

The Albums and Heinrich Friedrich von Diez

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Contents & Contexts: Re-viewing the Diez Albums

Julian Raby

The Diez albums first came to scholarly attention in 1956, two years after the publication of the earliest extended articles on cognate albums in Istanbul (H. 2152, 2153, 2154, and 2160).¹ Within three years,

Ernst Kühnel had published two articles on the Berlin albums,² followed in 1964 by Mazhar İpşiroğlu's volume describing their contents.³ From the outset scholars recognized that the Berlin and Istanbul albums shared many similarities in content, yet neither Kühnel nor İpşiroğlu elaborated on the scope or reasons.⁴ They also only fleetingly mentioned some of the considerable dissimilarities, in structure, general appearance, and, to some extent, content. For example, three of the albums – Diez A fols. 70–72 – contain no calligraphy, and no examples of the “Siyah Qalam monsters”

¹ I would like to thank Christoph Rauch and Julia Gonnella for their flattering invitation to deliver a keynote address to the conference, and Christoph for his hospitality in locking me in the basement of the library to study the Diez albums. I much enjoyed the frequent exchanges with Friederike Weis, who was very generous in sharing her close knowledge of the albums. I would also like to thank James White for his help with the initial research for this article; Tim Stanley for his advice; Robert Hillenbrand for his perceptive criticisms; Massumeh Farhad for her thoughts on the dating I have used in the charts; and Reid Hoffman for laying out the images and designing the charts. My deepest thanks go to the late Ernst Grube for his organization of the conference in London on the Istanbul albums, and his enormous generosity as a scholar and friend.

The earliest publication of the Diez albums was by Jörg Kraemer in *Persische Miniaturen und ihr Umkreis*, ed. Jörg Kraemer, Tübingen 1956, cat. nos. 33, 46, 47, 53, 69. For the first articles on the Istanbul albums, see Oktay Aslanapa, “Türkische Miniaturmalerei am Hofe Mehmet des Eroberers in Istanbul”, *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954), pp. 77–84; Richard Ettinghausen, “Some Paintings in Four Istanbul Albums”, *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954), pp. 91–103; Max Loehr, “The Chinese Elements in the Istanbul Miniatures”, *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954), pp. 95–89. For the early scholarship on the Diez albums, see David J. Roxburgh, “Heinrich Friedrich Von Diez and His Eponymous Albums:

Mss. Diez A. Fols. 70–74”, *Muqarnas* 12 (1995), p. 133, notes 6 and 7; Eleanor G. Sims, “Images of Firdausi’s Shahnama in the Diez Albums in the Berlin State Library”, in *Heroic Times: A Thousand Years of the Persian Book of Kings*, ed. Julia Gonnella and Christoph Rauch, Berlin and Munich 2012.

² Kühnel, “Malernamen in den Berliner ‘Saray’-Alben”, *Kunst des Orients* 3 (1959), pp. 66–77; *idem*, “Unbekannte Miniaturen und Zeichnungen aus Berliner Beständen”, in *Akten des 24. Orientalisten-Kongresses, München 28. August bis 4. September 1957*, ed. Herbert Franke, Wiesbaden 1959, pp. 352–54.

³ Mazhar Şevket İpşiroğlu, *Saray-Alben. Diez’sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlungen*, ed. Wolfgang Voigt, Wiesbaden 1964.

⁴ Kühnel, “Malernamen”, p. 76, suggested that the occurrence of signatures by the same “second-rank” artist, Muhammad Khayyam, in the Istanbul and Berlin albums indicated that the two groups had a common origin.

who feature prominently in much of İpşiroğlu's research.⁵

İpşiroğlu's organization of the images in the Diez albums by type and date makes it difficult to reconstruct their juxtapositions and sequences in the original albums. His approach reflected a prevailing lack of interest in the "phenomenology" of albums, that is the way in which structural arrangement, physical make-up, and decorative framing provide the landscape in which to view an album's contents, and in which to appreciate the cultural intentions of those who assembled the album.⁶ Albums at the time were not studied *qua* albums; the emphasis instead was on albums as repositories of contents, at the expense of understanding them as cognitive collections. It is only in the last twenty-five years that scholars, led by David Roxburgh, have pioneered our understanding of compilation and construction in the making of albums from the Muslim world.⁷

For the Diez albums an added complication arose in 1970, when a major conservation programme focused on the contents and tore up the "landscape". Paintings and drawings were lifted from the pages and loosely reattached to large sheets, each in a protective folder.⁸ The intention was to better preserve the contents, not to recreate the original appearance. Although the conservators tried to preserve an echo of the original grouping of each album page,⁹ they discarded most of the mounting and framing materials, and lost the precise juxtapositions. With each page filed separately, we have lost a sense of double-page openings, and of the arrangement and feel of the album. In short, we have lost the album as a phenomenon.

5 Mazhar Şevket İpşiroğlu, *Siyah Qalem: vollst. Faks.-Ausg. d. Blätter des Meisters Mehmed Siyah Qalem aus dem Besitz des Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul, u.d. Freer Gallery, of Art, Washington, Graz 1976*; *idem*, *Masterpieces of the Topkapi Museum: Paintings and Miniatures*, London 1980; *idem*, *Wind der Steppe. Die schönsten Blätter des Meisters Siyah Qalem*, Graz 1984.

6 Cf. Christopher Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments*, Oxford 1997.

7 David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album 1400–1600: From Dispersion to Collection*, New Haven and London 2005; Elaine J. Wright, *Muraqqa': Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library*, Alexandria, VA. 2008. The study of albums in a Western context has developed along several lines. For example, for a codicological approach, see Albert J. Elen, *Italian Late-Medieval and Renaissance drawing-books from Giovannino de' Grassi to Palma Giovane: A*

codicological approach, Leiden 1995; on the collecting of drawings into albums, Evelyn Karet, "Stefano da Verona, Felice Feliciano and the first Renaissance collection of drawings", *Arte Lombarda* 124 (1998), pp. 31–51; *eadem* and Peter Windows, "The Antonio II Badile Album of drawings: a reconstruction of an early sixteenth century collection", *Arte Lombarda* 145 (2005), pp. 23–56; and for a study of the cognitive and social aspects of photographic albums, M. Langford, *Suspended Conversations: The after-life of memory in photographic albums*, Montreal, Que. 2001.

8 Klaus Appel and Dieter George, "Die Saray-Alben der Staatsbibliothek und ihre Restaurierung", *Jahrbuch Preussischer Kulturbesitz* 9 (1971), p. 231. An unintended consequence of lifting the paintings, removing the glue and backing, and cleaning the reverse of the paintings with an anti-microbial liquid was that the colours gained a new vibrancy.

9 Photographs were taken before the albums were dismantled, and copies of these can be found under the relevant call numbers at <http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de>.

All credit must go to David J. Roxburgh, who published an article in 1995 that gave a fuller understanding of Diez's bibliophile activities in Istanbul and offered the first contextual review of the albums' contents and assemblage.¹⁰ He argued that the contents of all five Diez albums in Berlin – a total of some 180 pages and more than 400 drawings and paintings – stemmed from purchases Diez made in Istanbul, but that they are not uniform, and have different – and revealing – histories.

Different Albums, Different Histories

The first three albums (A fols. 70–72) were assembled and bound in Istanbul.¹¹ They have similar Ottoman bindings; the paintings and drawings were mounted in an Ottoman style, on similar gold-speckled paper, with rulings in two principal colour schemes.¹² Together they contain glean-

ings of fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century Iranian painting, many of types that survive only in the albums in Istanbul.

A fols. 73 and 74 differed from the coherent group of A fols. 70–72, and from each other. First, both albums were assembled in Germany,¹³ and neither used gold-sprinkled paper.¹⁴ Second, the contents were not arranged in the same manner as in the first three albums. Third, their contents are markedly different. A fol. 73 has mixed contents: some of the items are of high quality, mostly drawn from two albums in the Topkapı Palace; some of it is of mediocre or low quality, including one European and one Chinese work, and late eighteenth-century Ottoman items that one might politely call “bazaar work”. Significantly, this album lacks the sense of order of A fols. 70–72. The paintings in the first part of A fol. 73 were on separate folios, with a blank page opposite, whereas in the second half – from pages 38 to 73 – the paintings and drawings are on every page, creating facing pages of images.

10 Roxburgh, “Diez”.

11 The three albums differ in extent, as A fol. 70 is twice as big as the other two.

12 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 114; the rulings are distinctive and consist of a combination of a thick gold band, an orange or light blue line, and a thin gold line edged with black. Friederike Weis has kindly informed me that she had Oliver Hahn from the BAM Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing analyze some of the rulings, mostly using X-ray fluorescence. In A fols. 70–72 the light-blue rulings consist of a mixture of lapis lazuli and white lead, the orange rulings are of red lead/minium (Pb₃O₄), and the framing “gold” bands are edged with a black carbon ink. The “gold” bands, however, are made of the copper–zinc alloy brass (CuZn) rather than gold (Au). This is in contrast to A fol. 73, where the gold bands always consist of real

gold. Only a few of the orange rulings were tested, but at least in the case of the drawing of the *Tazza Farnese* (A fol. 72, p. 3, no. 2) they cover real gold rulings which seem to belong to a much earlier mounting, emphasizing the difference between the brass bands used in the late eighteenth century and the earlier gold bands.

Friederike Weis' work has not been published, but was delivered as a keynote lecture entitled “Detecting the originals among the copies: The art historian's view on some Persian drawings in the Diez Albums”, Franco-German Summer School “Science and Technology in Cultural Heritage” in Frauenchiemsee on 5 September 2011.

13 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 118.

14 Appel and George, “Saray-Alben”, p. 229.

Roxburgh concluded that single paintings as well as entire folios were removed from Tokpapi Sarayı MS H. 2152, with a few additional drawings taken from the largely calligraphic album B. 411.¹⁵ A fol. 73 was, then, a miscellaneous collectanea rather than a “designed” album.

A fol. 74 differs because it has little figurative imagery, and comprises mostly calligraphy. It includes texts culled from manuscripts, and even a letter from Diez requesting his stipend from the Sublime Porte. Several of the pages were lifted as complete folios straight from the Topkapi album B. 411, the size of which broadly dictated the size of A fol. 74.¹⁶

A fols. 73 and 74 were not, however, bound in Diez’s time. A previously unpublished passage from his will indicates that he bequeathed to the Royal Library – on 20 February 1817, less than two months before he died – a collection of Oriental paintings, some in three folio-sized volumes, some loose in a large outside folio folder.¹⁷

Evidently, A fols. 70–72 were already bound, whereas the loose-leaf items were only bound into albums later, perhaps in the 1830s.¹⁸

These different histories raise questions about Diez’s creative role in the formation of not only A fols. 73 and 74, but the three volumes bound in Istanbul, A fols. 70–72. With regard to the latter, Roxburgh surmised that Diez “presented a body of loose drawings and paintings excerpted from several Topkapi albums to a binder who undertook the task of arranging the materials and making three albums in a codex form for Diez”.¹⁹ This may not be the case, however, and this present article attempts to unravel more of the history of A fols. 70–72 through a closer understanding of their original structure and appearance.

From Physical Deconstruction to Virtual Reconstruction

Roxburgh was denied a fuller understanding of the albums’ design and programmatic construction by the dismemberment they suffered twenty-five years earlier. “Deconstruction” might better convey the meticulous process undertaken in 1970, but

15 On TSMK B. 411, see Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, chapter 3.

16 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 125 ff, and p. 136, note 60. The folios were trimmed for inclusion in A fol. 74.

17 This section of his will was not reproduced by Curt Balcke, “Heinrich Friedrich von Diez und sein Vermächtnis in der Preußischen Staatsbibliothek”, in *Von Büchern und Bibliotheken*, ed. Gustav Abb, Berlin 1928, pp. 187–200, especially p. 193. I owe the text of the missing section to Christoph Rauch. It reads: “[...] eine kleine Sammlung morgenländischer Gemälde, größtentheils Scenen aus Firdusis Geschichte der Könige oder Schahname]. Sie sind theils in drei kleinen Folio-Bänden geheftet, theils als lose Stücke, meist Zeichnungen und Zerrbilder, in einer Mappe von Groß Folio-Format zusammengelegt.”

18 On the date of Diez’s will, see Balcke, “Vermächtnis”, p. 191. The call numbers and page numbers were inserted by a Berlin librarian, perhaps Carl Immanuel Kießling in about 1838. See the article in this volume by Christoph Rauch. The same hand can be found on Diez’s European manuscripts: Ursula Winter, *Die europäischen Handschriften der Bibliothek Diez*, vol. 1, parts 1 and 2, Leipzig 1986, pl. iii, and part 3, Wiesbaden 1994, pls. iii and xi.

19 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 115.

it fails to convey the concomitant destruction. The preservation of the albums' contents entailed the destruction of context. It was a process akin to field archaeology, where excavating down the different strata involves the destruction of the upper levels. In this case too "excavation" led to what Appel referred to as chance discoveries: paintings stuck beneath paintings, and text pages used as what he called "eine Art Zwischenkarton", a sort of pasteboarding.²⁰ While these buried fragments were part of the physical construction of the album pages, they were never intended to be seen and should not be regarded as part of the denotative construct of the albums' maker or patron.

To understand each album as an entity, we need to "recreate" the codex. Fortunately, a microfilm was produced before the albums were disassembled, and, although each page was photographed separately, it is now an easy task to stitch together the images of facing pages. This photographic reconstruction (plates 1–9) reveals that the selection, organization, and mounting of items made A fols. 70–72 more distinctive, more coherent typologically, and more harmonious artistically than has generally been recognized. They were conceived with considerable forethought.

In terms of selection the most notable feature is the absence of text.²¹ This is all the more remarkable given the custom of

including some calligraphy even in largely pictorial albums, and given that the principal source album, H. 2152, had an extensive section of outstanding calligraphy.

Collectively the three albums A fols. 70–72 provide a conspectus of fourteenth- and very early fifteenth-century figurative painting from Iran, from the Ilkhanids to the Jalayirids and early Timurids.²² In terms of structure, the broad sequences of related material, the chronological range, the balance of multiple versus single images, and the grouping of paintings versus drawings can be appreciated in schematic form (plates 10–12). They reveal, for example, that A fols. 70 and 71 end with drawings that are late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. In both instances this seems like an intentional coda; and in both cases the final pages include drawings signed by or with attributions to Muhammad Khayyam, a placement that I would suggest is purposeful, not accidental. By contrast, in A fol. 72 we begin with drawings, and close with mid fourteenth-century paintings whose monumental size dictated a different scale for this volume. Assuming that A fols. 70, 71 and 72 were intended to be read as a consecutive experience, there is almost a musical sensibility in composition, with an antiphony of visual resonances, and quiet passages that culminate in a crescendo.

In artistic terms, pages were organized to be a series of double-spreads, with an eye for the balance of visual weight

20 Appel and George, "Saray-Alben", p. 231. For a discussion of some of the "buried" texts, see Simon Rettig in this volume.

21 On the absence of text, Kühnel, "Unbekannte Miniaturen"; Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 115. An exception is the gold text heading at the top of a late fourteenth-century painting,

The Lover Sends his Message with the Candle, A fol. 71, p. 11, no. 5.

22 In A fol. 70, pages 12 and 15 respectively, there is an anomalous early Safavid painting, and a Chinese painting, both of large-scale riders with one arm raised.

across the spreads. Items of comparable style, density, theme, and even size were juxtaposed.²³ There was often symmetry in how the picture block was filled: if there were multiple images on one page, there were multiple images on the opposite page. Balance across a double-spread was enhanced by placing items of similar height and width on facing pages, or by creating framing panels of largely similar dimensions, these rulings playing an important role in unifying the items on each page.²⁴ The execution depended more on eye than precise measurement, but the preference for facing panels of a similar size is evident from:

1. A few instances where the images were cropped, with the cut-off fragments buried as part of the "Zwischenkarton".²⁵

23 For example, the images of two kings on horseback, both carrying maces: A fol. 70, p. 14, nos. 1–2.

24 Most of the items were arranged with due respect for their original orientation. In other words, the top of the image faced the top of the album page, the baseline of the image the bottom of the page. There were, however, many instances where an image was too big to be placed horizontally; it was then almost invariably turned so that its baseline was next to the gutter of the binding. This sometimes entailed having an image on one page correctly oriented, whereas the image(s) on the facing page were turned ninety degrees clockwise or counter-clockwise. There are three exceptions to the "gutter rule" on A fol. 72, p. 6 no. 2 (*Man Fighting a Lioness*), p. 9 (*Chinese Children filling a Vase with Flowers*), and p. 10, no. 3 (*Lion*).

25 As in the case of the Jalayirid painting of *Siyavush's Trial by Fire*: A fol. 71, p. 27. See also A fol. 71, p. 9 and p. 13. By contrast, there are a

2. Numerous instances where several millimetres on one or more sides of an image were masked by a border, an obvious example being the top and right-hand sections of the drawing of the Tazza Farnese (A fol. 72, p. 3, no. 2).²⁶

few instances where parts of a painting have been cut off but were mounted so as to be visible on the album page: see A fol. 71, p. 8 (plate 3) where a portion of the left-hand part of the painting has been cut out and mounted so that it can be seen, above a section on the right. On A fol. 71, p. 31 (plate 4) an L-shaped late Jalayirid/early Timurid painting has been supplemented by a fragment of a mid-fourteenth century Jalayirid painting of the type seen on A fol. 71, p. 8 (plate 3). Three other fragments from the group are used to fill sections of a very miscellaneous assembly of paintings on A fol. 72, p. 40 (nos. 4, 7 and 8); cf. 41, no. 5. Cf. A fol. 71, p. 4 and p. 44, no. 6 for fragments of a painting of trees that has been used to fill in the assemblage. On page 4 the juxtaposition and alignment create a very strange effect. The most bizarre filler occurs on A fol. 71, p. 6, where the centre of the montage of images is occupied by a tiny fragment showing the rump of a horse (almost invisible in plate 3). For an excellent description of the three-stage process of mounting in the Diez albums, see Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 114.

- 26 On A fol. 71, p. 5 almost 2 cm at top of the Jalayirid painting was masked off, so that the upper part of the curtains could no longer be seen. On A fol. 71, p. 12, up to 3.5 cm was masked off the top of the scene of the man mating with a monkey. For further examples of masking part of a painting, see A fol. 70, p. 1, p. 3, no. 1, p. 8, no. 2, p. 14, no. 1, p. 15; A fol. 71, p. 2, p. 4, no. 1, p. 6, nos. 3 and 4, page 10, p. 32, no. 2, p. 35, p. 41, no. 1, p. 42, nos. 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8, p. 43, nos. 1–7, p. 44, nos. 1–5, p. 45, nos. 2, 3 and 4, p. 46, nos. 1–5, p. 62, p. 63, nos. 1, 2 and 7, p. 64, no. 1. In some cases this entailed masking an area smaller than that masked

3. The equally numerous instances where blank strips were used to enlarge the picture panel so that it was better balanced in size with its mate on the facing page.²⁷ These strips occurred on four, three, two or even just one side of the picture panel.
4. Instances in A fols. 71 and 72 where the outer border was supplemented by an inner border with ruled lines.²⁸
5. A single instance where the border was thicker than standard, and thicker than the border on the facing page (A fol. 72, p. 26).

There was also a clear preference for keeping the framed panel a neat rectangle, and on occasions where the picture area was filled with multiple images that did not entirely occupy the frame, blank paper would be inserted to fill the gap.²⁹ In sev-

eral instances key parts of a painting, such as a head or a foot, were carefully preserved by cutting around them. In other words, cropping or masking occurred where the loss was considered inconsequential, as for example parts of a landscape or building, whereas for figural elements partial *découpage* was often preferred.³⁰ Nevertheless, where a key part of a painting protruded beyond the inner margin, it was never allowed to protrude beyond the outer line of the border.³¹

Further evidence of the compiler's taste is provided by the disposition of paintings and drawings: he chose to have items with similar visual densities on facing pages, and avoided placing line drawings opposite fully-coloured paintings, as he must have found the contrast discordant. In four instances line drawings are placed opposite images from Rashid

by the borders created when the image was mounted into TSM H. 2152, leading in some cases to a dual loss of detail. For example, A fol. 71, p. 30, no. 1, p. 32, no. 1; A fol. 72, p. 4, nos. 3 and 4, p. 8, no. 2, p. 11, p. 16, no. 2, p. 18, no. 3, pp. 19, 22, 23, 26, 30. On the rulings used for H. 2152, see Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 115. On the dual loss, see, for example, A fol. 71, p. 11, no. 3, p. 29, no. 1, p. 31, no. 1; A fol. 72, p. 4, no. 2; p. 8, nos. 1 and 2 (where the loss at the bottom of the drawing is just under 1 cm); p. 16, no. 2 (where the loss of the painting on the left is about 8 mm); pp. 22 and 23.

- 27 For example, A fol. 70, pp. 1, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 25; A fol. 71, pp. 7, 8, 11. In A fol. 72, the relative sizing of the framed areas in a double-spread (pp. 1–6) is less uniform.
- 28 A fol. 71, pp. 58, 59 and 60 (all Rashid al-Din cavalry battles), and pp. 64, 68; and A fol. 72, p. 3.
- 29 For example, A fol. 70 p. 10, p. 13; A fol. 71, p. 63; A fol. 72, p. 2.

30 For example, A fol. 72, p. 6, no. 3, about 5 mm of the bottom of the drawing was masked, though the camel's foot was not cropped or masked but cut around so that it was pasted over part of the outer border. See the similar case of a camel's foot in the margin, A fol. 72, p. 4, no. 1 (barely visible in plate 8). On A fol. 71, pp. 29 and 30, two paintings of the *Small Shāhnāma* type are placed on facing pages, and in both instances the heads of figures at the top have been preserved by cutting around them, even though this meant having the heads protrude into the large-scale Jalayirid paintings above (plate 4). See also A fol. 71, p. 42, no. 3. Two marked examples of *découpage* occur on A fol. 70, p. 6, no. 1, and on A fol. 71, p. 46.

31 There are two exceptions where an element protrudes beyond what should be the main line of the frame, but in both cases the border runs around the protruding area and thus contains the entire image: A fol. 70, p. 12 and A fol. 71, p. 33 (plates 1 and 5).

al-Din manuscripts, but as these were only partially coloured the contrast was not extreme.³² There is one exception to this rule, and that is the pairing on the same page of a painting and drawing of a princely rider holding a mace, but in this case consonance of theme surely trumped dissonance in manner (figs. 2.1a and 2.1b).

Although the black-and-white micro-film does not allow one to gauge the colour of the mounting pages, a surviving folio from A fol. 71 (pp. 36 and 37) indicates that the mounter was sensitive to the colours in the painting. On page 36, the left half of one double-spread, he has used a paper dyed a pale amethyst, whereas on page 37, the right half of the following spread, he has used a paper dyed a pale burgundy (figs. 2.2 and 2.3). The choice was purposeful: the colours of the mounting pages work excellently with the colours of key elements in the paintings, especially in the case of page 36. The frames in A fols. 70–72 used either a pale blue or an orange inner guard stripe, and it is noticeable how the blue used on page 36 accords perfectly with the painting (fig. 2.2), while the orange used on page 37 is more sympathetic to the colouring of the painting on that page (fig. 2.3). Similar sensitivity can be observed throughout A fols. 70–72, though the “deconstruction” of the albums has left only traces of the effect intended. The choice of orange or blue for the guard stripes seems to have been determined by the painting rather than the spread: thus on page 3 of A fol. 70 orange is used, whereas blue is used on page 4 opposite.

All these factors point to a much more sensitive approach to the mounting of

these albums than previously recognized. The result was more orderly and decorative than the placement of items in H. 2153 and arguably H. 2152. In the Istanbul albums items were sometimes placed with little regard for their original orientation.³³ In H. 2153 the items were not given custom-made borders, and there were no frames around clusters of images. In H. 2152, on the other hand, the arrangement was more disciplined, and many items had bespoke borders, including some of the larger single images;³⁴ in a few instances frames were created to corral the miscellaneous contents of an entire page.³⁵ Nonetheless, there is a broad contrast in approach between the Berlin and the Istanbul albums. Even if it is too much to describe it as order versus convenience, the Berlin albums project a more determined sense of thematic and aesthetic coherence.

Exceptions to this neatness do occur. Some images in A fols. 71 and 72 are upside down, the majority of these occurring in A fol. 72 (plates 8 and 9). Given how well-conceived many of the double-spreads are, it is difficult to imagine that anyone designed the albums this way, and the most obvious explanation for this unsightly

32 A fol. 70, pp. 23–24; A fol. 71, pp. 63–64; A fol. 72, pp. 15–16, and 17–18 (plates 2, 6, 8 and 9).

33 For example, H. 2152, fols. 44v, 75r, 83v, 88r. See Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 105. Gülru Necipoğlu has observed a greater sense of order in H. 2153 than previously recognized, with the images on the facing pages of many of the double-spreads arranged in comparable or at least consonant compositions. See her contribution to the present volume.

34 For example, H. 2152, fols. 46v, 48r, 51v, 55v.

35 For example, H. 2152, fols. 52v, 89r.



FIGURE 2.1A Princely Rider Holding a Mace, with Two Warriors Fighting on Horseback, *Iran, late fourteenth century. SBB-PK, Diez A fol. 70, p. 14, no. 1.*



FIGURE 2.1B Equestrian Frankish King Holding a Sceptre, with Two Standing Musicians, *Samarqand or Herat, late fourteenth century. SBB-PK, Diez A fol. 70, p. 14, no. 2.*



FIGURE 2.2 *Recto of a folio showing the eighteenth-century Istanbul mounting of A Sea Monster Devouring Two Shipwrecked Men, Iran, mid fourteenth century. SBB-PK, Diez A fol. 71, p. 36.*

orientation is that the mounter made the mistake of inverting several bifolios.³⁶

The inverted images raise questions about another possible failure. Several

36 The inverted images in A fols. 71 and 72 form clusters. In A fol. 71 the errant pages are 42 to 45 (fols. 22 r-v, 23 r-v) (plate 5). One explanation is that the images were mounted the correct way up, but the bifolio incorrectly inserted upside down, either in Istanbul or in Berlin, though evidently before the pages

were numbered. This would explain how the images on pages 42 and 45 are upside down, while those on the facing pages, pages 41 and 46, which might have belonged to the preceding and the succeeding bifolios, are oriented correctly. If the putative bifolio (22r-23v) was inverted by mistake, the original intention



FIGURE 2.3 *Verso of the same folio, showing the eighteenth-century Istanbul mounting of Two Riders in Mortal Combat outside a City Gate, Iran, mid-fourteenth century. SBB-PK, Diez A fol. 71, p. 37.*

would have been to have, using their current numbers, page 41 face 45, and page 42 face 46. The paintings on these facing pages would have been consonant in number, scale, theme and style. For example, across the facing pages 42 and 46, there would have been a sequence of three square paintings from a Rashid al-Din manuscript, each depicting an Ilkhan and his consort.

However, this scenario is extremely unlikely: one can tell even from the poor black-and-white photographs that the current order of pages is the intended one, because the mounting pages form matching double-spreads. The opening and closing pages of the bifolio would not match their facing pages if the bifolio had been inverted as suggested above. The alternative, then, is that the mounter got the orientation of this

bifolio (22r–23v) wrong before it was bound, and placed the images upside down. This may betray the work of the binder's assistant.

In A fol. 72 the aberrant pages are 1 to 4 and 12, 14, and 16 – the equivalent of folios 1v to 3r (on folio 3v the images are all turned ninety degrees clockwise) and folios 7r, 8r and 9r (plate 8). It is difficult to see how the errors could have been made by inverting bifolios in this album, and one must conclude that the mounter made the same mistake and got the orientation of the images wrong when he was mounting them on the folios. The results are egregious: five of the six drawings on the double-spread A fol. 72, pp. 3–4, including the image of the *Tazza Farnese*, are upside down, while the sixth is turned ninety degrees counter-clockwise.

pictures in A fols. 70–72 seem to be out of the most visually logical sequence. For example, two full-page drawings of riders spearing dragons, one late fourteenth-century, the other slightly later, are now mounted back-to-back, on the obverse and reverse of the same folio (plate 2: A fol. 70, pp. 24, 25). To a European eye, it would be easier to compare them if they were seen face-to-face, and one might assume that their present positions were caused by an inattentive mounter. It is conceivable, though, that the arrangement was prompted by a desire to play with visual memory, that is with sequential rather than synchronous viewing.

In another instance, in A fol. 70, two large paintings of a rider that would, to a modern eye, have formed a harmonious double-spread occur widely separated, on pages 12 and 15 (plate 1). It is possible there was never any intention to pair them, but it is equally possible that their current placement was a mistake by the mounter.

Despite lapses – some of them arguable – in the execution and perhaps even the planning of A fols. 70–72, the harmonization of their contents and their final mounting demonstrate a coherent vision. Similarities occur in facing pages and in sequences over several spreads. This coherence is partial in A fol. 70, but paramount in A fols. 71 and 72 (plates 10–12). If these albums were assembled in the order in which they are numbered, the differences between A fol. 70 and A fols. 71–72 suggest that the commissioner paid increasing attention to what was placed on facing pages and/or provided more detailed instructions to the binders.

Guiding Spirit

A fols. 70–72 display an organizational vision and aesthetic absent from A fols. 73 and 74, and even from some of the cognate albums in Istanbul. This prompts questions about who planned the albums, where he acquired the material, and what his concept was in creating them. Who, in other words, was the mastermind behind the creation of these albums? The two prime suspects are Heinrich Friedrich von Diez or the person who supplied him.

Diez published an account of how he acquired his vaunted Piri Reis manuscript after a Palace eunuch informed him that it and “various Persian works in which there were paintings” (“mit verschiedenen persischen Werken, worin sich Gemälde befunden”) had been “abandoned” (“überlassen”) to the harem under Abdülhamid I (r. 1774–1789). It seems very likely that Diez’s “various Persian works” included the material comprised in A fols. 70–74.³⁷

With the accession of Selim III in 1789, members of the harem were obliged to leave the Topkapı Palace and move to the “Old Palace”.³⁸ The eunuch claimed that

37 Heinrich Friedrich von Diez, *Denkwürdigkeiten von Asien in Künsten und Wissenschaften, Sitten, Gebräuchen und Alterthümern, Religion und Regierungsverfassung aus Handschriften und eigenen Erfahrungen gesammelt*, Berlin 1811–1815, vol. 1, p. 39; Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 113, p. 134, note 16. See also the comments in Diez’s hand-written catalogue, cited by Christoph Rauch in this volume.

38 On the Old Palace and its relationship to the harem in the Topkapı Palace, see Leslie Pierce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and*

the ladies of the harem needed money, which enabled Diez to acquire the manuscripts, presumably through the eunuch who, he says, “knew of my love of books”. Diez suggested the Atlas was treated in the harem “probably as a picture-book” (“vermuthlich als ein Bilderbuch”), and justified his purchase on the grounds that the Atlas and other works would be ruined if they were taken to the Old Palace and remained in the hands of the women.

This justification perhaps reflected Diez’s male chauvinism, but it was doubtless fuelled by Diez’s contact at the Palace, the unnamed eunuch, for it provided a righteous excuse for both seller and buyer. It was probably also prompted by the unbound and damaged state of the Piri Reis manuscript when Diez acquired it.³⁹ That was not, however, the case with A fols. 70–72, as we shall see.

The key questions are whether Diez purchased the contents of A fols. 70–72 loose, as happened with the contents of A fols. 73 and 74, and whether Diez orchestrated their mounting into albums in

Istanbul or acquired the albums already bound.

I find it difficult to credit Diez with their construction for several reasons. Diez demonstrated a deep interest in Persian and Turkish literature, and was prepared to pay sizeable sums for illustrated versions of the *Shāhnāma*, the *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*, and Nizami’s *Khamsa*. Diez bought the *Shāhnāma* from the Ottoman Palace, and admitted he paid a high price, because of the rarity of the paintings. Diez wrote admiringly of Persian calligraphy and illuminated decoration, but criticized the lack of perspective and shadows in Persian figural painting.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, other than the five eponymous albums in Berlin, and two volumes of Ottoman costume drawings now in the British Museum, Diez’s examples of non-Western paintings are relatively sparse and show no consistent eye for quality.⁴¹

The Berlin albums are evidence of Diez’s curiosity about Persian painting, but this does not mean that he had a tutored eye. His comment that illustrated manuscripts were hard to come by in Istanbul underlines how difficult it would have been for him to become an expert. As Christoph Rauch has forcefully argued, there was in Diez’s day almost no appreciation in Europe of Persian painting and certainly

Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire, New York and Oxford 1993, pp. 119 ff.

39 Diez, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1, pp. 33–71, especially pp. 40–41. Diez says that he could not have it rebound in the original style of binding, even if he had known the order of the pages, as some of the text went into the gutters and would have been lost by ‘our bookbinders’. This surely indicates that Diez did not have his Piri Reis manuscript bound in Istanbul. The manuscript is currently in a binding made in January 1934, according to a note on the endpaper. <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000B58200000007>.

40 See the article in this volume by Christoph Rauch.

41 The catalogue of the auction of Diez’s effects, held in 1818, reveals that he had a large, but very miscellaneous, collection of European paintings and prints. I am grateful to Christoph Rauch for sharing images of this catalogue.

no understanding of its history. Diez would have had to have been an expert *avant la lettre* to have overseen the arrangement and mounting of A fols. 70–72.

To credit him with such knowledge and sensitivity is also to ignore the ill-considered selection and assemblage of material in the first part of A fol. 73. As the binding of A fols. 73 and 74 was undertaken after the materials entered the Royal Library, Diez can perhaps be forgiven for their arrangement. Nevertheless, it was Diez who collected and preserved the miscellany of often second-rate eighteenth-century European prints, and Ottoman and Chinese paintings. The material is so heterogeneous he must have picked up much of it piecemeal in the bazaar, and, while he acknowledged his bequest included some “caricatures” (“Zerrbilder”), the overall impression is not of a keen sense of connoisseurship – an impression reinforced by the small collection of late eighteenth-century Chinese costume paintings in MS Diez A fol. 75.⁴² Conversely, the extraordinary range of Persian material in the second half of A fol. 73 is not an index of Diez’s personal taste, as the pages had been lifted in part or in their entirety from an album still in the Topkapı Sarayı, H. 2152.

If Diez had the material in A fols. 70–72 mounted while he was in Istanbul, it must have happened within a period of eleven months at the most.⁴³ We can pin down

the making of the Diez albums in Istanbul with some confidence. The items were presumably removed from the harem apartments in the Topkapı Palace after Selim III’s accession on 7 April 1789, and either before or when Abdülhamid’s female retinue had to leave. A fols. 70–72 were therefore likely to have been compiled between April 1789 and Diez’s departure from Istanbul on 18 May 1790.

If Diez commissioned the mounting of A fols. 70–72 in this narrow window, it seems strange that over the next quarter of a century in Germany he never turned his attention to mounting the remainder of his pictorial gleanings from Istanbul. Furthermore, Diez’s very

Diez infuriated many in Berlin with his pro-Ottoman sentiments and his general attitude, described by the Foreign Minister Hertzberg as “aussi trop égoïste et trop défiant” (Johann Wilhelm Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches in Europa, Sechster Theil. Umschwung des inneren Lebens des osmanischen Reiches und der orientalischen Politik während der Revolutionszeit, von dem Frieden zu Kutschuk-Kainardsche im Jahre 1774 bis zum Frieden mit Frankreich im Jahre 1802*, Gotha 1859, p. 744). See Stanford Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789–1807* (Cambridge, Mass. 1971), pp. 40–60, for a description of the military and diplomatic events of 1789 and 1790. For extended discussion of Diez’s activities, drawn mostly from official dispatches, see Zinkeisen *Geschichte*, pp. 467–93, 509–14, 518–611, 671–763. Diez did not return immediately after the signing of the alliance, but stayed a further four months, as is clear from a letter he wrote to Chr. W. von Dohm on 20 May 1790 saying that after his official farewell he had boarded the ship for Hamburg “the day before yesterday” (“vorgestern”): Babinger, “Berater Goethes”, p. 92.

42 <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000D63E00000000>.

43 Diez was recalled for making generous concessions to the Ottomans in the alliance that was signed on 31 January 1790 (not 1791, as stated by Franz Babinger, “Ein orientalistischer Berater Goethes: Heinrich Friedrich von Diez”, *Goethe-Jahrbuch* 34 (1913), p. 92).

large collection of some 800 European manuscripts contained few decorated, prestige products, and consisted mostly of “Gebrauchshandschriften”, while the bindings of his manuscripts were equally simple.⁴⁴ If Diez masterminded the mounting and binding of A fols. 70–72, it was out of character.

In short, I suggest that Diez purchased the three albums A fols. 70–72 as finished products. Diez chose to buy the albums, but that does not mean he selected the works that went into them, or influenced their arrangement.⁴⁵

44 Winter, *Handschriften*, vols. 1–2, p. 7; cf. Balcke, “Vermächtnis”, p. 200. Ursula Winter, “Die Bibliothek Diez in der Deutschen Staatsbibliothek Berlin”, *Marginalien: Zeitschrift für Buchkunst und Bibliophilie*, 53 (1974), pp. 10–29, especially p. 24, calls Diez “sparsam” when it came to the binding of his own works.

45 The two volumes of Ottoman costume drawings are fine examples of the genre, evidently produced at about the time Diez was in Istanbul, which was between July 1784 and May 1790. (He had been sent out as *chargé d'affaires* two years before he became Envoy Extraordinary in 1786: Zinkeisen *Geschichte*, pp. 471, 760). Such collections of costume drawings were commonly acquired by visiting diplomats, and served as an *aide-mémoire* and a memento rather than an example of Ottoman artistic achievement. For albums of similar date, see Klaus Tuchelt, *Türkische Gewänder und osmanische Gesellschaft in achtzehnten Jahrhundert / Facsimile-Ausgabe des Codex Les Portraits des differens habillemens qui sont en usage à Constantinople et dans tout la Turquie, aus dem Besitz des Deutschen Archäologischen Institutes in Istanbul*, Graz 1966. Nurhan Atasoy, *Osmanlı Kıyafetleri. Fenerci Mehmed Albümü / Ottoman Costume Book: A facsimile edition of Osmanlı Kıyafetleri by Fenerci Melmed, the*

To whom, then, can we credit the planning of these albums, if not to Diez? The most obvious candidate is the eunuch mentioned by Diez, or at least someone in the Palace for whom the eunuch was acting as broker. He could have been the Chief Black Eunuch, any of the *Darüssaâde* eunuchs, or any of the ladies of the harem, because, despite Diez’s poor opinion of their respect for books, there were female members of the imperial household with bibliophile interests.⁴⁶

Incidentally, a connection with a Chief Black Eunuch can be found in one of Diez’s most prized manuscripts, the late sixteenth-century illustrated Shiraz *Shāhnāma* (MS Diez A fol. 1): its flyleaf

original of which is in the private collection of Rahmi M. Koç, ed. İlhami Turan, Istanbul 1986 publishes another of similar date, though of a very different style. A note on the flyleaf of the so-called Diez costume albums, evidently written after the albums were acquired by the British Museum, records: “These Drawings of Costumes are stated to / have been executed by order of the Sultan / for General Diez, Prussian Ambassador / at Constantinople in the time of Fred+c II / J.M.” If correct, the volumes tell us nothing of Diez’s connoisseurship of Ottoman or Persian painting. The volumes do not appear to have been part of the auction of Diez’s effects in 1818. There seems to be little record of how much Diez paid for the manuscripts he purchased in Istanbul (see the article in this volume by Christoph Rauch). He constantly complained of being ill-remunerated, and wrote several plangent letters to the King and to Hertzberg on his return to Germany, saying that he had not been paid the costs of his journey and expenses, and was facing ruin (Zinkeisen *Geschichte*, pp. 761–2).

46 Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 15, assumes “the chief eunuch was the intermediary in the sale.”

bears an ownership inscription in the name of the *Darüssaâde* Ağa Beşir. This could refer to one of the most powerful of all the Chief Eunuchs, al-Hajj Beşir Ağa, who died in 1746, and was the founder of a great library in Istanbul.⁴⁷ The *Shāhnāma* bears the seal of Sultan Osman III (r. 1754–57), which might suggest it was appropriated as part of Beşir Ağa's entire estate when he died.⁴⁸

A figure worth investigating is İdris Ağa, who had relatively easy access to the imperial library and treasury when he served as *hazinedar-i şehriyārī*, and who

was appointed Chief Black Eunuch in June 1783 until he was dismissed in AH 1204 (1789–90). He was succeeded by a leading member of Selim III's faction, Büyük Bilâl Ağa. His dismissal may therefore have been connected to Selim's installation of a new harem in the Palace. One can imagine his loyalty to members of Abdülhamid's harem forced to move to a form of exile, his bitterness at his own dismissal, and his urge to raise funds for himself or the ladies of the harem. However, any connection he may have had with the Diez albums remains speculative.⁴⁹ For the moment the person Diez referred to as the "Verschnittene" remains anonymous. It is unlikely he was working alone, and when I mention "the eunuch", that should be taken as shorthand for a possibly more complex network.

Several factors indicate that A fols. 70–72 were assembled shortly before Diez acquired them. When the pages were photographed in 1970 or thereabouts, 180 years after Diez's purchase, they were in reasonable condition, though many of

47 Jane Hathaway, *Beshir Agha: Chief eunuch of the Ottoman Imperial harem*, London 2005.

48 <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000067C00000007>. However, the ownership inscription is not in the same hand as al-Hajj Beşir Ağa's *ex libris* in MS 591 in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, which is dated AH 1158 (1745): <http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W591/>. An alternative scenario is that Diez A fol. 1 belonged to Sarıkçı Beşir Ağa, who was a close companion (*musahip*) of Sultan Abdülhamid I, and became Chief Black Eunuch in 1774 (Meḥmed Şüreyyâ, *Sijill-i 'Uthmanî: Taḫkîr-i mashâhîr-i 'Uthmāniyya*, İstanbul AH 1308–1316 [?] (1890–1898 [?]), vol. 11, p. 21; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî* (Eski Yazıdan Yeni Yazıya 1,1; Tarih Vakfı yurt yayınları 30, 1; İstanbul, Kültür Bakanlığı ile Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996, vol. 1, p. 371). However, he was dismissed in 1779, and sent to Mecca, where he died, making it unlikely that he was the direct source for Diez. The manuscript might have been appropriated from Sarıkçı Beşir Ağa's estate by the Sultan, though in this case there is a complicated scenario in which the manuscript was in the royal library under Osman III, came into the hands of Sarıkçı Beşir Ağa, and then returned to the royal library, from where it was sold to Diez.

49 İdris Ağa's dismissal raises questions about the date of the albums. It is possible that the albums were made in the short period between İdris Ağa's dismissal and Diez's departure. İdris Ağa is said to have been dismissed in AH 1204, which began on 21 September 1789. Meḥmed Şüreyyâ, *Sijill-i 'Uthmanî*, vol. 1, p. 311; *idem*, Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, Eski Yazıdan Yeni Yazıya, 1, 1; Tarih Vakfı yurt yayınları, 30, 1; İstanbul, Kültür Bakanlığı ile Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996, vol. 3, p. 791. On the penury of the Ottoman Court in the latter part of Abdülhamid I's reign and the beginning of Selim III's, see Zinkeisen *Geschichte*, pp. 495, 745 (Selim III sending 50 pack loads of silver plate to the mint).

the gatherings were loose, doubtless due to the heavy nature of the pages, which had pasteboarding under the images, and to their flimsy connection to the bindings. The edges were largely clean, and there were no signs of interference to the images – none had been lifted, as had happened to H. 2152 and H. 2153. In contrast to several other Diez manuscripts which carry clear indications of a Palace provenance,⁵⁰ the covers and mounting pages of A fols. 70–72 lack any indication of Ottoman, let alone Palace, ownership. There are no Ottoman seals, library marks, or readers' annotations, and no scrawls or marks other than a few artist attributions, which were probably made before the images were inserted into these albums.⁵¹ The albums had not even been paginated before they entered the Royal Library in Berlin. This absence of notations suggests that the albums were freshly compiled when Diez acquired them. We have no way of knowing if Diez realized the innate contradiction between his criticism of how the imperial harem handled "picture-books" and the pristine condition of A fols. 70–72 when he acquired them.

A date in the 1780s is supported by the construction of the albums: the style of paper binding fits with a late eighteenth-century date, and a Picador watermark on a page from A fol. 72 is datable to about

1780.⁵² Nothing suggests these albums were ever in a Palace library, or spent time in the harem, and it seems more likely that the images came from the Palace not as complete albums, but as disjunct material, in some cases as separate paintings, in others as complete folios like those from H. 2152 in the second half of A fol. 73. In this case the contents must have been cannibalized and assembled into albums outside the Palace. The materials used for the mounting and for the paper-covered binding were not of the very highest quality, and point to a commercial rather than a court production, though, as we have seen, care was taken to create an aesthetically harmonious ensemble.⁵³

The eunuch could have directly commissioned a binder, perhaps with an assistant to mount the pages. Alternatively, he might have relied on an expert such as a bookseller to value the items, and to contract the mounting and binding.⁵⁴ It seems

50 Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 134, note 18, and Rauch's contribution to this volume, note 32. On Diez A fol. 1, see above, note 49.

51 On the "signatures", see Kühnel, "Malernamen"; also see the contribution to this volume by Friederike Weis. There is one defaced, probably Ottoman, inscription on the back of a throne in a Rashid al-Din scene: A fol. 71, p. 5.

52 On this type of binding, see Jake Benson, "Satisfying an Appetite for Books: Innovation, Production, and Modernization in Later Islamic Bookbinding", http://www.academia.edu/820713/Satisfying_an_Appetite_for_Books_Innovation. On the watermark, Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 115, p. 134, note 32.

53 Cf. Roxburgh, "Diez", pp. 114–115. On the use of brass in place of gold, see note 12 above.

54 Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Empire ottoman, divisé en deux parties, dont l'une comprend la législation mahométane; l'autre, l'histoire de l'Empire ottoman*, Paris 1788–91, vol. 1, p. 298; Orlin Sabev, "Rich Men, Poor Men: Ottoman Printers and Booksellers Making Fortune or Seeking Survival (Eighteenth-nineteenth Centuries)", *Oriens* 37 (2009), pp. 177–90, where he refers to the estates of three booksellers who died in the first decade of the nineteenth century; İsmail E. Erünsal,

unlikely, though, that the binder was solely responsible for the conceptual and artistic organization of the contents. To whom, then, can we credit the planning? If we posit the eunuch, by which, to repeat, I am referring not to an individual but to a network within the Palace, this has interesting implications that can be explored by looking at the programmatic construct of A fols. 70–72.

Decorative or Programmatic?

There are some key features that distinguish A fols. 70–72 from the albums in Istanbul. To recap, there is a developed aesthetic in the way in which images are sequenced over several folios, juxtaposed on facing pages, and mounted and framed with an eye to creating a harmony of colour, tone and saturation. Calligraphy is ignored as an art form, and no interest is shown in text of any sort. These are all clearly conscious choices by the eunuch.

In two other respects – the absence of certain categories of images found in H. 2153, notably the “Siyah Qalam monsters”, and of any Timurid material later than about 1420 – there may also have

been a choice. However, there is an alternative explanation, which is that the contents of A fols. 70–72 were largely dictated by the available source material. This is a crucial issue, because there is a marked difference between a relatively free selection of items that would reflect a compiler’s connoisseurship and intentions, and a selection circumscribed by availability, largely restricting the compiler’s contribution to the creation of aesthetic combinations. One is potentially programmatic, the other principally decorative.

Diez was supplied with entire folios from the Topkapı Palace album B. 411, which were eventually incorporated into his A fol. 74. These folios must have been removed by someone with privileged access – for our purposes, the eunuch. It seems highly likely the eunuch adopted a similar approach to removing items from H. 2152 and H. 2153. This would explain why the pages in the surviving pictorial section of H. 2152 have relatively few missing drawings or paintings.⁵⁵ Rather than lifting single items from a page, the eunuch removed not only complete folios but possibly whole sections.⁵⁶ How selective he was about the folios he removed we cannot tell, but from a stash of folios he could have assembled groups of related material, creating more coherent typological and aesthetic clusters in the three

“Osmanlılarda Sahhaflik ve Sahhafklar: Yeni Bazı Belge ve Bilgiler”, *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 29 (2007), pp. 99–146. There appear to have been some thirty booksellers in Istanbul in the latter part of the eighteenth century. A comprehensive study of Diez’s manuscripts might reveal patterns in terms of bindings and provenance. From the Diez items published among the Staatsbibliothek online facsimiles, there are several that evidently had the same provenance, but none with bindings similar to those of the Diez albums.

55 The painting losses in H. 2152 start at p. 93. There are a maximum of fourteen gaps on a total of nine pages where paintings or drawings seem to have been removed (the pictorial section runs from p. 86 to the last page, p. 198, if we ignore the partially illustrated genealogical tree in the centre of the album).

56 Large-scale removal would also help explain why it was necessary to rebind the volumes in the late nineteenth century.

Berlin albums than in the Istanbul ur-albums. The argument could be made that in this scenario the eunuch was drawing from a restricted supply of folios from a small number of albums. His choices in compiling the Diez albums were therefore circumscribed, and his effective role was to create an attractive rather than meaningful product.

Following this argument, it was a matter of availability rather than eschewal that in A fols. 70–72 there is little Timurid material from the second quarter of the fifteenth century and later. The surviving pictorial section of H. 2152 does focus on material from the fourteenth century, such as the large, rather crude *Shāhnāma* and related paintings from late in the century.⁵⁷ Paintings from the same series recur in A fols. 70–72, especially A fol. 72, as well as other fourteenth-century material of the type found in H. 2152. There is also a high proportion of fourteenth-century material in H. 2153. Thus it could be argued that the emphasis in A fols. 70–72 on fourteenth-century images is a reflection of the eunuch's sources rather than any intention on his part, although H. 2153 in particular includes some fifteenth-century Timurid and Turkoman material, as well as chinoiserie, which one might have expected to feature more in A fols. 70–72, if the removal of folios was adventitious rather than critical, and the selection of material purely decorative.

There are, however, more than half a dozen reasons to suggest that the eunuch

had a developed sense of purpose. One is the inclusion of so much material derived from copies of Rashid al-Din's *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, including images in an ink-and-wash style that reference early copies of that work. In the Diez albums there are close to fifty "Rashid al-Din" miniatures – spanning almost a century in date – spread over 124 pages of A fols. 70–72. By contrast, in H. 2153 there are currently four over almost 400 pages. In H. 2152 there are none. Three possibilities suggest themselves. One is that the eunuch removed most of the "Rashid al-Din" images from H. 2153 and/or H. 2152; this is supported by the distinctive rulings on a few which indicate they came from H. 2153.⁵⁸ Another is that he extracted the majority from another album, trace of which has been lost. The third possibility is that, besides extracting some from H. 2153, he cannibalized one or more manuscripts of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, though the text on the back of several of the paintings appears not to be from the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, but from other manuscripts, pages of which were glued to the back to stabilize the miniatures.⁵⁹ Whatever the process, the accumulation of "Rashid al-Din" images in A fols. 70–72 implies more planning and purpose than haphazard raids on H. 2152 and H. 2153.

Second, the inclusion of several late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century pastiches of Rashid al-Din images arguably

57 Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 98, fig. 52; Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision. Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, Los Angeles 1989, pp. 58–63.

58 Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 116.

59 Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 116, noted that some of the Rashid al-Din miniatures in the Diez albums have text on the back, and assumed that they were from a manuscript(s) of Rashid al-Din's work. See, however, the contributions of Karin Rührdanz and Simon Rettig to this volume.

indicates that the compiler saw them as the extended influence of a formative moment under the Ilkhanids.⁶⁰ A third indication is the inclusion of drawings that are finished works of art rather than preparatory or practice sketches.⁶¹ This may reflect Dust Muhammad's references to the emergence of *qalam-siyāhī* under the Jalayirids, as "black pen" drawings became an autonomous art form.⁶²

These observations relate, though, to overall prevalence, and, one can argue, reflect the nature of the eunuch's source materials – availability more than choice. The following four observations, however, relate specifically to juxtapositions that were under the control of the compiler, and more certainly reflect intentionality.

First, while there is a dearth of painting in a classic Timurid style in A fols. 70–72, a notable exception is the initial image in A fol. 70 – a mounted hunting scene.⁶³ Stylistically anomalous in these albums, it nevertheless occupies a preemi-

nent position. Was it chosen simply as a decorative pendant to the early Jalayirid scene of charging cavalry on the opposite page or did the juxtaposition carry greater meaning? Unusually, both of the paintings on this opening spread bear attributions, the Timurid painting to Darvish Mansur,⁶⁴ the fourteenth-century image to Ahmad Musa. As Ahmad Musa was credited by Dust Muhammad as the man "who lifted the veil from the face of painting", the volume opens with what was seen as one of the earliest and – in the context of these albums – one of the latest examples of "[the style of] depiction that is now current", a style invented, Dust Muhammad claims, by Ahmad Musa.⁶⁵ Confronting works by the progenitor of that tradition and by a practitioner of its distinctive Timurid expression reads like a synopsis of the history of Jalayirid painting from its Ilkhanid origins to its influence in the early Timurid period.

Secondly, a folio in A fol. 70 includes an image with a clear debt to European art on one side (p. 14) and a Chinese painting on the reverse (p. 15) (plate 1), as if these two images were counterposed to exemplify Dust Muhammad's claim that, "the custom of portraiture flourished so in the lands of Cathay and the Franks until sharpened Mercury scrawled the rescript of rule in the name of Sultan Abu Sa'īd Khudaybānda [r. 1317–35]."⁶⁶

60 For example, the drawing of a Mongol princess, A fol. 72, p. 11; cf. H. 2153, fols. 70r and 166r. See also the work of Abd al-Baqi al-Bakuwi in H. 2160: David J. Roxburgh, "Persian Drawing, ca. 1400–1450: Materials and creative procedures", *Muqarnas* 19 (2002), pp. 44–77; Ettinghausen, "Some Paintings", p. 95 and figs. 12 and 13.

61 Cf. Roxburgh, "Diez", p. 116.

62 A fol. 72 also includes some preparatory or practice drawings of the type found in the Topkapı album H. 2152, which testify to an interest in artistic process.

63 On the anomalous inclusion of a Safavid painting of a rider, see above, note 26. For several late Jalayirid or early Timurid drawings in the style of manuscript narrative paintings, see A fol. 70, p. 26, no. 2; and A fol. 72, p. 1, no. 3, p. 4, no. 2, p. 7 (Kühnel, "Malernamen", fig. 7), A fol. 72, p. 18, no. 4.

64 He may be the painter who worked under Abu Sa'īd and was the father of Shah Muzaffar; see Arnold 1930, p. 672; Kühnel 1959, "Malernamen", p. 77.

65 Wheeler M. Thackston, *A Century of Princes. Sources on Timurid History and Art*, Cambridge, Mass. 1989, p. 345.

66 *Ibid.*

Thirdly, paintings or drawings of similar theme but different date are juxtaposed, hinting at an interest in the development of style. In A fol. 70 these pairings include the galloping riders on pages 1 and 2; the kings on horseback holding maces on page 14; and the riders fighting dragons on pages 24 and 25 (plates 1 and 2).

Fourthly, it is possible that the eunuch and/or his network added attributions to several drawings, attesting to his/their connoisseurship, and to an especial interest in Muhammad Khayyam.⁶⁷ In two works in the Diez albums this artist notes he was copying works by ‘Abd al-Hayy. This may be significant, because Dust Muhammad implies that ‘Abd al-Hayy was pivotal in transferring the Jalayirid tradition to the Timurid realm, claiming that after his death “all masters imitated his work.”⁶⁸

Such aesthetic and art-historical selectivity points to someone with more than an eye for decoration. We might venture to call him a “connoisseur” of Persian painting. His connoisseurship is also evident in his choice of drawings, for many of those in A fols. 70–72 are finer, more finished, and in many cases earlier than those that survive in H. 2152.⁶⁹ In other words, he removed many of the choicest.

For those with access and inclination, the Topkapı Palace offered unparalleled opportunity to learn from surviving examples and from primary texts about the early history of Persian painting. Indeed, our connoisseur might well have gained his understanding of Ilkhanid and Jalayirid painting from another album in the Topkapı Palace, the treatise of Dust Muhammad in the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154).⁷⁰

Yet there were instances when the eunuch could have provided stronger visual testimony for Dust Muhammad’s account. For example, in A fol. 72 there is a drawing, *Two Mounted Chinese Warriors*

67 On these see the detailed discussion by Friederike Weis in this volume, where she suggests they were likely to have been added in the latter part of the sixteenth century. We should not, however, discount the possibility that the eunuch and/or his network added attributions to several drawings, attesting to his/their connoisseurship. For further discussion, see below, “Appendix: Attributions to Muhammad Khayyam in Diez A fols. 70–72”.

68 Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 345. Kühnel, “Malernamen”, noted a link between the majority of the signatures in the Diez albums and key figures mentioned by Dust Muhammad. However, his review of the signatures included several in A fol. 73, which was not one of the trio of albums assembled in Istanbul. On Muhammad Khayyam, see Kühnel, “Malernamen”, pp. 74–76; and Roxburgh, “Persian Drawing”, p. 59; Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, pp. 85–86, 96, 102, 139. Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 116, suggests that the presence of signatures in part guided the choice of images in the Diez albums: “Diez’s

selection of materials appears to have been governed partially by the presence of either signatures or attributions on the works”. He credits Diez with this selection, but it seems highly unlikely that Diez could have known the account of Dust Muhammad.

69 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 116 argues against H. 2154 as a likely source and suggests (“Diez”, note 20, and p. 120) that only H. 2152 and H. 2153 had any direct connection with the contents of the Diez albums.

70 Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 345; Laurence Binyon, John Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting including a critical and descriptive catalogue of the miniatures exhibited at Burlington House*, Oxford 1933, pp. 183–188; Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, chapter 6.

in Combat, which Muhammad Khayyam inscribes as after a model by ‘Abd al-Hayy. This drawing was almost certainly removed from H. 2152, but our connoisseur did not remove another version from H. 2152, which is more accurate in details such as the rendering of the spear tip, and less mannered in its draughtsmanship. Although it is unsigned, it is the finer drawing, and might plausibly have been ascribed to ‘Abd al-Hayy.⁷¹ The Palace albums included further works attributed to ‘Abd al-Hayy and works by other artists mentioned by Dust Muhammad, which might have been removed to make A fols.70–72 more historically comprehensive.⁷²

The eunuch’s fastidiousness did not, however, always extend to grouping paintings from the same manuscript together. Thus a double-page Jalayirid image of the Siege of Baghdad was split and placed on different pages in A fol. 70 (pp. 4 and 7) (plate 1). Even if they were divorced in his source album, he might have sought to rejoin them. There were other instances too where paintings evidently from the same manuscript were not clustered together.⁷³

While the eunuch, personally or as part of a network, might have had a broad understanding of Ilkhanid and Jalayirid painting, and recognized the names of some key artists, we should not judge him

by the standards of Dust Muhammad himself, who was a librarian with access to the royal holdings and presumably had licence to remove the pages that he wanted to illustrate his account. Nor should we anachronistically impose on him a Western scholarly understanding of Persian painting that has been developed over the course of the last 125 years. His *modus operandi*, I suggest, was not to excerpt individual items to construct an ordained narrative; instead, he made a systematic arrangement of material that had been lifted largely *en bloc*. In other words, he constructed a “vision” of Ilkhanid and Jalayirid painting without following precisely Dust Muhammad’s developmental narrative.

In summary, A fols. 73 and 74 were diverse in origin and content, with parts incorporated wholesale from existing albums. A fol. 73 consisted of numerous preparatory drawings, some of them sketches, some complete working drawings for use in other media, reflecting workshop process and praxis. A fols. 70–72, on the other hand, were aesthetically designed and more broadly historical in scope, reflecting a cognition of what has become the received story of the emergence or “unveiling” of Persian painting in the fourteenth century.

The eunuch evidently planned albums A fols. 70–72 with forethought, but whether he originally intended them for Diez seems unlikely, given their many subtleties. By contrast, he might have seized the principal contents of A fols. 73 and 74 in a more opportunistic manner, perhaps – though this is of course conjecture – when he realized that the bibliomane Diez was about to leave. It was indicative that their contents were not turned into albums

71 Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 60; Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 140.

72 However, some, such as Dawlatyar and Shams al-Din, featured in A fol. 73: Kühnel, “Malernamen”.

73 Two paintings from the story of “the Man and the Monkey Wife” can be found in A fol. 71, p. 12 and A fol. 72, p. 19. (cf. appendix 11 in this volume, figs. 9 and 10).

until after Diez's death. In neither instance can the creative credit be given to Diez – his achievement was to have nurtured his contacts and seized the opportunity. He doubtless appreciated the contents, but he would have been precocious if he fully understood the construct of A fols. 70–72.

The credit for conceiving A fols. 70–72 must go to the eunuch and his network. Although his treatment of the Istanbul albums was destructive, it was not born of ignorance, but insight. Interest in Persian painting amongst at least some of the *Darüssaâde* eunuchs under Abdülhamid I is evidenced by Diez's Shirazi *Shāhnāma*. Nevertheless, we have tended to downplay Ottoman interest in the Istanbul albums in the latter centuries, and to limit it to the physical rebinding of several of the Istanbul albums under Abdülhamid II (r.1876–1909).⁷⁴ The “Diez albums”, though, point to a more refined understanding of the “Istanbul albums” at the Ottoman court in the eighteenth century, for A fols. 70, 71 and 72 were not mere dumping grounds for spoils, but informed and visually astute reinventions of material garnered from the fifteenth-century albums.

It was the eunuch who transformed what some saw as “picture-books” into illustrated compendia of early Persian painting, and fulfilled what Dust Muhammad in his introduction to the Behram Mirza album declared as his aim: “That the scattered folios of past and present masters should be brought out of the region of dispersal into the realm of collectedness.”⁷⁵

74 Cf. Roxburgh, “Diez”, p. 116, and especially notes 39 and 40; Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, p. 76.

75 Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 338.

Appendix: Attributions to Muhammad Khayyam in Diez A fols. 70–72

There are only ten images in A fols. 70–72 with signatures and/or attributions. A very high proportion – seven – are connected with “Muḥammad-i Khayyām”.⁷⁶ These seven carry a total of eight inscriptions, of which three purport to be signatures, while five are terse attributions; one drawing, A fol. 72, p. 13, includes both an extended signature and a terse attribution. The purported signatures are written with a strong calligraphic flourish, and include the artist's patronymic (“b. Maḥmūdshāh”) and the definite article “al-” before Khayyām. Two of the three also note that they were after the work of ‘Abd al-Hayy. Of the terse attributions one reads “Qalam-i Muḥammad-i Khayyām”, four “Muḥammad-i Khayyām”.

Of the total of eight terse attributions in A fols. 70–72, several were surely not penned for the Diez albums. They show variations in their hand, and in their placement on the page, which affects their orientation to a viewer reading the album the correct way up:

“Darvish Mansur” (A fol. 70, no. 1): this occurs on a drawing that was turned ninety degrees clockwise, but was upside down relative to the viewer of the Diez album.

“Ahmad Musa” (A fol. 70, p. 2, no. 1): this appears correctly oriented for the viewer of the Diez album but is anomalous in its location – it occurs in the middle of the painting – and in its hand, which differs from any of the those used for the other attributions in the Diez album.

“Qalam-i Muḥammad-i Khayyām” (A fol. 72, p. 7): the attribution is anomalous in its posi-

76 See Friederike Weis' contribution to this volume for a detailed discussion.

tion, phrasing and possibly also in its hand. The drawing was turned ninety degrees when it was mounted in the Diez album, placing the attribution upside down to the viewer.

In contrast, five other terse attributions are much more consistent in their script, and in most cases in their angle, their location towards the bottom left of their respective drawing, and their orientation to the viewer. The hand is a simple *naskh* that slopes downwards at an eight o'clock angle, and has minimal ligatures and relatively short ascenders and descenders. There are differences, though, and these have prompted Friederike Weis to question whether the attributions were written by a single person. Regardless of whether these are by one hand or not, there are reasons for thinking that they may be late additions, perhaps following the spoliation of the Istanbul albums, and before the creation of the Diez albums.

“Qalam ‘Abdallah” (A fol. 70, p. 12): the image was turned ninety degrees clockwise, but the signature appeared at the bottom left of the drawing as one viewed the album page, and was correctly oriented for the reader of the album. In other words, the attribution lies at a right-angle to the depiction of the rider. It was evidently added after the drawing was included – or was being prepared to be included – in an album where the image was turned ninety degrees clockwise.

“Muḥammad-i Khayyām” (*Mounted Warrior Fighting a Dragon*) (A fol. 70, p. 24, no. 1): the drawing was turned ninety degrees counter-clockwise when it was mounted into the Diez album. In that position the attribution was, like most of the others in this group of five, angled at eight o'clock, and positioned towards the bottom left of the drawing. It was correctly oriented for the viewer.

“Muḥammad-i Khayyām” (*Mounted Warrior Fighting a Dragon*) (A fol. 70, p. 25): the drawing was turned ninety degrees clockwise in the

Diez album, but the attribution, which was written on a fairly straight line rather than at an angle, was correctly oriented for the viewer.

“Muḥammad-i Khayyām” (*Tazza Farnese*) (A fol. 72, p. 3, no. 2): here the attribution was upside down relative to the viewer of the album. Yet it was evidently intended to be oriented correctly, as the drawing was inverted in the album (see above, note 36). The attribution appears to be under a layer of varnish, as noted by Friederike Weis, suggesting that the attribution was written before the drawing was mounted in the Diez album, though how long before is not clear.

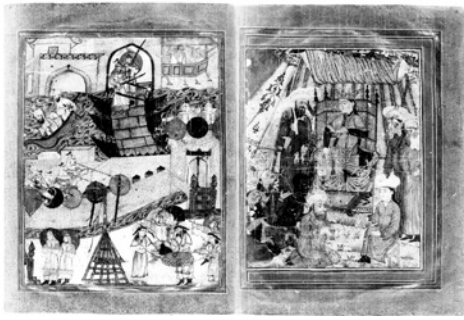
“Muḥammad-i Khayyām” (*Mongol Rider*) (A fol. 72, p. 13): the attribution appeared top left, sloping upwards in the Diez album. The drawing itself, though, was turned ninety degrees clockwise when it was mounted. In other words, if the drawing had not been turned, the attribution would have been correctly positioned for the viewer, and, like the others in this cluster, would have been towards the bottom left of the image, and sloping downwards. This suggests that the attribution was not added with the position of the drawing in the Diez album in mind.

The attributions might have been written when the images were in a prior album, but in that case the first, third and fourth items must have been turned clockwise, and the second counter-clockwise, just as in the Diez albums. That seems quite a coincidence. It also seems unlikely they were added while the drawings were part of H. 2152. First, the only examples with the terse attributions “Muḥammad-i Khayyām” are those in the Diez albums. Second, the hand (or hands) in which they are written does not occur in the surviving pages of H. 2152. While it is of course possible that all these items were incorporated into another album, traces of which have disappeared, this seems unlikely as one would have expected

there to be remnants around the images of ruling frames that could be associated with this lost album. However, the only rulings seem to be either those of the types associated with H. 2152 or with Diez A fols. 70–72.

To conclude, this latter group of five attributions seems to postdate the removal of the drawings from H. 2152. It is possible that the attributions on the first to fourth items were written after the Diez albums were compiled, but this would mean that the attribution on the fifth item was done before, the others after. An alternative explanation is these five attributions were written *before* being inserted into the Diez albums by someone who was aware of how the drawings would be oriented in those albums. This suggests not only planning, but a pretension to connoisseurship and a programmatic intent in the compilation of A fols. 70–72.

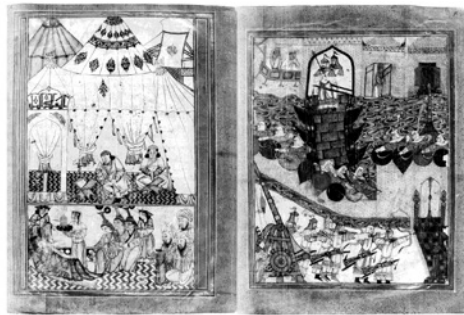
- PLATES 1–9 *Diez A fols. 70–72 reproduced in their original sequence of double-page spreads, using black-and-white photographs taken before the conservation programme in 1970.*
- PLATES 1–2 *Diez A fol. 70.*
- PLATES 3–7 *Diez A fol. 71.*
- PLATES 8–9 *Diez A fol. 72.*
- PLATE 10–12 *Charts showing the sequencing of images by period and type. The arrows indicate the orientation of the images, with the arrow heads pointing to the top of the image.*



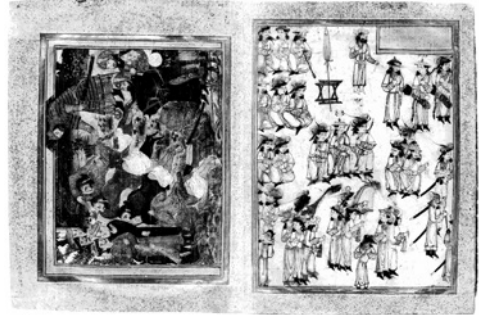
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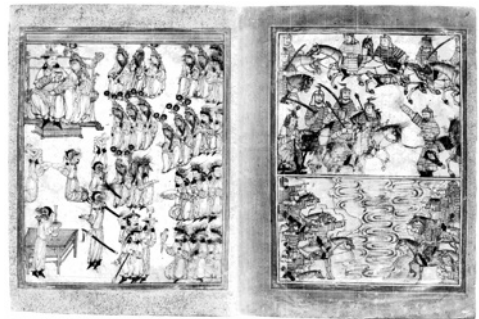
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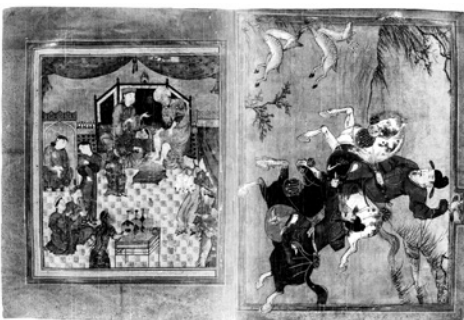
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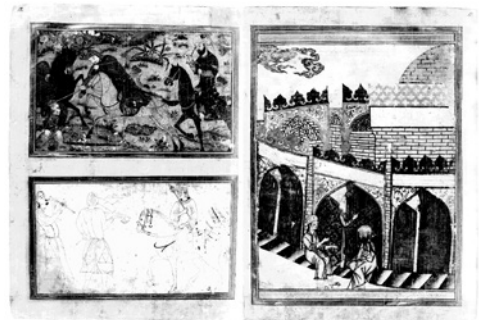
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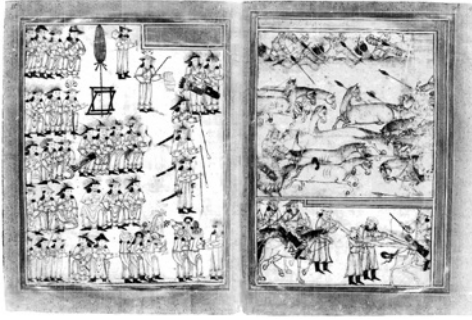
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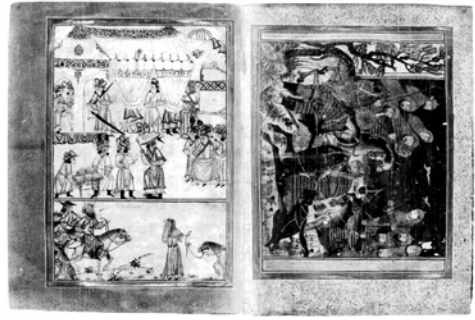
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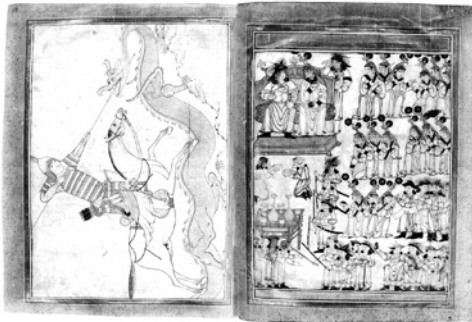
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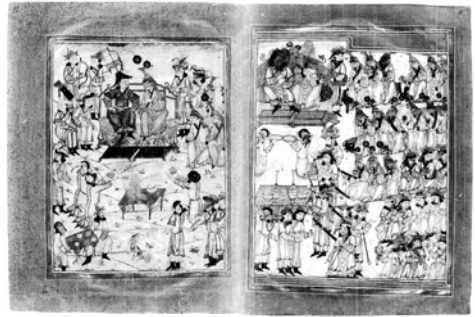
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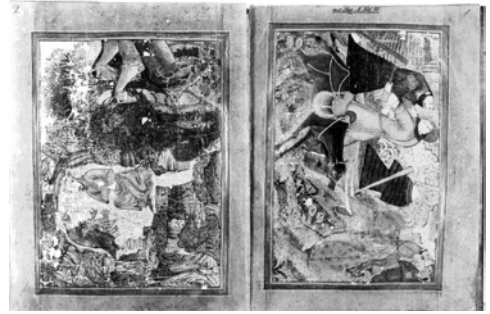
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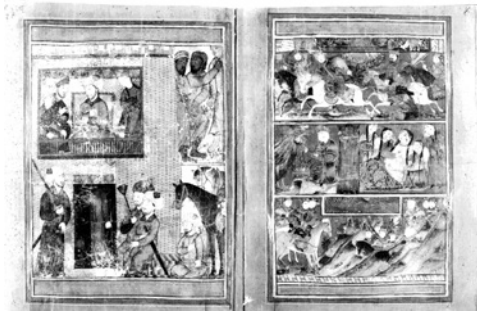
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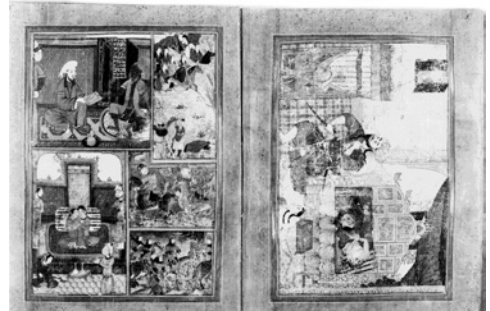
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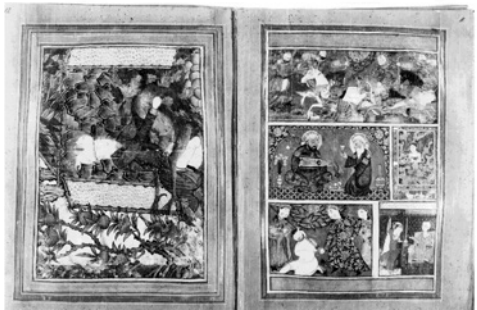
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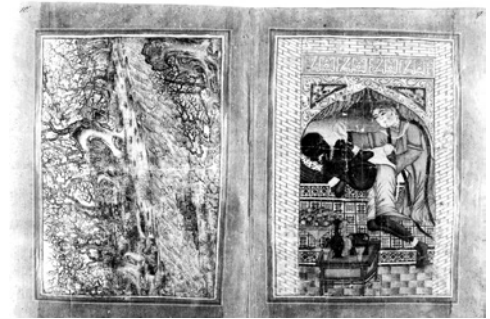
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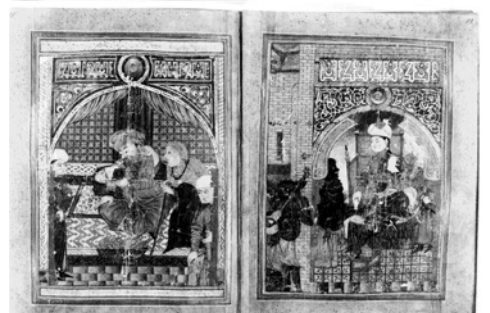
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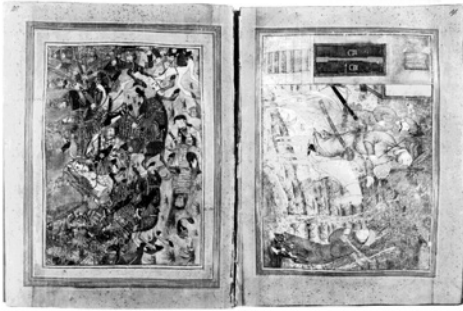
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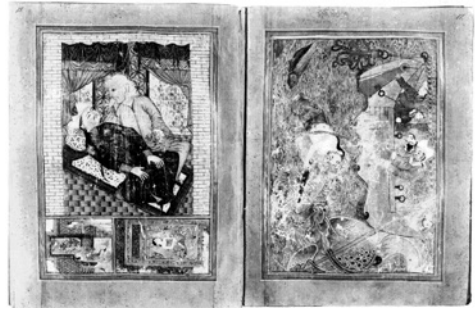
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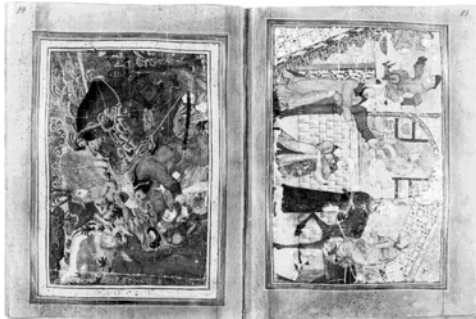
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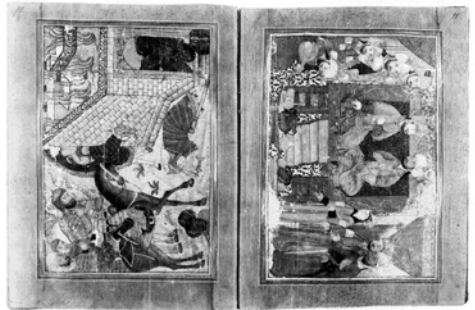
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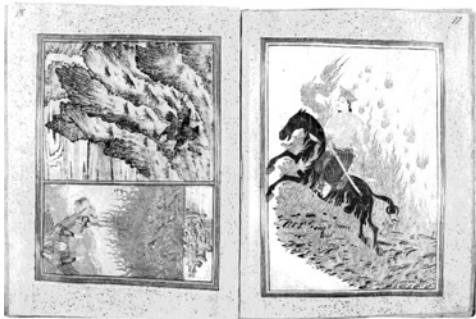
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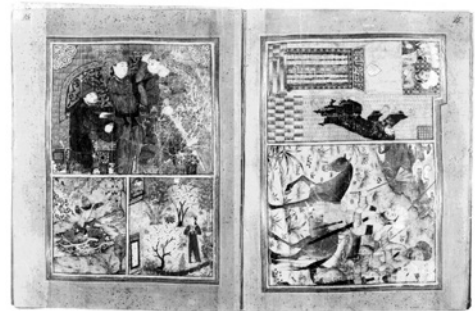
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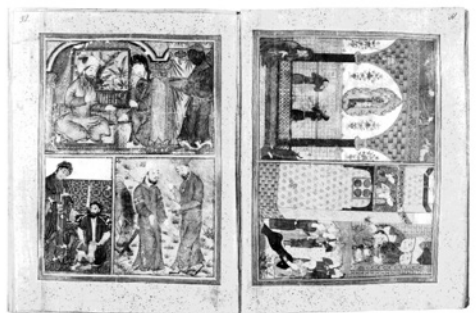
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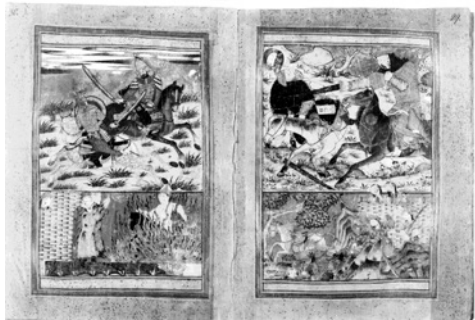
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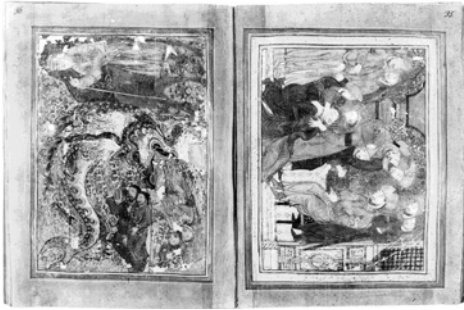
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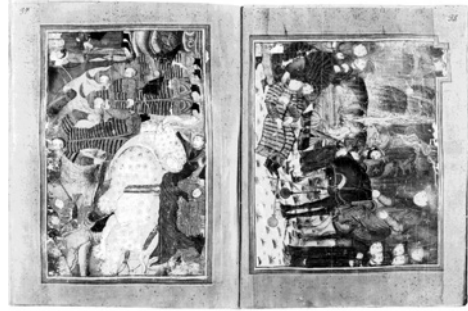
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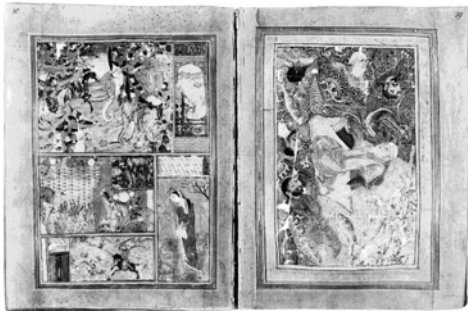
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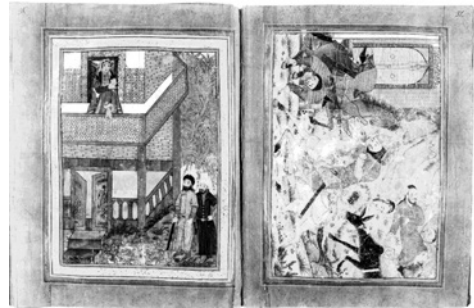
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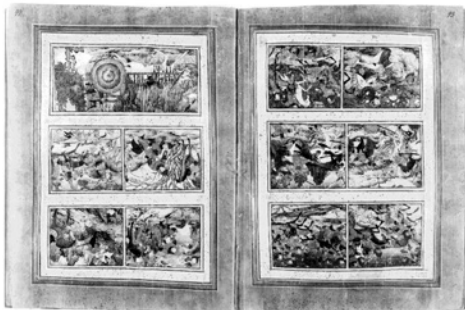
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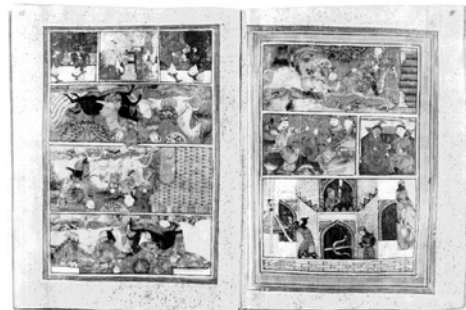
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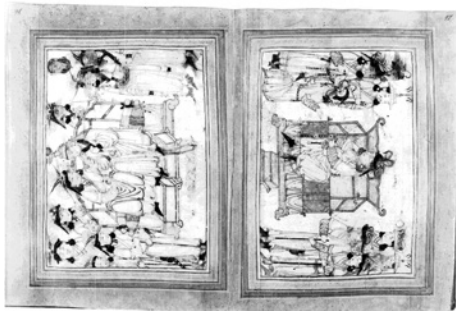
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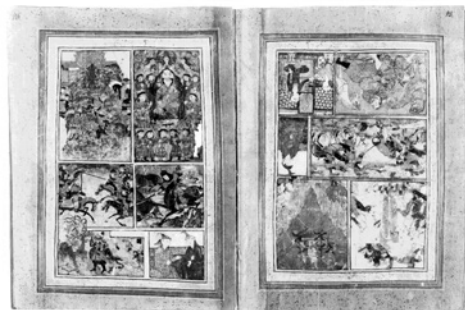
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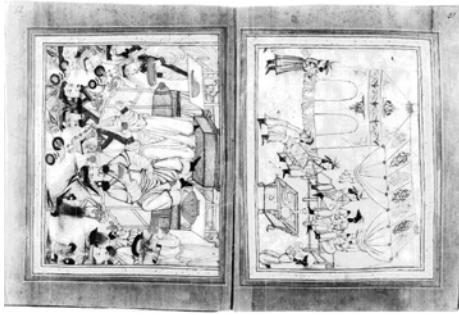
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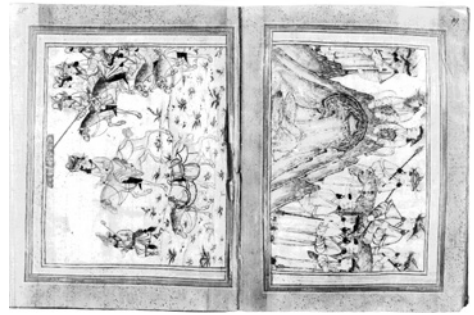
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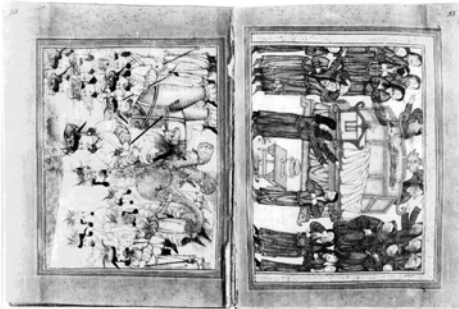
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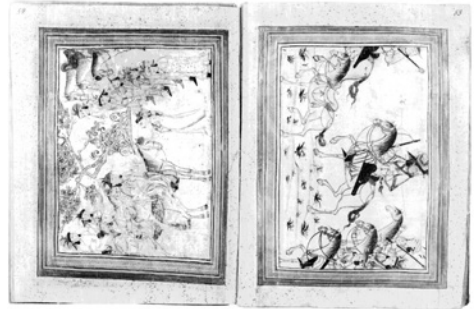
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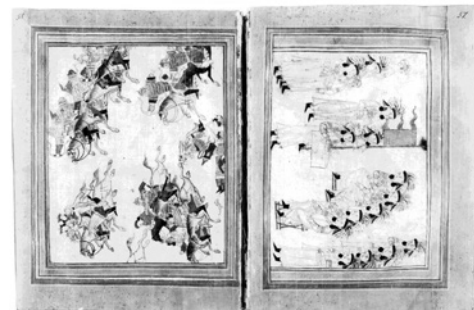
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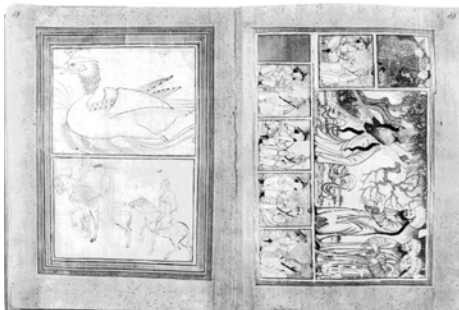
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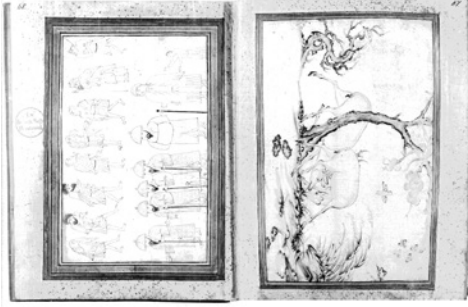
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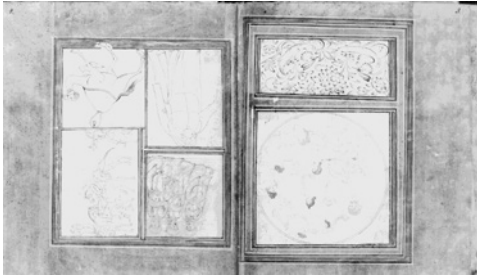
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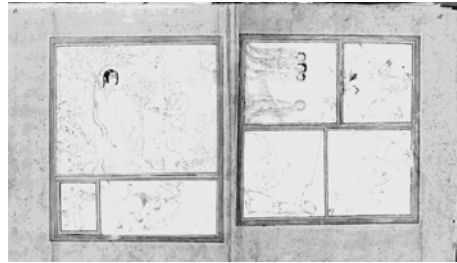
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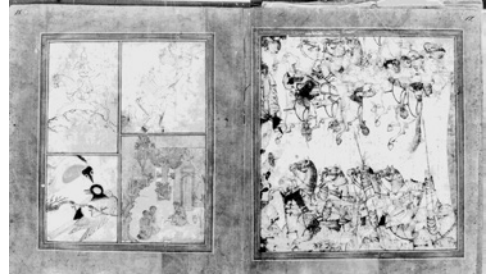
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18-17



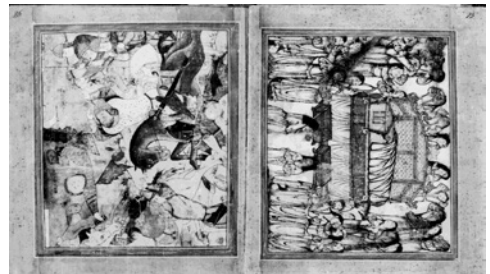
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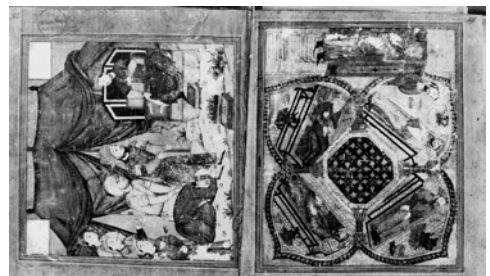
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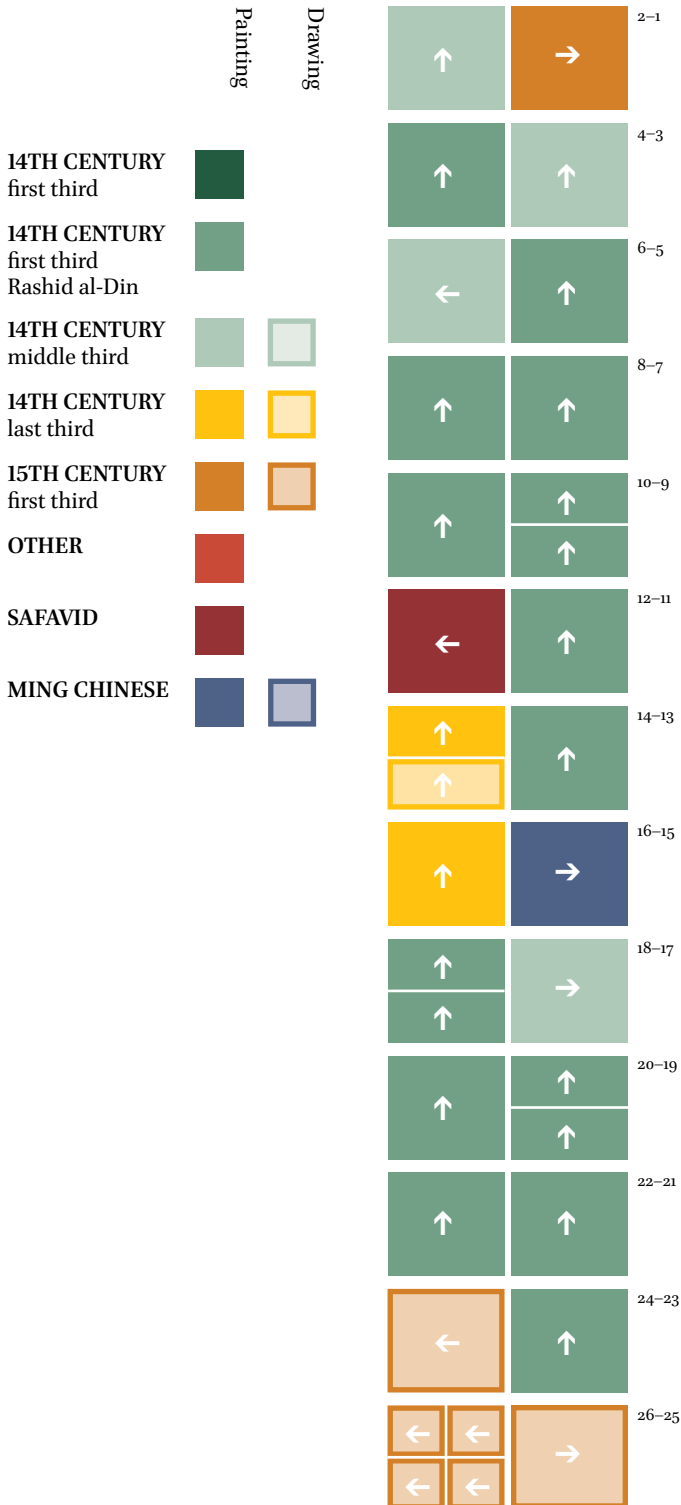
28-27

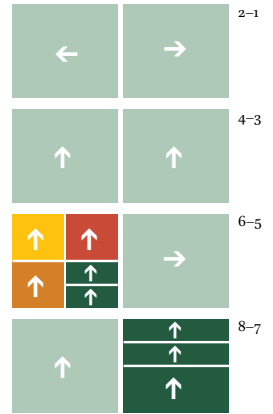
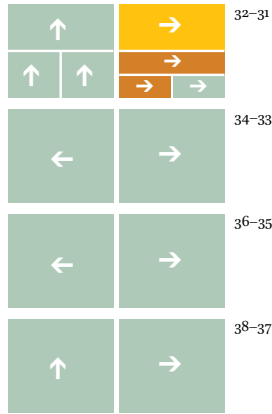
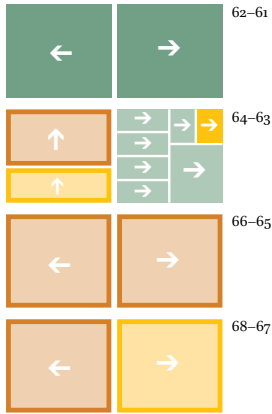


26-25



30-29

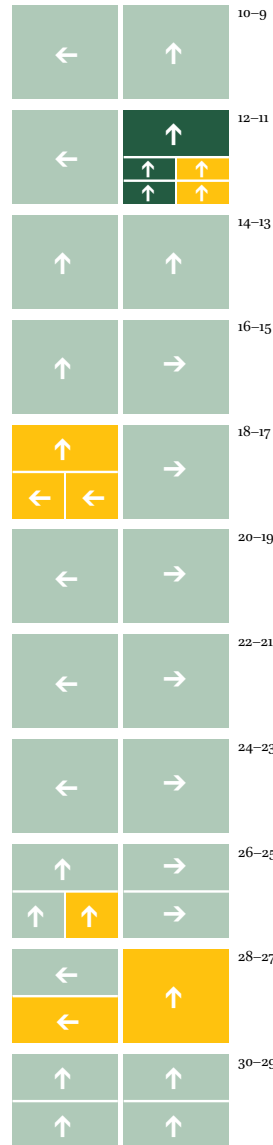
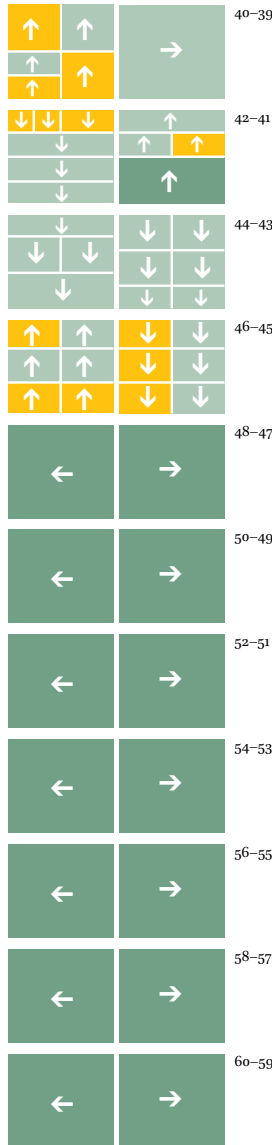


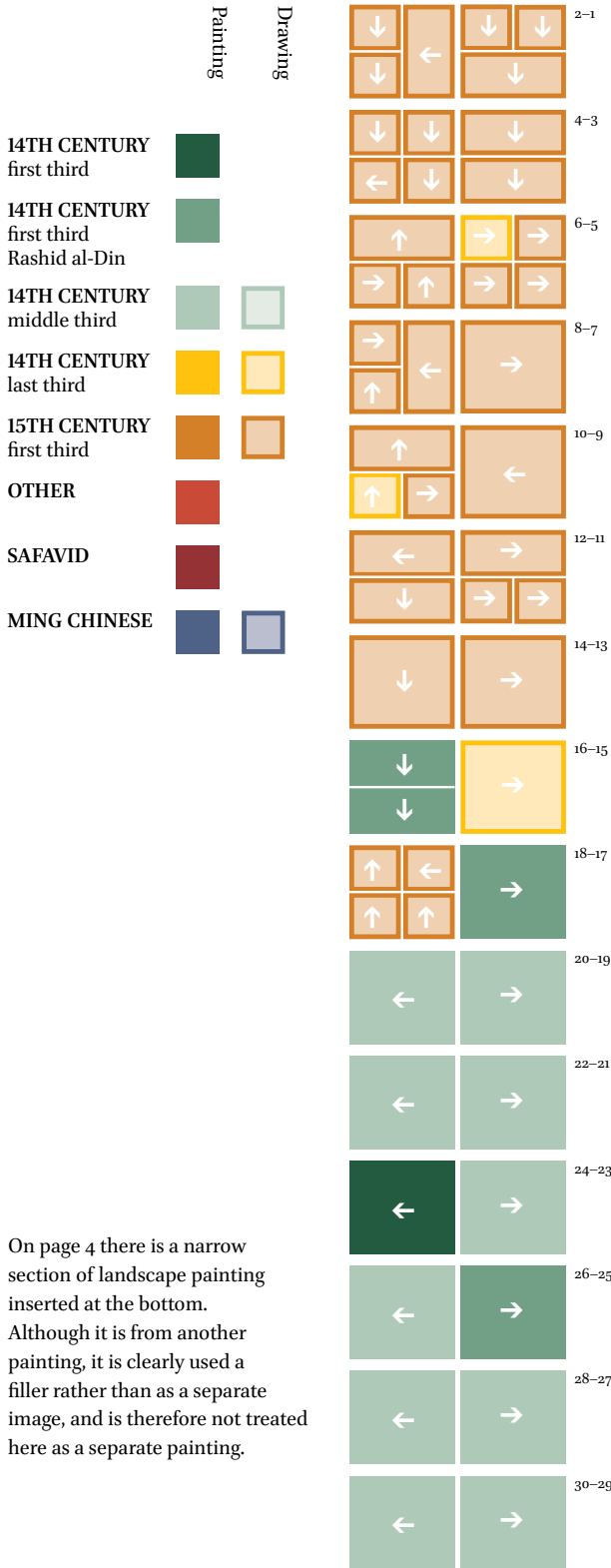


Painting

Drawing

- 14TH CENTURY first third
- 14TH CENTURY first third Rashid al-Din
- 14TH CENTURY middle third
- 14TH CENTURY last third
- 15TH CENTURY first third
- OTHER
- SAFAVID
- MING CHINESE





On page 4 there is a narrow section of landscape painting inserted at the bottom. Although it is from another painting, it is clearly used a filler rather than as a separate image, and is therefore not treated here as a separate painting.