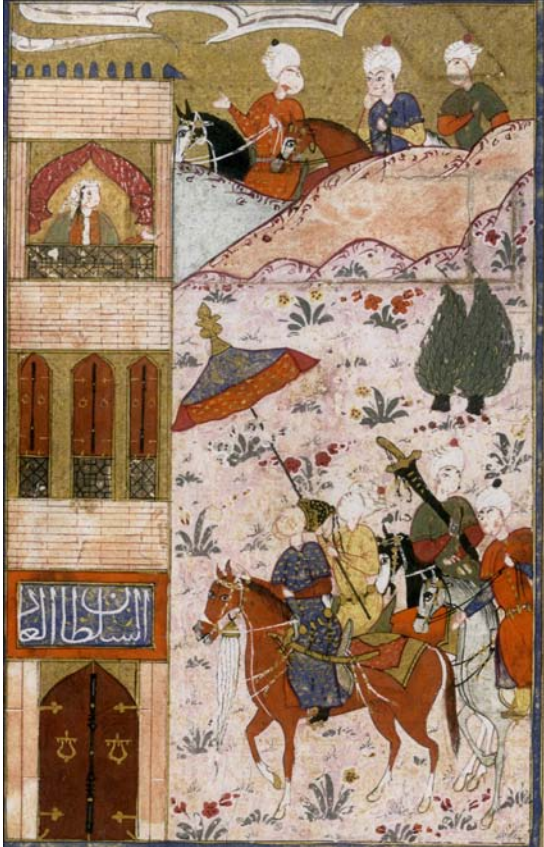
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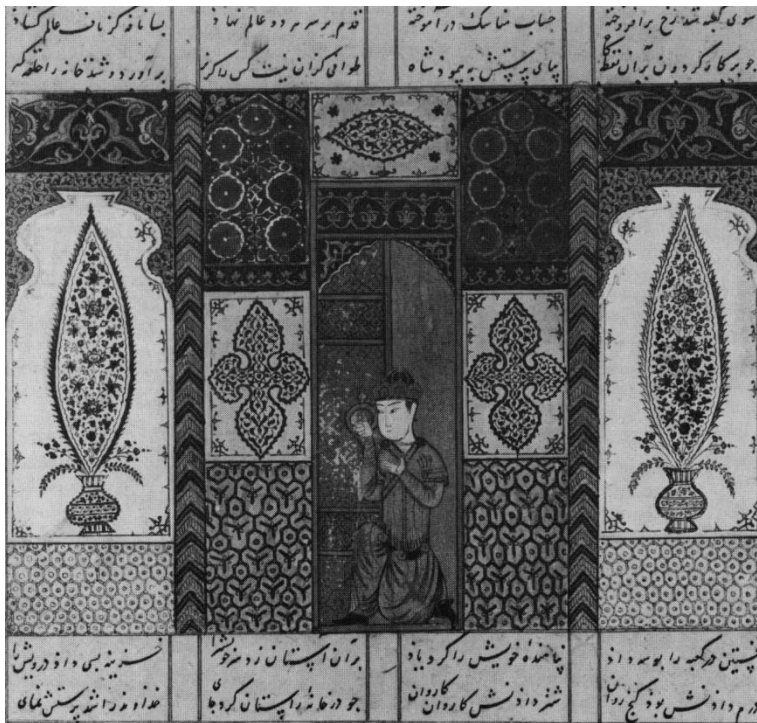
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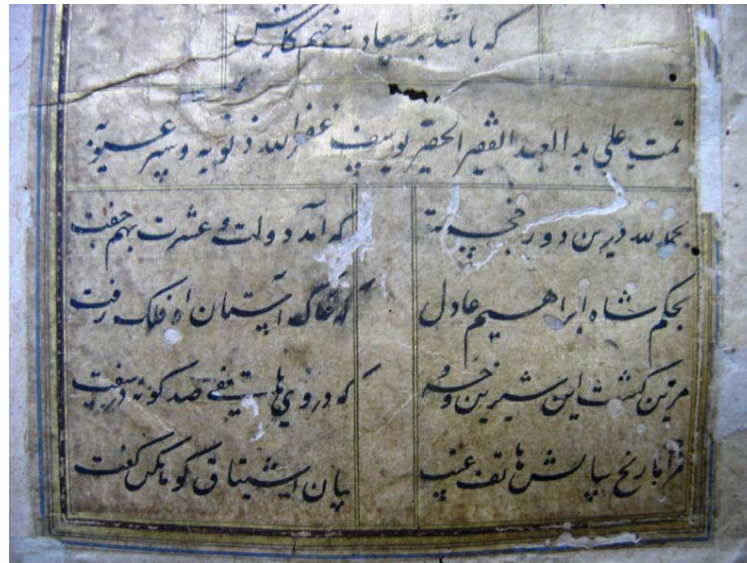
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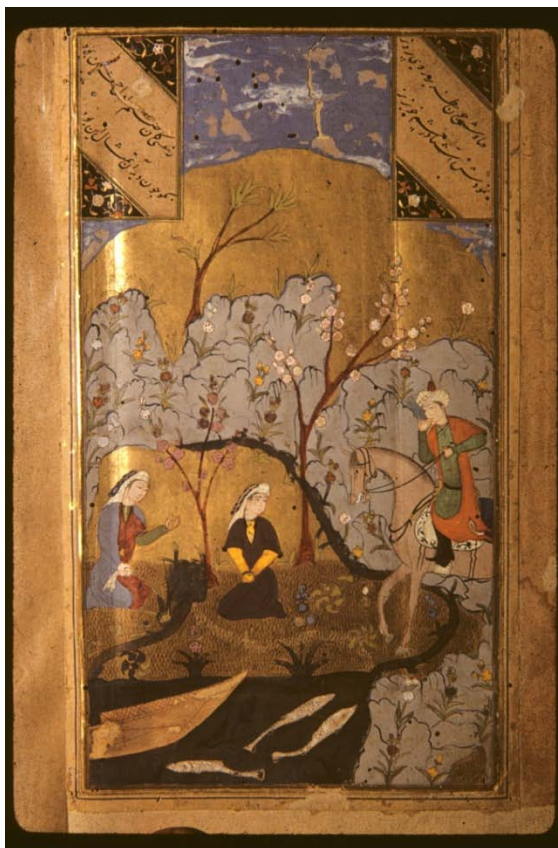
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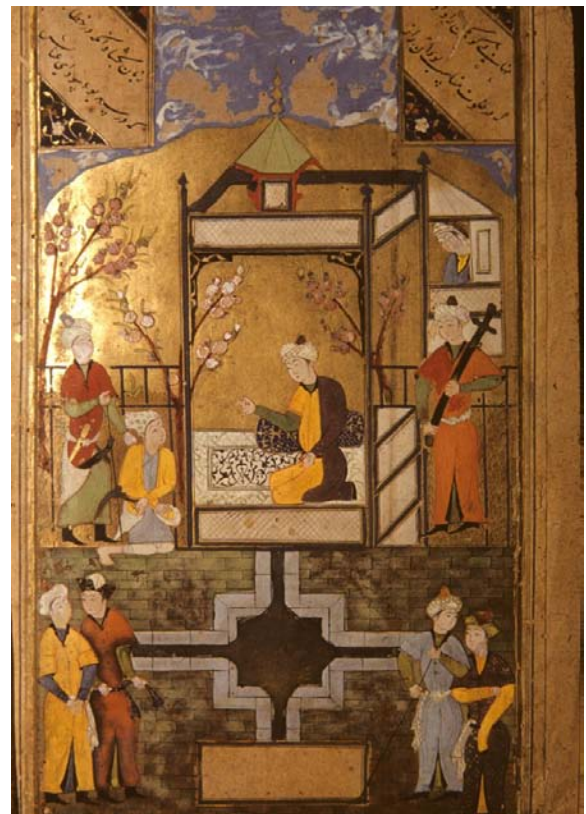
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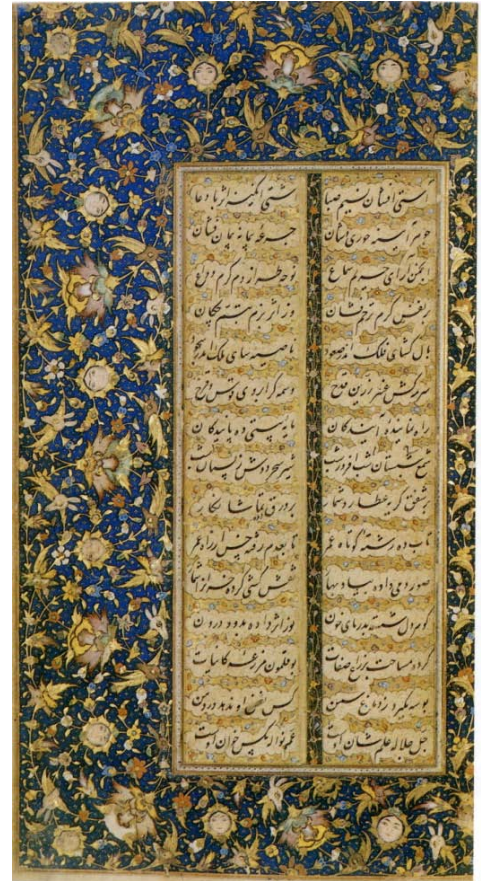
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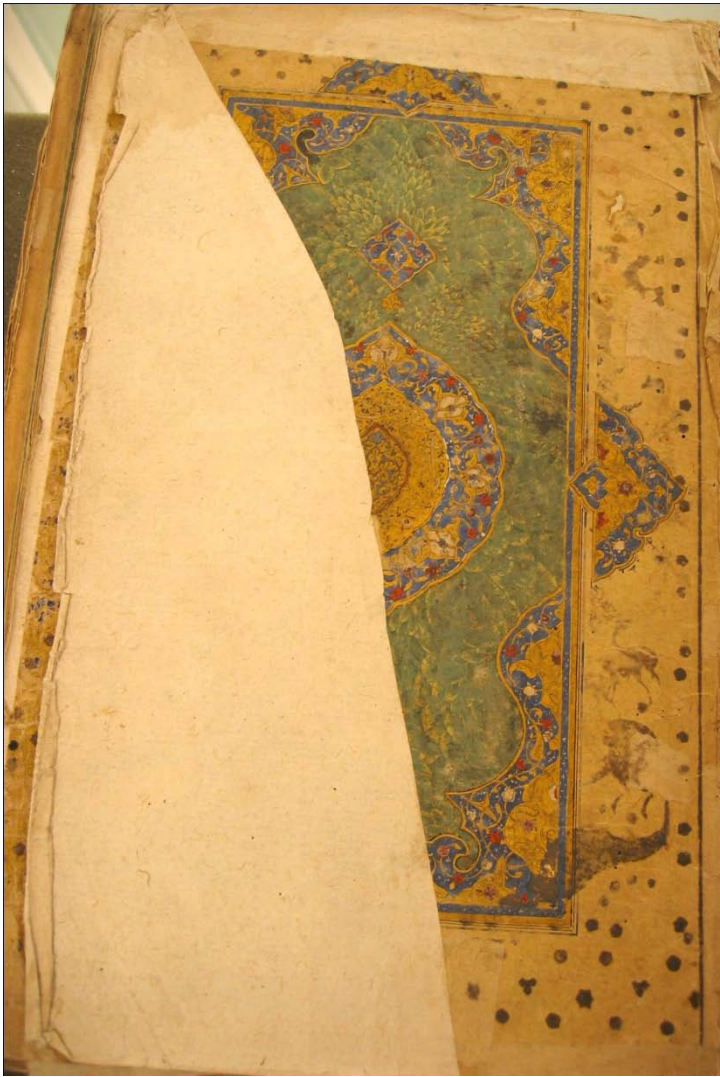
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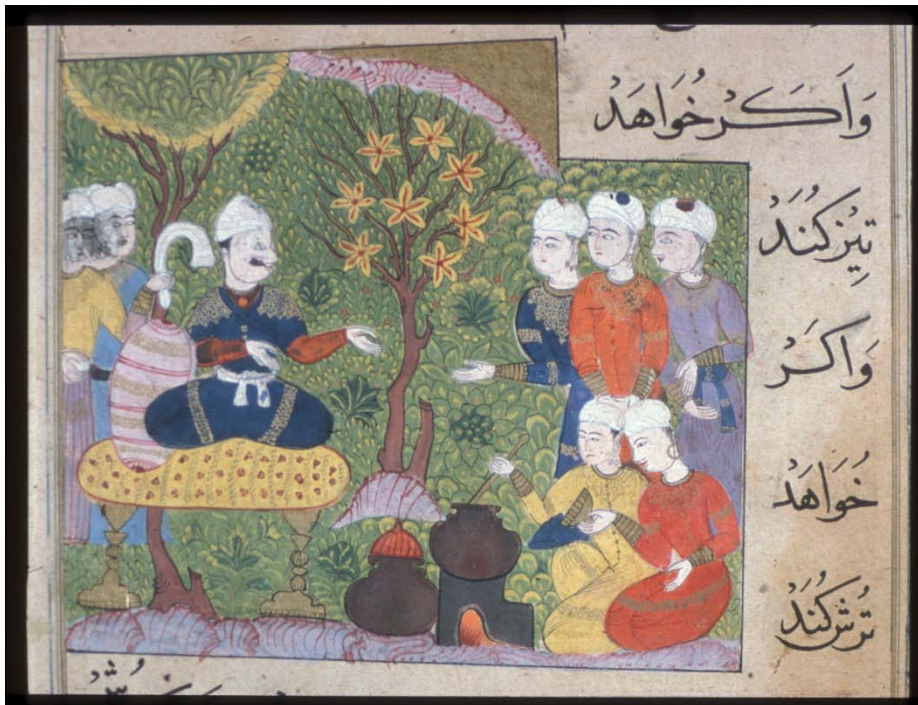Figure 4.7 – *Anvar-i Suhayli*, f. 2v, 1582, Golconda (Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 13-1962)

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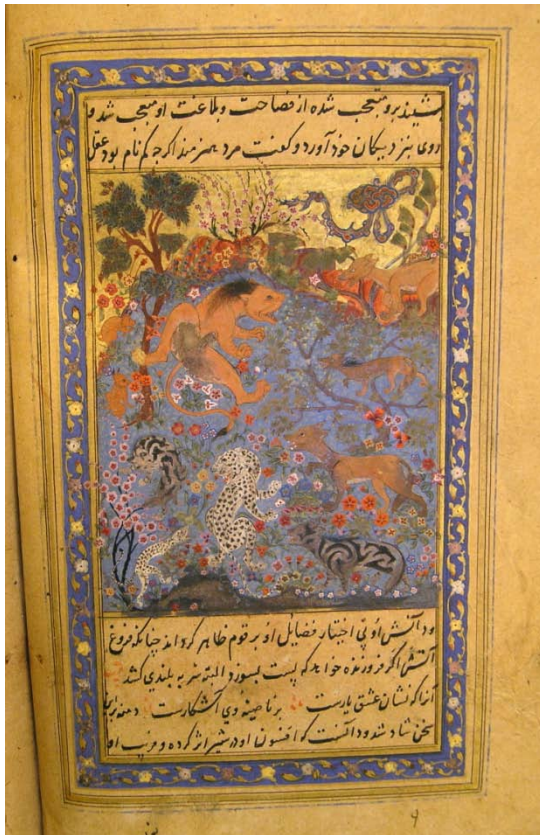Figure 4.9 – *Anvar-i Suhayli*, f. 78v, 1582, Golconda (Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 13-1962)

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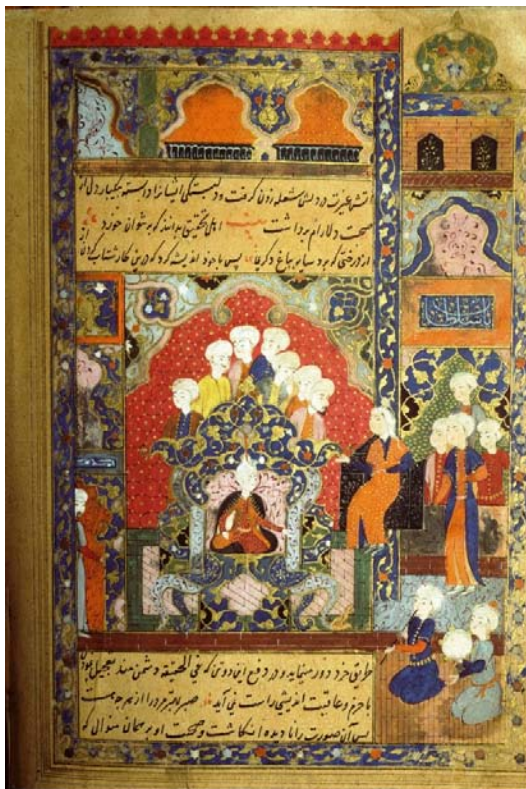
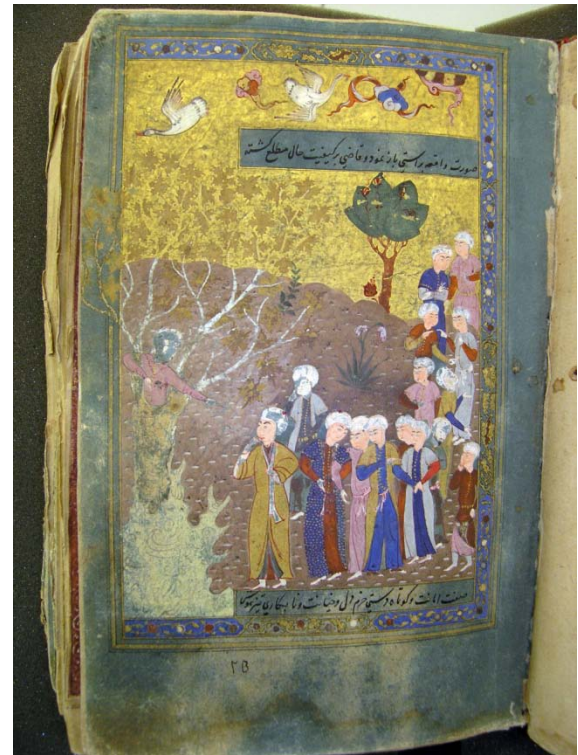Figure 4.12 – *Anvar-i Suhayli*, f. 191v, 1582, Golconda (Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 13-1962)

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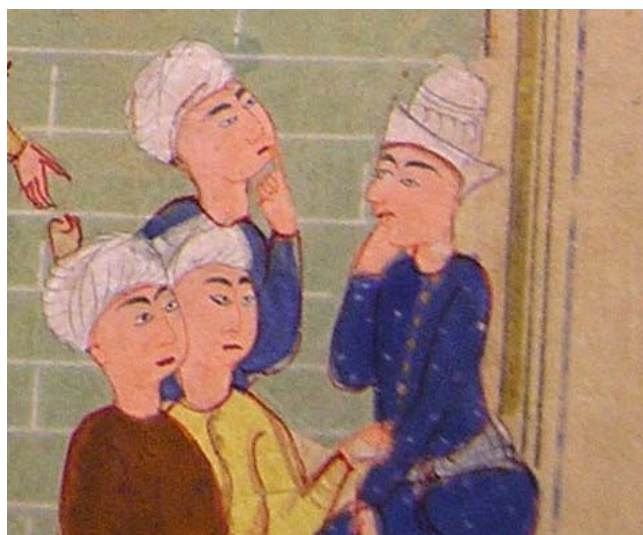
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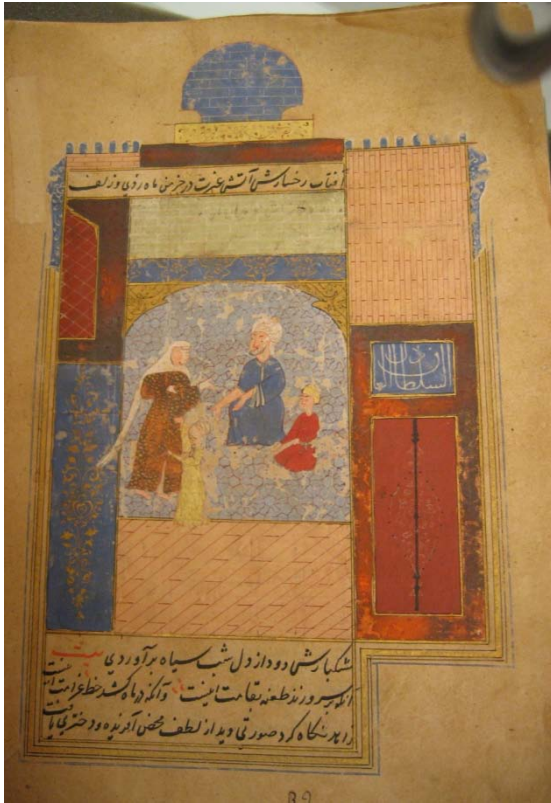
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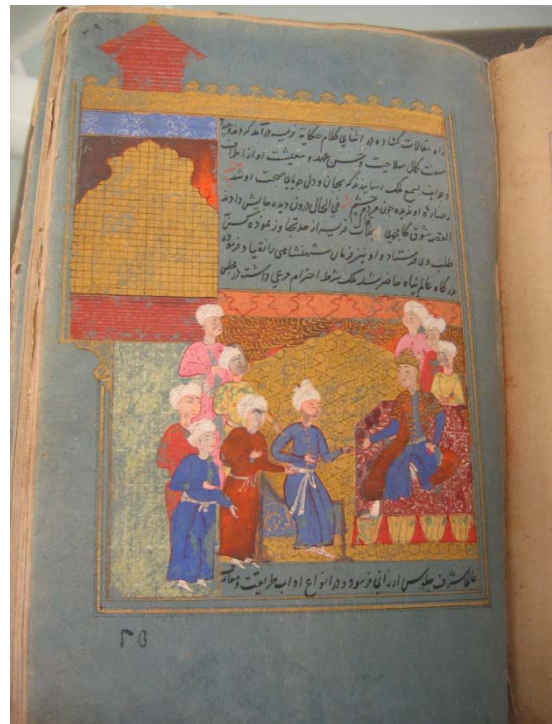

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Museum, IS 13-1962)

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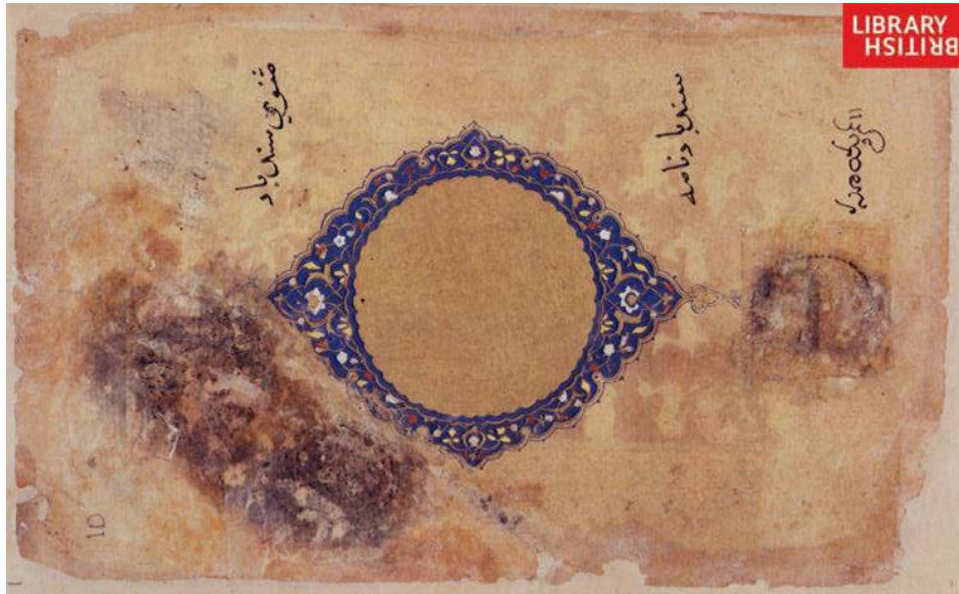
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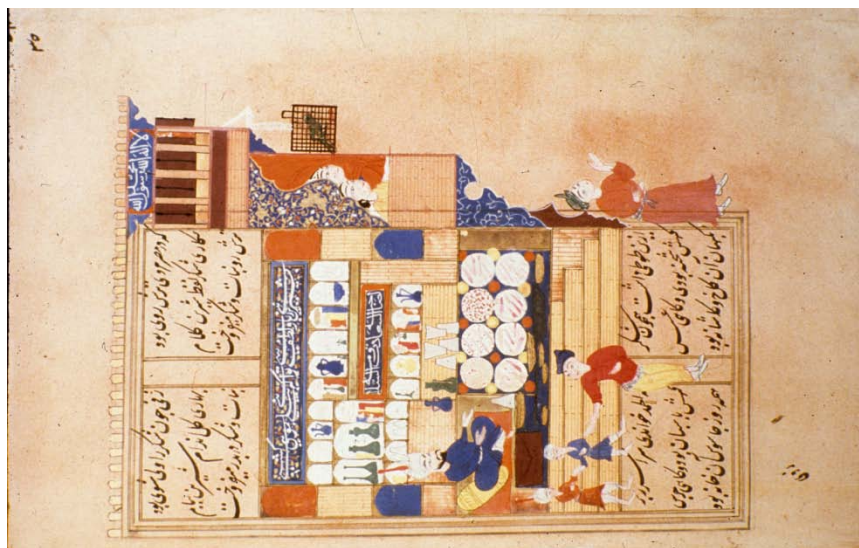Figure 4.31 – *Sindbadnama*, f. 2r, 1575-85, Golconda (British Library, IO Islamic 3214)

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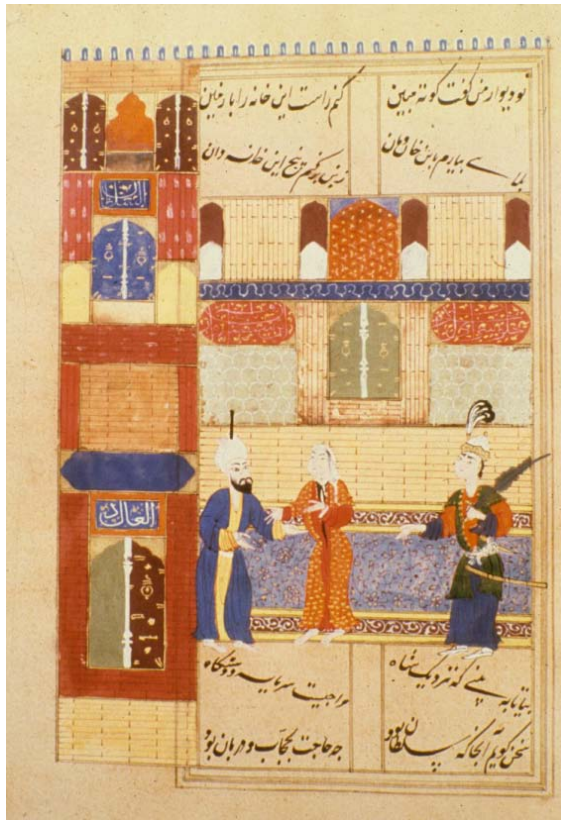
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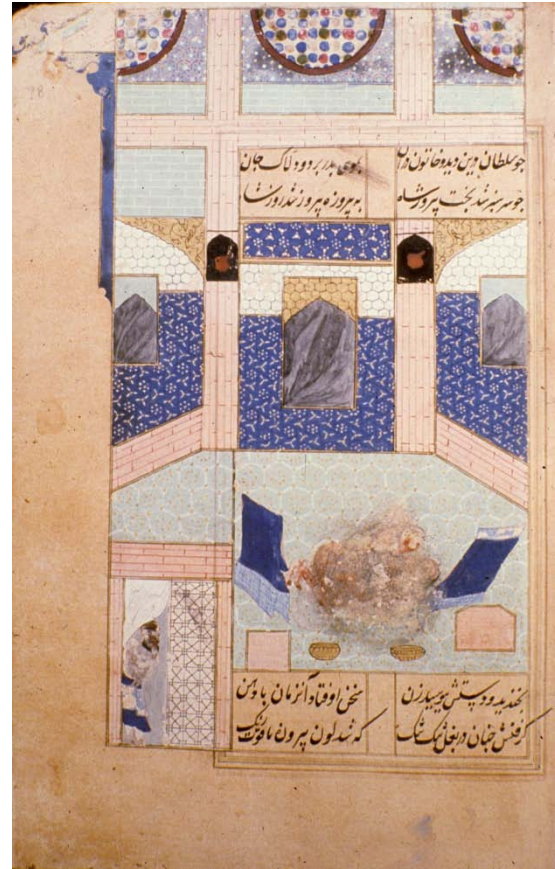Figure 4.36 – *Sindbadnama*, f. 80r, 1575-85, Golconda (British Library, IO Islamic 3214)

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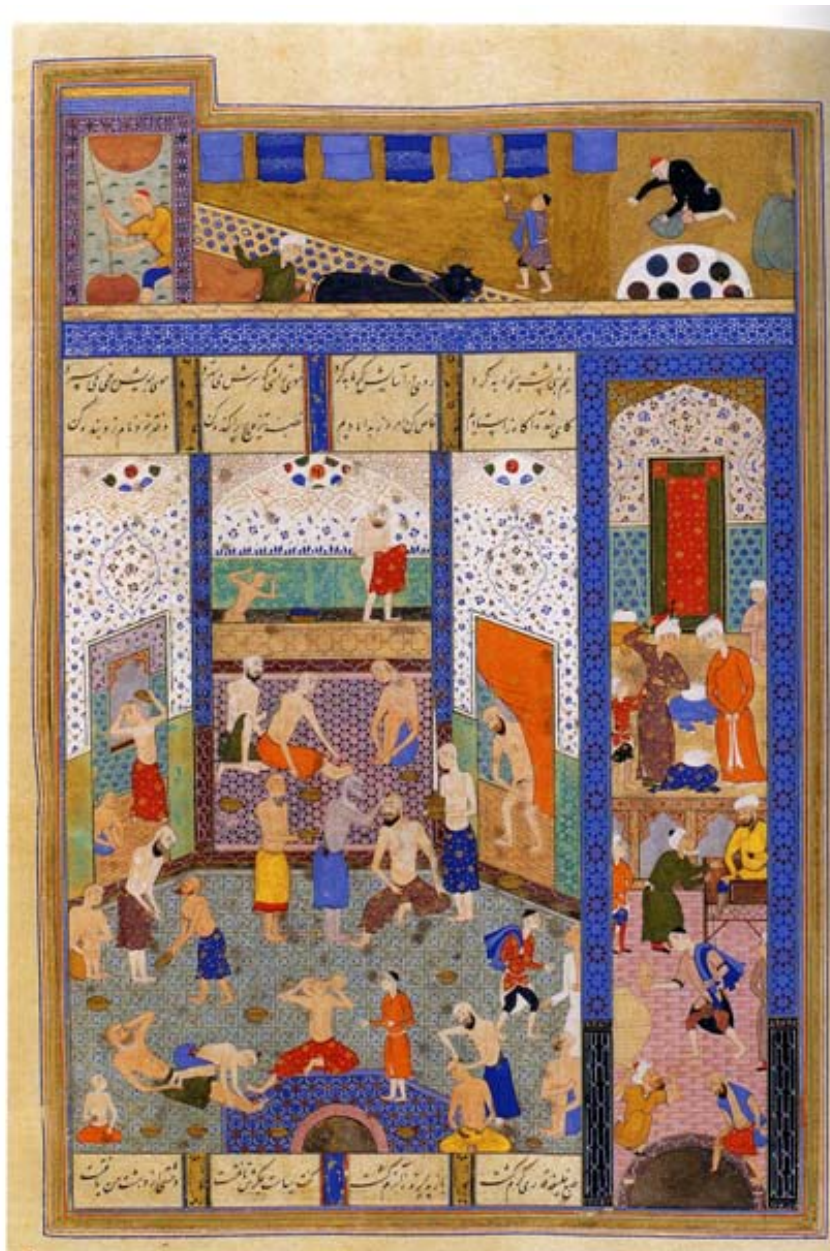Figure 4.42 – *Zafarnama*, f.418r, 1533, Iran (British Library I.O. Islamic 137)

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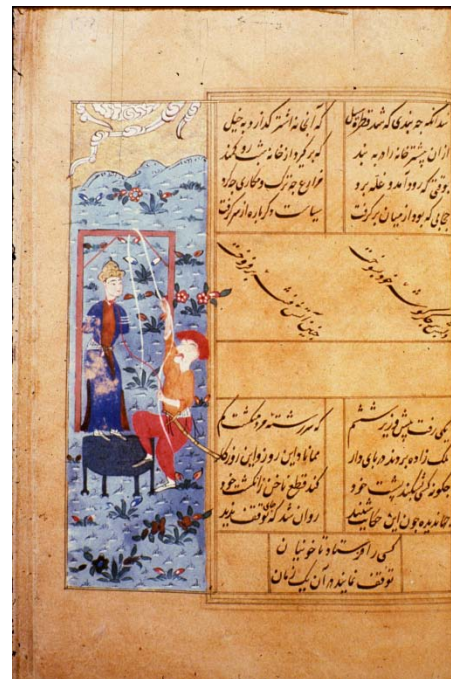

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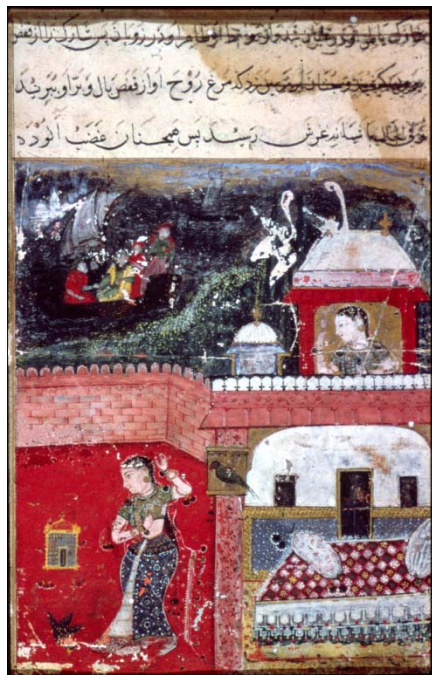

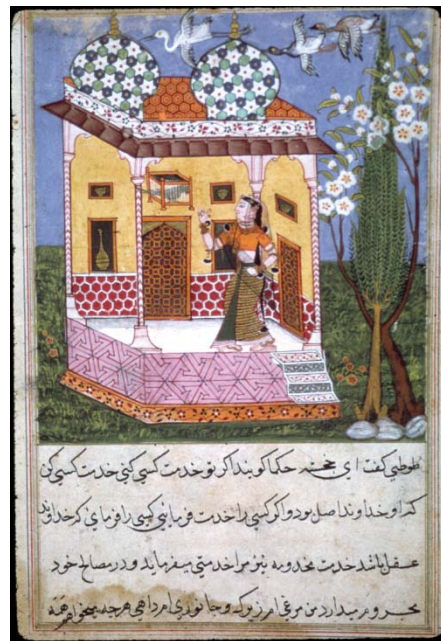Figure 4.50 – *Tutinama*, f. 8r, mid-16th century, India (Cleveland Museum of Art, 1962.279)

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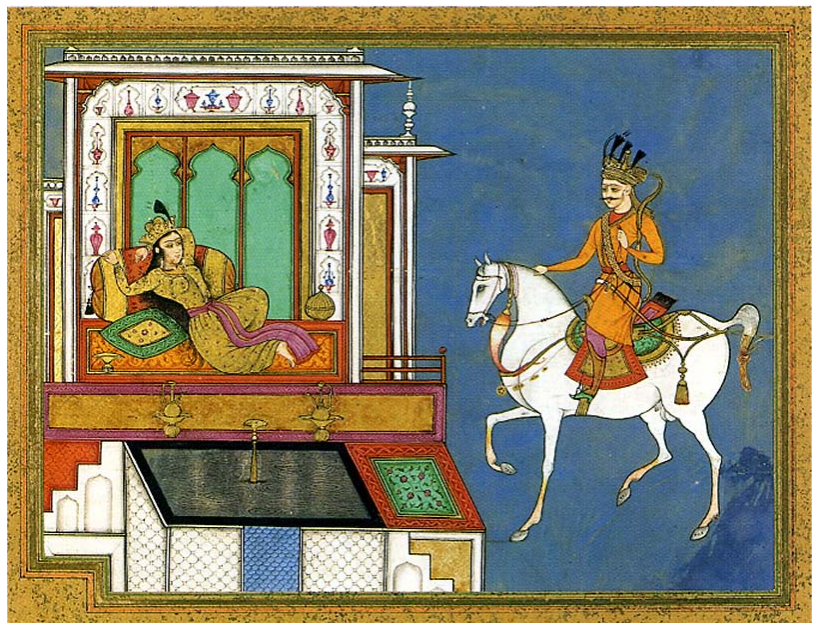Figure 4.54 – Folio of a *Khamsa*, 17th century, possibly the Deccan (Brooklyn Museum, x635.1)

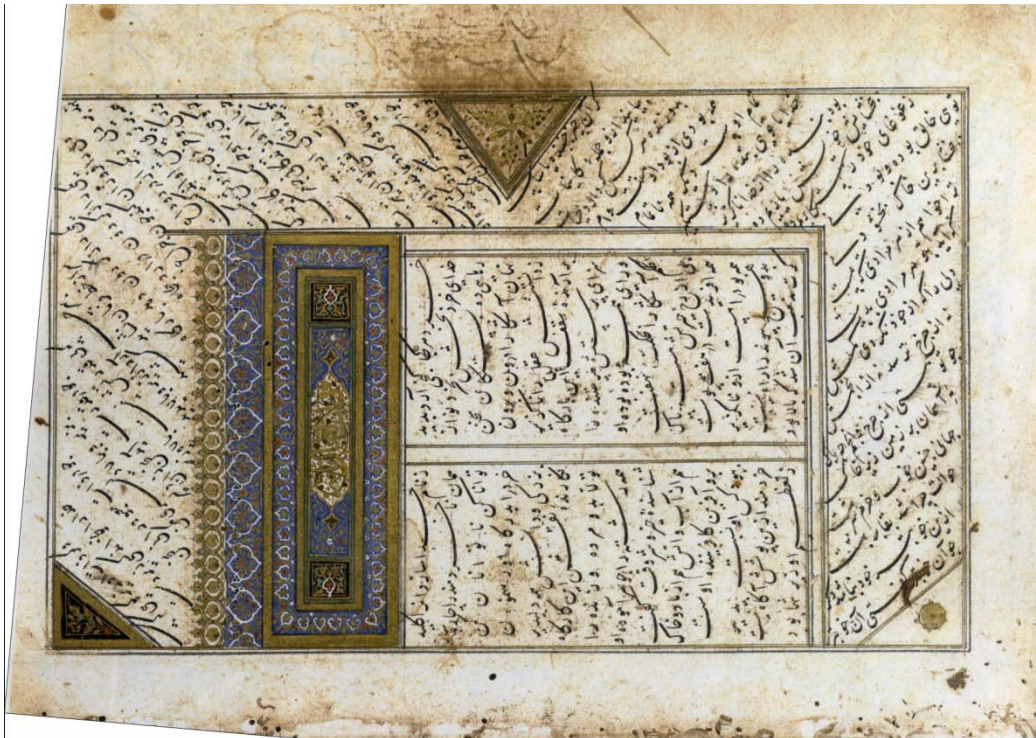Figure 4.55 – Folio of a *Khamsa*, 18th century, possibly Golconda (Present location unknown)

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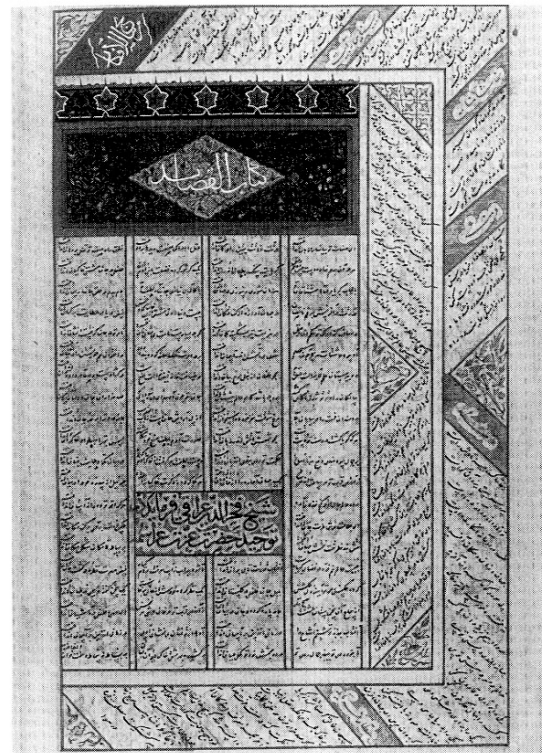
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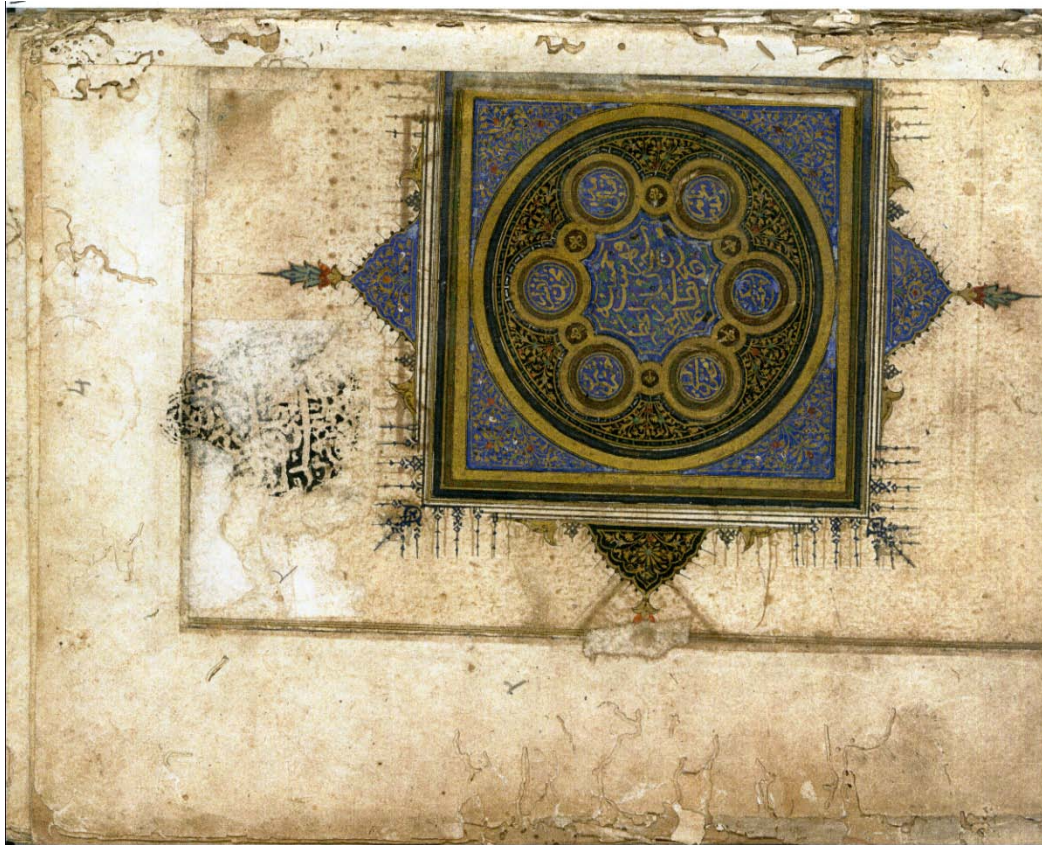Figure 4.65 – *Khamsa*, f. 106r, ca. 1575,
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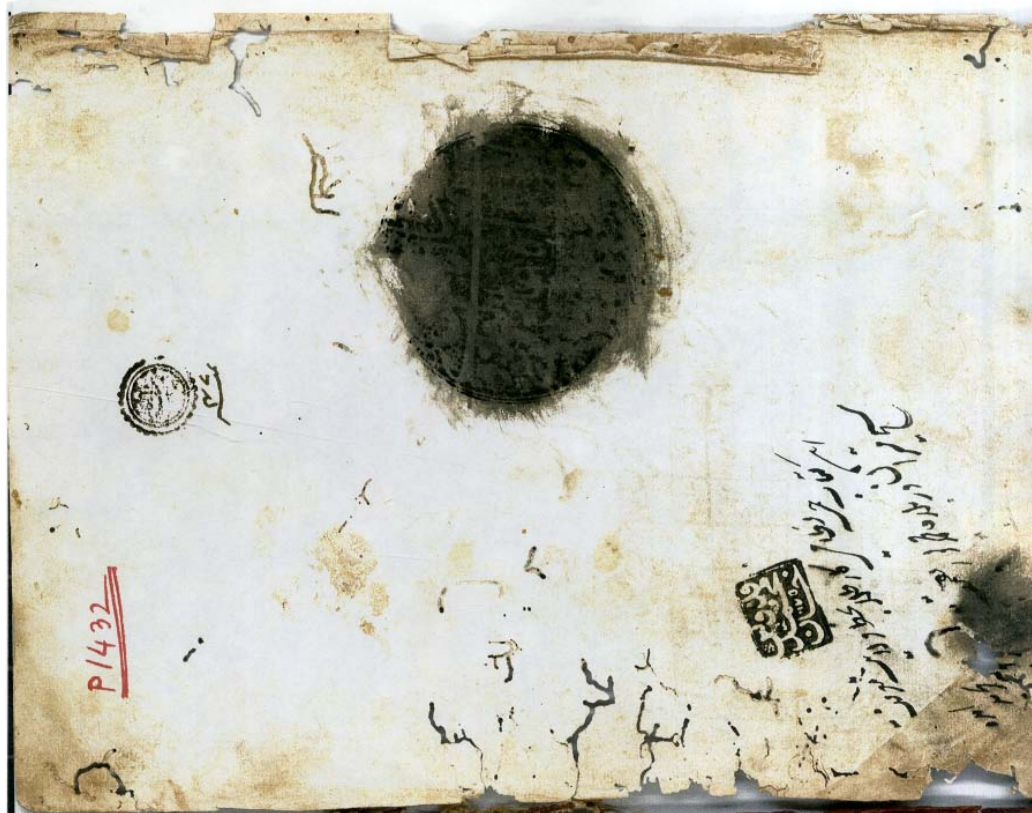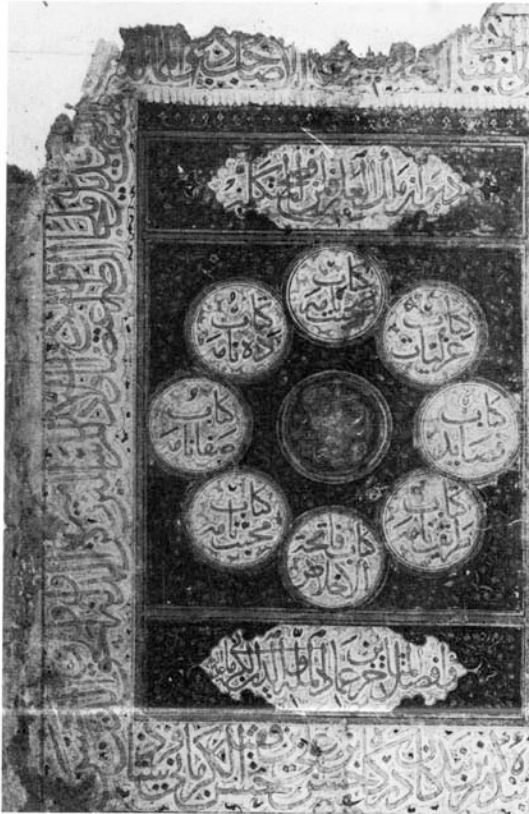Figure 4.68 – *Khamsa*, f. 222v, ca. 1575, Golconda (A.P. State Museum, MS P 1432)

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1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum,
Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.4 – *Shahnama*, Garshasp playing polo, 16th century, Shiraz (National Library of Russia, Dorn 334)

Figure 5.3 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 5r, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.5 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 5r detail, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

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Figure 5.8 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 12r detail, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.7 – *Khamsa* of Nizami, f. 77v, ca. 1540, Iran (British Library, London, Or. 2265)

Figure 5.6 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 12r, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.9 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 24v, 1590-1605,
Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.10 – *Yusuf wa Zulaykha*, Zulaykha sleeping with her maidens, ca. 1590, India (Sotheby's London, 16 October 1996 lot 82)

Figure 5.11 – *Khamsa* of Nizami, Nushaba recognizing Iskandar (Paris, Cartier Collection)
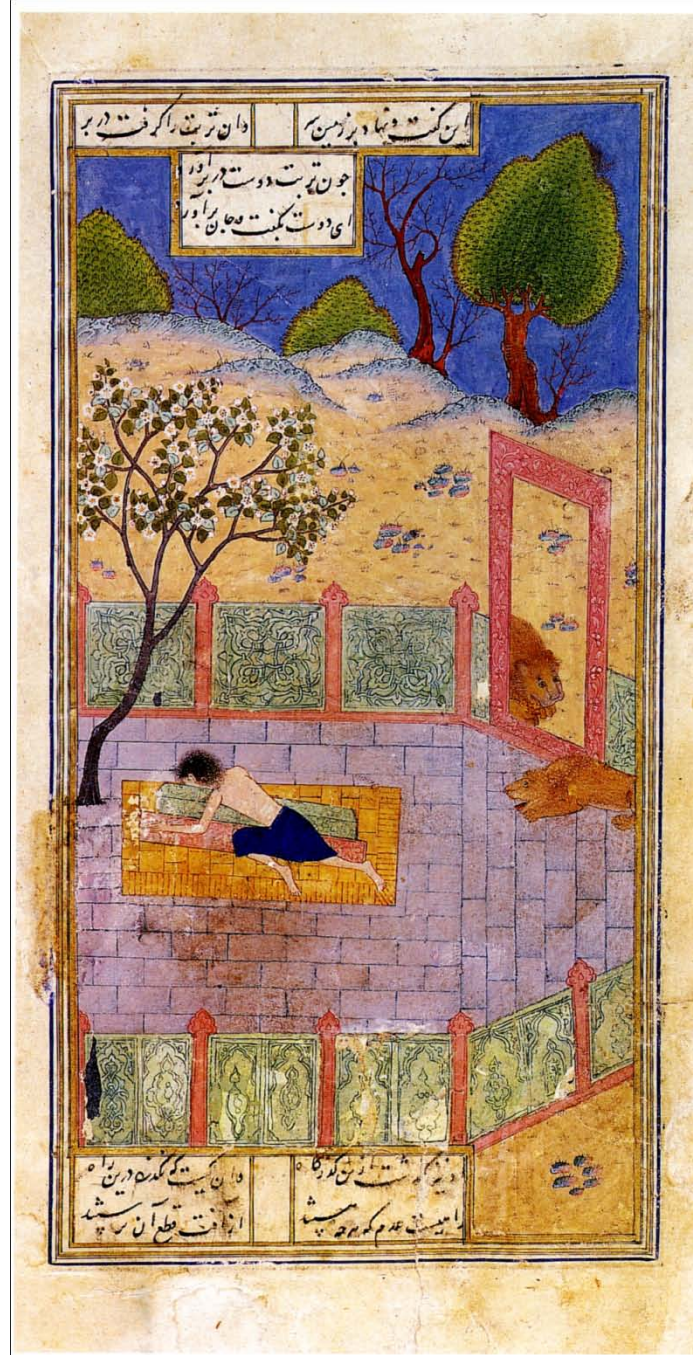
Figure 5.12 – *Khamsa* of Nizami, Majnun Dies on Layla's Grave, f. 233v, 1432, Iran (Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg , Inv. No. VR-1000)

Figure 5.14 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 53v, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.13 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 29v, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

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Figure 5.15 – *Subhat al-abrar* and *Tuhfat al-ahrar* of Jami, f. 1v-2r, ca. 1570-75, Iran (TSM, Istanbul, R.898)

Figure 5.16 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 53v detail, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.17 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 87v,
1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum,
Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.19 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 97v, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)

Figure 5.18 – *Diwan* of Muhammad Quli, f. 93r, 1590-1605, Golconda (Salar Jung Museum, Urdu Ms. 153)
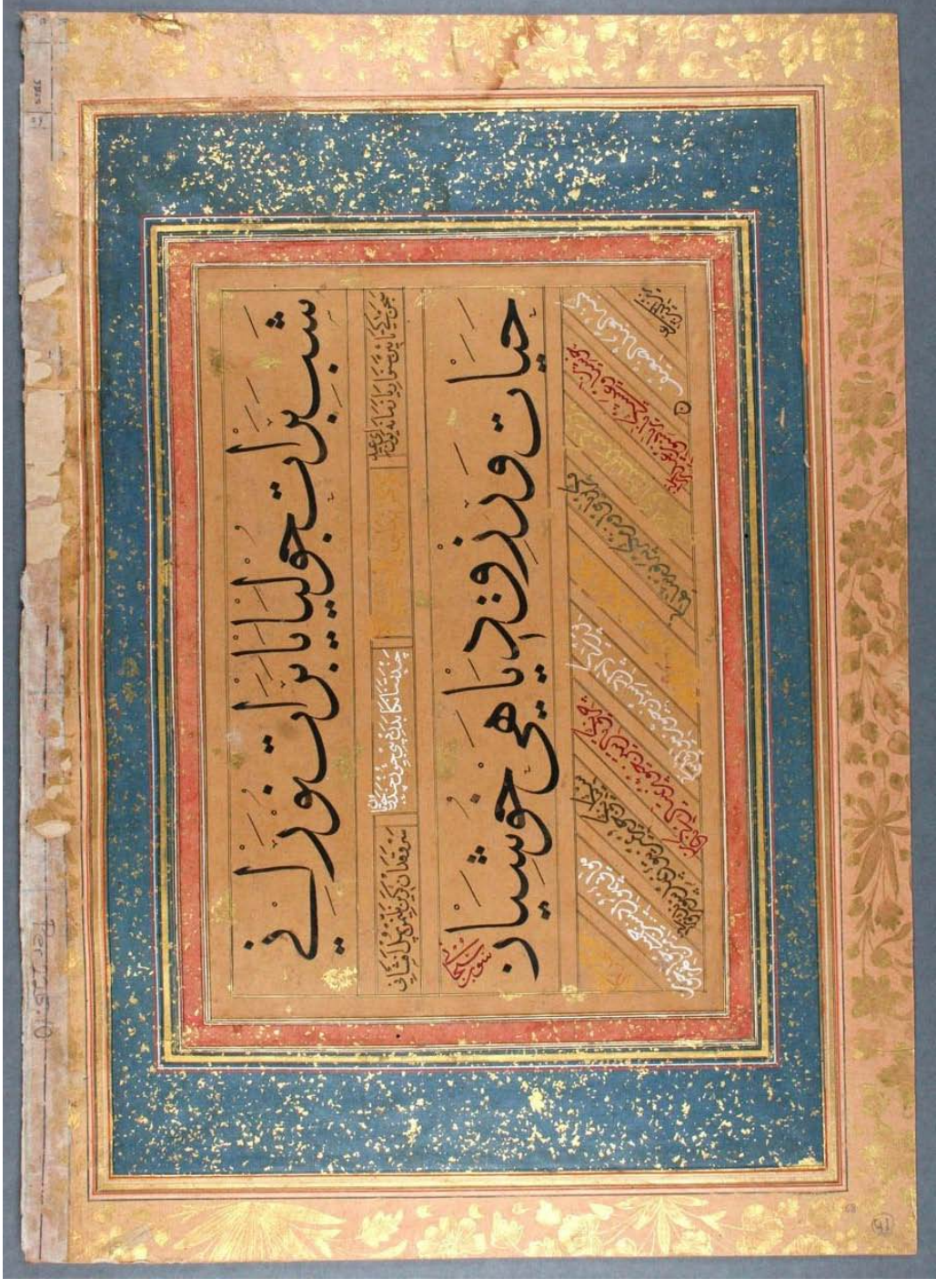
Figure 5.20 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 10r, central panel ca. 1605, Golconda (Chester Beatty Library, Persian Ms. 225)
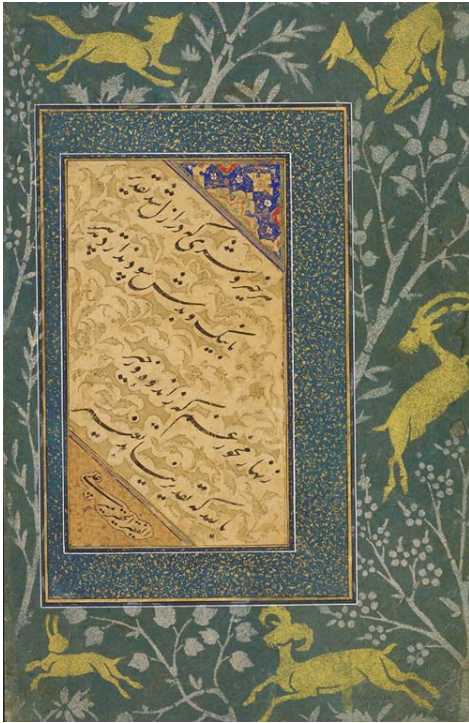
Figure 5.21 – Page of calligraphy by Mir 'Ali, 16th century, Iran (Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, S1986.326)

Figure 5.22 – *Muraqqa'*, 1664, Ottoman Turkey (Sabancı Collection, Istanbul, no. 391)
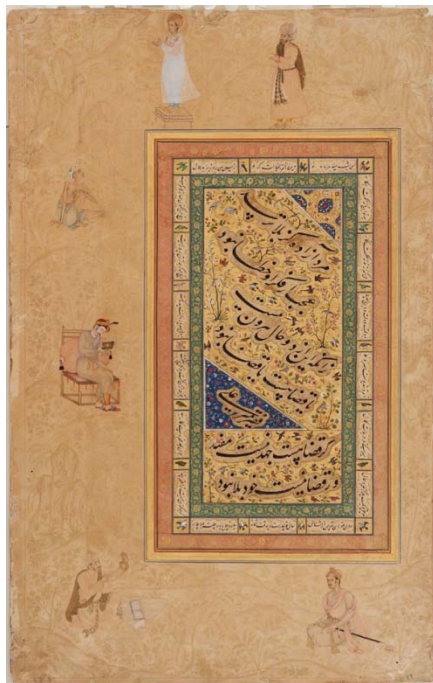
Figure 5.23 – Page of calligraphy, 1588, India (Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, F1963.4)

Figure 5.24 – *Kit'a* by Seyh Hamdullah, 15-16th century, Ottoman Turkey (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, İstanbul, no. 246)

Figure 5.25 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 13r, central panel ca. 1605, Golconda (Chester Beatty Library, Persian Ms. 225)
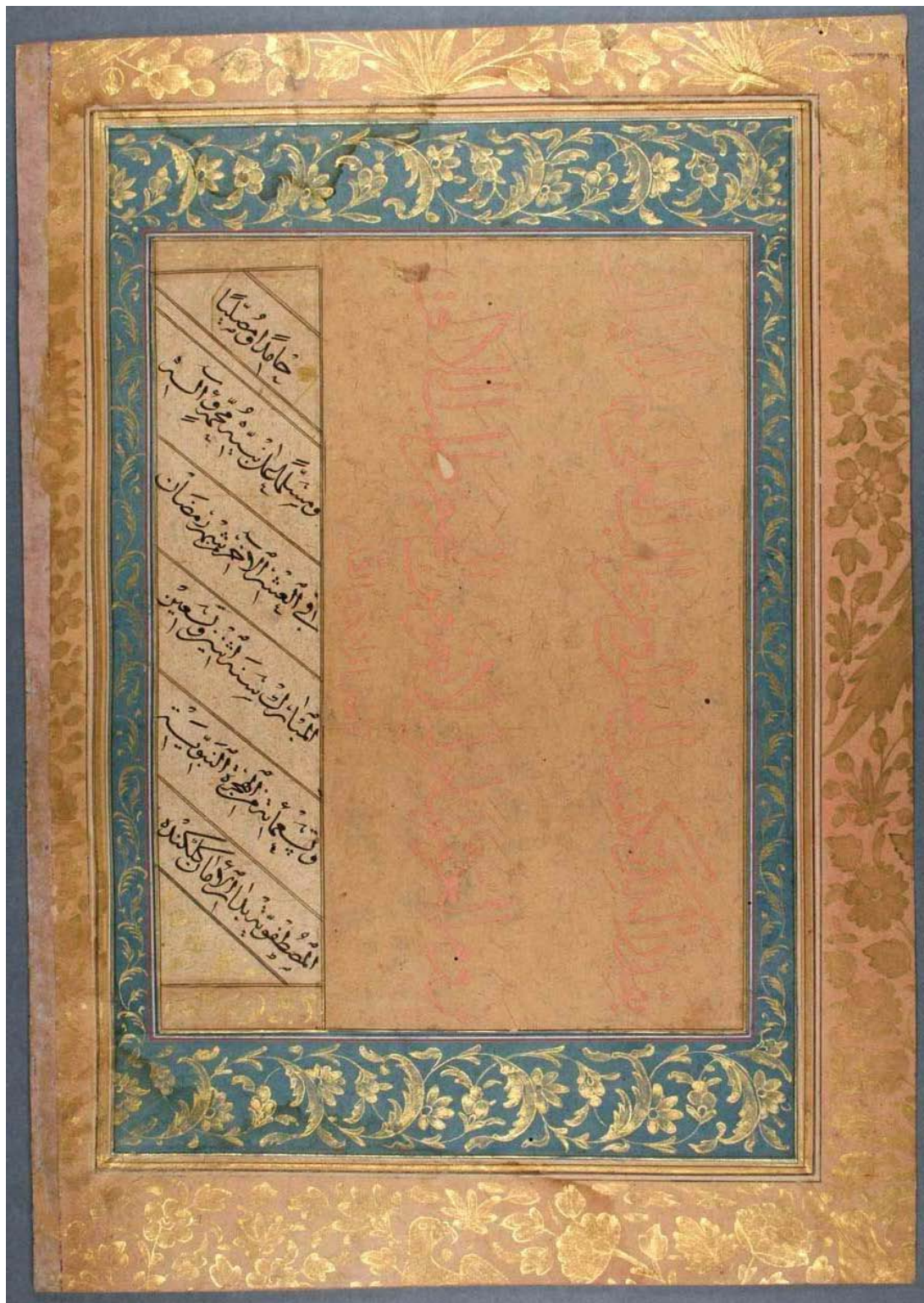
Figure 5.26 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 3v, central
panel 1584, Golconda (Chester Beatty Library,
Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.27 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 6v, central panel 1591,
Golconda (Chester Beatty Library, Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.28 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 2v, central
panel ca. 1595, Golconda (Chester Beatty
Library, Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.29 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 3r, central
panel ca. 1595, Golconda (Chester Beatty
Library, Persian Ms. 225)
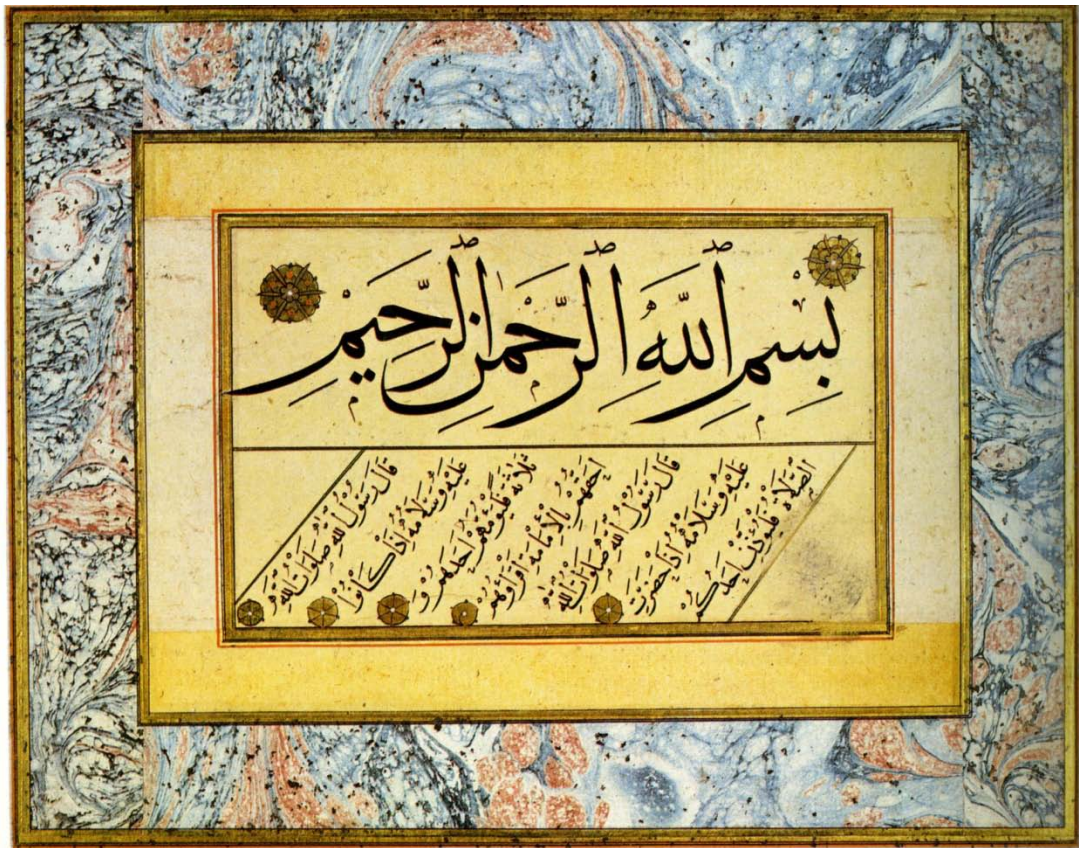
Figure 5.30 – Page of calligraphy, 17th century, Turkey (Topkapı Sarayı Müsezi, İstanbul, no. 3655)
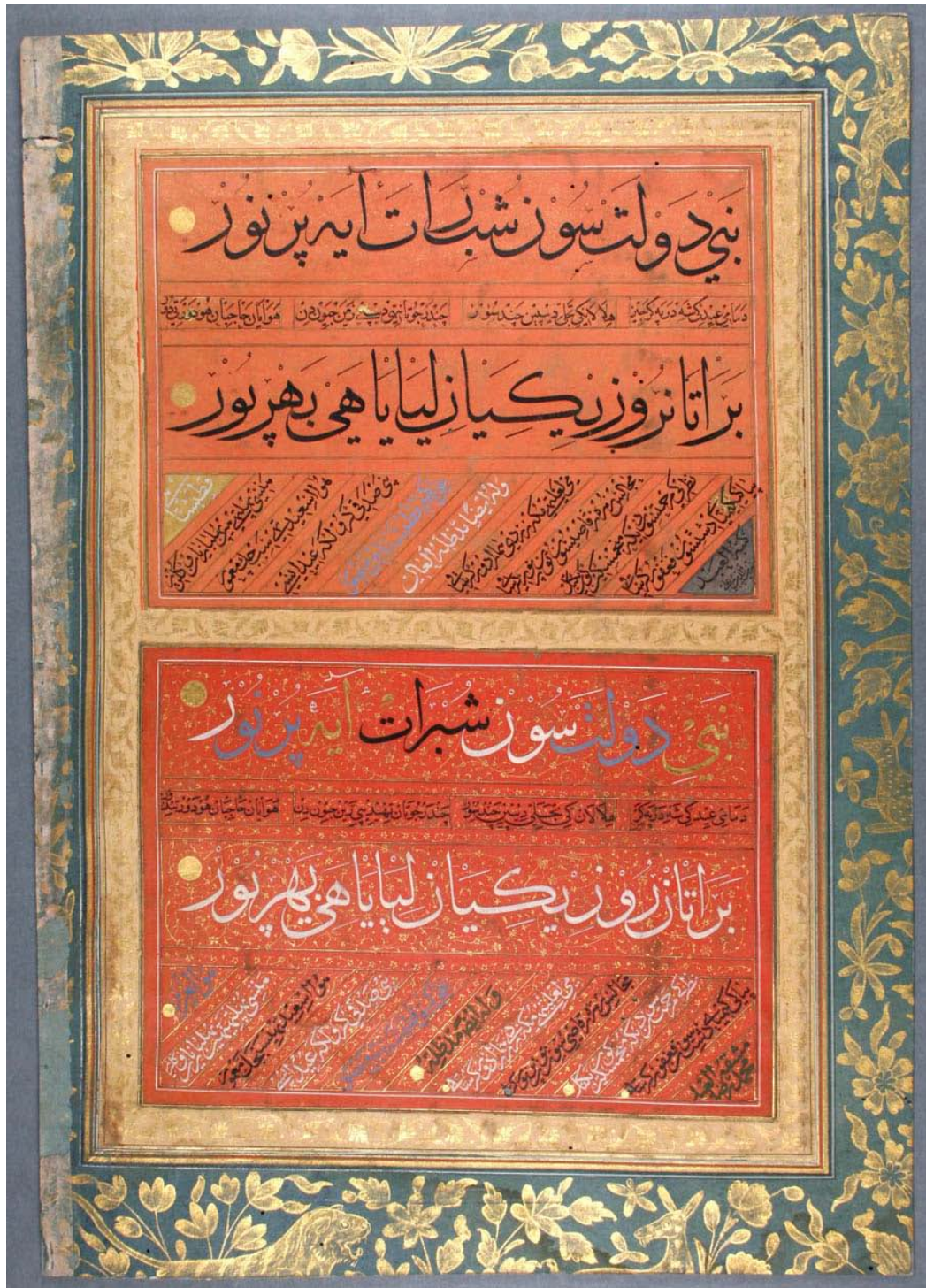
Figure 5.31 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 13v, central
panel ca. 1605, Golconda (Chester Beatty
Library, Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.32 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 8v, central panel ca. 1605, Golconda (Chester Beatty Library, Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.33 – Qutb Shahi album, f. 4r, central
panel 16th century, Iran (Chester Beatty Library,
Persian Ms. 225)

Figure 5.34 – *Kulliyat* of Nawa'i, binding, early
16th century, Iran or Turkey (National Library of
Russia, Dorn 558)

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Appendix I: Kannada Captions in the British Library Sindbadnama (I.O. Islamic 3214)

No.	Folio	Transcription	Translation
1	fly leaf	*bādaśāharu vālagadalliyadhāre*	The *badshah* is in *darbar*. (?)
2	1r	*sūryya*	Sun
3	11v	*vanadalli bādaśāharu putranu bekendu / tapassu māḍiddu//*	Desiring a son, the emperor does penance in the forest.
4	13v	*sanadubāda-ninci | upā- dhyaru / rājakumāranige || vidyavannu he[?]ḷ utāne|| maśīti ||*	The teacher Sindbad instructs the prince [in the] mosque.
5	14v	*yerujana paṇ - ḍitaru tamma śā-stravannu nōḍu- tāre ||*	The seven pandits consult their *shastras*.
6	18v	*bādaśāhiyaṃnnu kuritu [?] sanadubādanu katheyannu heḷ utāne ||*	Sindbad tells a story concerning the strategies of ruling.
7	20v	*aḍaviyalli | voṇṭ e | tōḷ a | jambuka ||*	In the forest: the camel, the wolf, and the jackal.
8	21v	*sanadubādana | śṛṅ gā- ra-vana ||*	Sindbad's pleasure-garden.
9	22r	*sanadubadana maneyalli | kumāranige vidyavannu bō- dhisuttāyidhāne ||*	In Sindbad's house: he is instructing the prince.
10	23v	*āneśālukeḷ age māvaṭ e ganubiddayidhāne| surajana villā nōḍutadi ||*	The mahout is trampled by the elephant while the people watch.

Appendix II: Reconstruction of the Andhra Pradesh State Museum Khamsa

Folio	Original state	After additions
		Painting 1
		Painting 2 (missing)
	Shamsa (missing)	*Shamsa* (missing)
1r	*Shamsa*	*Shamsa*
1v	*'unwan* 1	*'unwan* 1
2r – 32r	Text of 1st poem	Text of 1st poem
32v	Blank page	Painting 3
33r	Blank page	Painting 4
33v	*'unwan* 2	*'unwan* 2
34r – 105r	Text of 2nd poem	Text of 2nd poem
105v	Blank	Blank
106r	Blank	Painting 5
106v	*'unwan* 3	*'unwan* 3
107r – 160r	Text of 3rd poem	Text of 3rd poem
160v	Blank	Painting 6
161r	Blank	Painting 7
161v	*'unwan* 4	*'unwan* 4
162r – 222r	Text of 4th poem	Text of 4th poem
222v	Blank	Painting 8
223r	Blank (missing)	Blank (missing)
223v	*'unwan* 5 (missing)	*'unwan* 5 (missing)
224r – 306v	Text of 5th poem	Text of 5th poem
307r	Blank	Blank
308v	*'unwan* 6	*'unwan* 6
309r – 350v	Text of 6th poem	Text of 6th poem
351r	Blank	Blank

Appendix III: Qutb Shahi album folios in Chester Beatty Library Persian Ms. 225[1]

Folio #		Name of calligrapher	Place of production	Date	Language	Content
1	Recto	'Imad al-Hasani	-	-	Arabic	Praise of Muhammad
	Verso	Malik Daylami	Nakhchivan (place where calligraphy was done)	961/1554 (date when calligraphy was done)	Persian	Praise of a king
2	Recto	-	-	-	Persian	Praise of a king
	Verso	Haji Abdullah	Hyderabad	After 1591	-	Praise of Muhammad
3	Recto	Haji Abdullah	Hyderabad	After 1591	Arabic	About the birthday of Muhammad
	Verso	Murad Dhu'l-Qadr	Golconda	992/1584 (date when page was put together, not date of the calligraphy)	Arabic	*Hadith*
4	Recto	Drawing	-	-	-	-
	Verso	-	-	-	Arabic and Persian	*Bismillah* and sayings of the prophet
5	Recto	-	-	-	Persian	Poem about calligraphic beauty
	Verso	Sultan 'Ali	-	-	Persian	Page of a book about Sufism
6	Recto	Muhammad Shirazi (possibly the father of scribe who worked in Hyderabad)	-	-	Arabic	Poem about prophet
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	1000/1591	Arabic, Persian and probably Dakani	Name and titles of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah
7	Recto	Muhammad Riza	Hyderabad	-	Mostly Arabic and a bit of Persian	Prayers and invocations
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Dakani	Poem about birthday of Muhammad
8	Recto	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din	-	-	Dakani	Poem about

		'Ali				Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah
9	Recto	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Arabic and Persian	Sayings of 'Ali
	Verso	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem in praise of 'Ali
10	Recto	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
	Verso	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Praise of the prophet
11	Recto	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
	Verso	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem about end of *'id Ramadan*
12	Recto	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali and Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *'id Ramadan*
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *'id Ramadan*
13	Recto	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Muharram*
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali and Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
14	Recto	Muhammad Riza	Hyderabad	-	Arabic	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
	Verso	Muhammad Riza and Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	1014/1605	Dakani	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
15	Recto	Muhammad Riza	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Shab-i Barat*
	Verso	Zayn ud-Din 'Ali	-	-	Dakani	Poem about *Bakr 'id*

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[1] The information Appendix III should not be considered definitive. Further work with specialists in the manuscript's three languages will be necessary to reach a conclusive assessment of the content of each page.