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STEFAN HEIDEMANN, JEAN-FRANÇOIS DE LAPÉROUSE, AND VICKI PARRY

THE LARGE AUDIENCE: LIFE-SIZED STUCCO FIGURES OF ROYAL PRINCES FROM THE SELJUQ PERIOD

Two iconic stucco sculptures of the Middle Islamic period (eleventh to fifteenth century) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) are by far the largest and most embellished of their kind (figs. 1 and 2).¹ Both arrived from private collections via the antiquities market of the early twentieth century. The diademed figure was in the possession of Hagop Kevorkian (1872–1962) in 1931,² while the figure with the winged crown was owned by Cora Timken Burnet, a close friend to whom he may have sold it. Since none of the known stucco figures or related stucco heads has been recovered from controlled excavations, iconographic and spatial contexts have been lost. Close parallels in terms of garment and execution are found in the less-than-life-sized royal figure with winged headgear at the Detroit Institute of Arts and the lively though differently posed figure in the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin (figs. 3 and 8). Both of these were acquired from Kevorkian, the latter in 1913. The three figures of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) were purchased by Sir Charles Murray Marling (1863–1933), a British diplomat in the Middle East, on the antiquities market in Tehran between 1916 and 1918 (figs. 4–6).³ One standing figure entered the collection of the Worcester Art Museum in 1932 (fig. 7),⁴ and in 1926, Henry Walters acquired a standing stucco warrior for his collection in Baltimore, originally called the Walters Art Gallery and now known as the Walters Art Museum.⁵ A comparable figure in the Sabah Collection in Kuwait is a recent addition to the collection (fig. 9).

One can imagine that when a mud-brick building decays over time or collapses, stucco—where it is not protected by overlaying debris—falls off the wall and is smashed into many pieces. The raised areas are easily damaged, especially faces and hands, and floors get clut-

tered with stucco fragments of inscriptions and miscellaneous parts of the decoration, including arabesques, decorative fresco painting, and parts of rosettes. Over the centuries, sand, dust, and debris settle on top. Eventually, dealers or their workers take what they regard as suitable merchandise.⁶ Large fragments such as heads and occasionally torsos are easily found intact within the rubble, but the detailed background of geometrical figures and foliage, delicate epigraphic bands, and other embellishing details are left behind. The spolia may be reassembled later as a freestanding figure or as an invented composite stucco revetment for the market.⁷ Several single heads and figures have survived in this way. The isolation of the MMA figures as freestanding sculptures today distorts our understanding of the artists' original intent in placing them within the dazzling decorative revetment program of a reception hall.

In 1931 Rudolf Riefstahl, a classical archaeologist, attempted to collect all the Islamic stucco figures known at his time and suggested dating them to the later Seljuq period, about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁸ Although the MMA figures have often been published as illustrations, little research has been done on them or on the related figures in other museums.⁹ Estelle Whelan and, more recently, Melanie Gibson proposed that these figures served as royal guards.¹⁰

After a brief introduction to the tradition of stucco figures from the Ancient Orient to the Middle Islamic period, a revision of the dating will be attempted. The question of whether these are royal guards or princely figures will also be examined, as will their architectural context and function, with special reference to their posture and their placement within the mural tradition. Finally, in the technical examination in part V the details

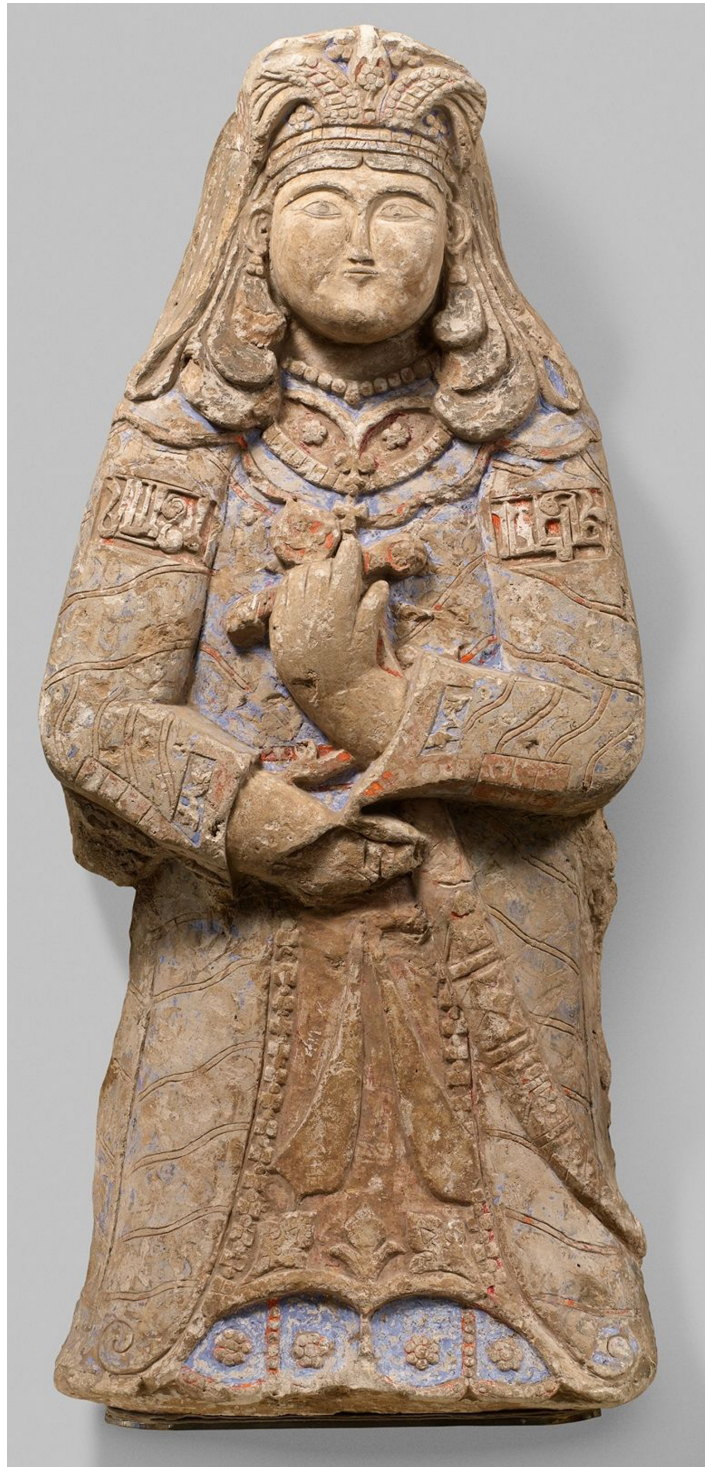


Fig. 1. Figure with winged crown. Stucco; free formed, incised, painted, gilt; H. 47 in. (119.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 57.51.18. Cora Timken Burnett Collection of Persian Miniatures and Other Persian Art Objects, Bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1956. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, N.Y.



Fig. 2. Figure with jeweled diadem. Stucco; free formed, incised, painted, gilt; H. 56 3/4 in. (144.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 67.119. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Wolfe, 1967. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, N.Y.



Fig. 3. Figure. Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 25.64. (Photo: courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Arts)



Fig. 4. Standing figure with winged crown. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, A.21-1928. (Photo: courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum)



Fig. 5. Standing figure with jeweled crown. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, A.22-1928. (Photo: courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum)



Fig. 6. Cross-legged figure. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, A.20-1928. (Photo: courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum)

of their manufacture, condition, and polychromy will be discussed, along with the pigments used.

The temptation to include in this study all figural stucco from the Seljuq period was resisted because some examples, such as those from Seljuq Asia Minor, which depict hunting or courtly scenes, differ in composition and style, and others obviously belong to a different iconographic program. The figure from Berlin (fig. 8) and the crouching figure (fig. 6) from the Victoria and Albert Museum, however, are included here.¹¹ Single Seljuq stucco heads survive in Berlin, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the David Collection in Copenhagen, and other museums, but this group provides even less or no iconographic context.¹²

I. THE TRADITION

I.1. *From the Ancient Orient to the Seljuqs*

Despite their late date at the beginning of the Middle Islamic period, life-sized figures of royal personages are part of a tradition going back to the ancient Near East.¹³ We find figures standing in a frontal position in Hatra (Iraq) in the second century, others of the *shāhānshāh* (king of kings) in Taq-i Bustan (near Kirmanshah, western Iran) in the seventh century, and still others in Nizamabad (about 80 km southeast of Tehran, Iran) in the seventh or early eighth centuries. A life-sized image of the caliph from the early eighth century is preserved from Khirbat al-Mafjar in Palestine. In the British Museum we even have a large stucco warrior from sixth- / seventh-century Chinese Turkestan, a region where the Chinese tradition of standing figures reigned.¹⁴ At the same time, lavish vegetal polychrome stucco wall panels and ceiling decorations were integral parts of architectural decorative programs. From the Abbasid period on, we know almost only of vegetal and geometric incised or carved stucco panels from the palaces and mosques in places such as al-Raqqa (Syria),¹⁵ Samarra (Iraq),¹⁶ Fustat (Egypt),¹⁷ and Nishapur (eastern Iran).¹⁸ The tradition of “post-Samarran” non-figural stucco was continued in Iran, for example, in the Ghaznavid palaces at Lashkar-i Bazar (near Bust in present-day Afghanistan), and in the Kashan region, until the middle of the twelfth century.¹⁹ A time gap of several centuries, therefore, lies

between the last figural stuccos from the Umayyad palaces and the figures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. They highlight a new context to which these figures also belong. From the centuries in between, figural images are known, at least from the frescoes from Samarra²⁰ and Nishapur,²¹ but we do not have any three-dimensional human figures. To our present knowledge human figures in relief emerge in the Ghaznavid palatial context on marble slabs from the vicinity of Ghazna. They were most probably once polychrome.²² In eastern Iran and Central Asia princely imagery in polychrome wall frescoes continued almost uninterrupted from the pre-Islamic Soghdian period to the Middle Islamic period. Most prominent are those found in Lashkar-i Bazar from the mid-eleventh century, and from the Qarakhani reception building (*kūshk*) in Tepe Afrasiyab, Old Samarra, from the middle decades of the twelfth century.²³ Artistically connected to the architectural decoration are the later paintings on *mīnā’ī* and luster-painted ware and early manuscript illustrations from the second half of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.²⁴

I.2. *Stucco figures of the Middle Islamic period*

While figurative art was always present from the time of the Umayyads to the Seljuqs, we see a resurgence of it in the Ghaznavid and Seljuq periods, mostly as architectural decoration on ceramics and metal ware, as well as on circulating coins and in book painting.²⁵ The two figures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art are by far the largest and most embellished figures of their kind. They were all made by modeling and carving gypsum-based plaster.²⁶ After drying, the figures were most likely painted and partly covered with gilt.²⁷ As noted earlier, one of the two figures in the MMA’s collection wears a winged headdress, the other a jeweled diadem. As important as the headgear are the garments and other accoutrements. Both figures are shown in a frontal position wearing open-buttoned caftans,²⁸ their upper sleeves embroidered with *ṭirāz* brassards with inscriptions. This type of caftan is rarer than the better-known tunic-like garments (*qabā*)²⁹ frequently depicted in a more abstract fashion on *mīnā’ī* and luster-painted ware; it was perhaps called a “special court *qabā* with *ṭirāz*” (*qabā-yi khāṣṣ-i muṭarrāz*).³⁰ The open caftans are held together with golden³¹ belts or sashes (*kamar* or *kamar-band*)³²

ending in two long ribbons dangling in the middle of the body, which are described by Bayhaqi as part of a robe of honor.³³ These coats or tunic-like garments (*khaftān* and *qabā*, the first with buttons) were common in the Turco-Iranian world for a long time. A round gilt and embellished protector—presumably meant to depict metal—rests on each shoulder of the diademed figure, similar to the protectors on the shoulders of the smaller figures in Detroit and in Berlin. The figure with the winged crown wears an embroidered shoulder piece instead. The golden belt, ostentatious metal accoutrements, and unusually rich embroideries point to an elevated rank. From the hemline of the coat to the top of the crown, both figures measure 115 to 116 centimeters (46 inches), thus affirming their supposed origin from the same decorative stucco revetment. The figure with the jeweled crown wears boots with broken-off tips, giving it a total height of 144 centimeters. The space between the bootlegs is embellished with an asymmetrical five-leafed palmetto, which is the only remaining trace of the former background of the revetment. The two figures have the same round beardless “moon face,” with a small dimpled mouth and a delicate nose; the latter is fashionable in eastern and western Iran and generally associated with Turks. The images of the two humans were only minimally gendered; their sabers and crown-like headgear indicate that both are male.

As mentioned above, the closest parallel in size and decoration is the figure in the Detroit Institute of Arts (fig. 3), which also wears a richly embroidered caftan with *ṭirāz* brassards but is shorter, measuring 101 centimeters (40 inches) from the sole of the boots to the top of the crown.³⁴ This figure retains some of the original floral and ornamental background of the revetment at the sides and between the legs. Unlike the other standing figures, this one holds not a saber but another object, perhaps a bag of money or a *mandīl* (royal napkin),³⁵ while his left arm projects outward and presumably held something important in the outstretched hand, which has now disappeared.³⁶ While this might have been a lance, staff, or sword, it was most likely a ceremonial mace, as seen on the mural of Lashkar-i Bazar, the aforementioned marble slabs from Ghazna, and *mīnā'ī* and luster-painted ware. Three smaller figures and two fig-

ural stucco elements form a group of fragments at the Victoria and Albert Museum (figs. 4–6).³⁷ All three of these figures came from the same revetment, or at least from the same architectural program. One is standing and wears a caftan and an abstracted winged crown while holding a flower in his hand (height: 52 cm); the second is standing with his left hand on his hip (height: 46 cm); and the third is seated and also holds a flower (height: 42.5 cm). The latter two wear tunics and jeweled diadems and none of them holds a sword or a saber. The figure in the Worcester Art Museum (height: 86 cm), one of the tallest in this group, wears a type of crown, but it is too poorly preserved to allow for a closer identification (fig. 7). It seems to be a palmetto, perhaps winged. He holds a flower in his right hand and a *mandīl* in the left.³⁸ The figure at the Walters Art Museum (height: 60.4 cm) has a number of unusual features that have to be carefully studied before it can be included in this comparative sample.³⁹ Another standing figure wearing a caftan was recently acquired by the al-Sabah collection in Kuwait; it is heavily restored, especially in areas of interest, such as the crown and the hands (fig. 9).⁴⁰ The figure with a seemingly vivid sense of motion (height: 60 cm) now in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin also belongs to this comparative group (fig. 8).⁴¹ It is unique in the way it seems to capture movement through its long wavy braids of hair and upraised arm and raised foot; it is also without a saber. The impression of movement might, however, come from viewing the figure in isolation. Images of attendants on *mīnā'ī* ware and luster-painted ware from Iran have a similar three-quarter profile, with one foot often slightly raised off the ground and a hand open in a gesture of servitude.⁴² The same pose can be found in a smaller-than-life-sized figure (height: 130 cm) seen in a mural on the eastern wall of the court of the Qarakhani *kūshk* of Old Samarkand. The figure, an attendant, holds an arrow in his hand and turns to the throne niche.⁴³ The Berlin figure, acquired from Hagop Kevorkian in 1913, was said to have come from Rayy. Obviously connected to the MMA figures is a stucco panel with two symmetrical mirror-shaped figures that was published by Riefstahl. Said to have come from Rayy, its whereabouts are now lost but it was in Kevorkian's possession in 1926 (figs. 19 and 20).⁴⁴



Fig. 7. Standing figure. Worcester, Mass., Worcester Art Museum, 1932.24. (Photo: courtesy of the Worcester Art Museum)



Fig. 8. Figure. Museum für Islamische Kunst / Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, I. 2658. (Photo: Ingrid Geske, courtesy of the Museum für Islamische Kunst / Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)



Fig. 9. Standing figure. Kuwait, al-Sabah Collection, inv. no. LNS 2 ST. (Photo: Walter Denny)

II. DATING

II.1. Overview

Riefstahl attempted to date these figures to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries on the basis of stylistic analysis, at a time when the study of Islamic art was in its infancy. However, we propose a slightly earlier dating based on two details of the epigraphy and armor.

II.2. Epigraphy

An important clue for dating the MMA figures is provided by the calligraphy of the *ṭirāz* brassards. The cartouches on their upper sleeves each show parts of an inscription that share the same calligraphic details. Although the inscription of the figure with the winged crown is divided between the cartouches on both sleeves, it may be interpreted as part of a continuing Koranic phrase: *‘alayk[um] bil- / mu’minīn* (fig. 10). Read in this way, it would be a defective two-word inscription, missing a *mīm*. Abdullah Ghouchani has suggested that it could be a section from Koran 9:128: “[he is deeply concerned] about you [plural], toward the believers [full of kindness and mercy].”⁴⁵ But *ṭirāz* inscriptions on paintings and murals are not expected to bear any meaningful texts.⁴⁶ Known *ṭirāz* inscriptions on textiles usually carry a eulogy of the ruler or a very general religious inscription, and do not run from one sleeve to the other. The *ṭirāz* inscription on the figure with the jeweled crown is simply a part of an often-repeated standard eulogizing phrase: *al-mulk* (translation: The sovereignty [belongs to God]), with the same word on each sleeve (figs. 2 and 23). The calligraphy on the *ṭirāz* brassards of the Detroit figure shares a similar design. One can read *al-mu’* on the left sleeve, followed by *minīn* on the right one (translated as “the be / lievers”). The similarity in style is also apparent in the scrolling treatment of the *wāw* and the exaggerated pointed tops of the lower vertical letters. The figure in Detroit is thus probably contemporary with the pair at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The letters on the *ṭirāz* brassards of the two MMA figures and the one in Detroit have triangular fins at the top of the vertical parts of each letter and swan-shaped *nūns* and *wāws*. This simple way of adorning the letter-



Fig. 10. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): *ṭirāz* cartouches.

ing started in the late ninth century and was common during the tenth century. The type of little flower above the *ʿayn* is also frequently attested on Ghaznavid gold coins of the tenth century and later.⁴⁷ The high-rising “shadows” above every low vertical letter are abraded stumps of exaggeratedly pointed letter tops and are helpful for dating the figure. These pointed tops had been evolving since the early tenth century, allowing low vertical letters to rise, even to the height of long vertical letters. This style was popular from the eleventh century until the middle decades of the twelfth century. Early examples include inscriptions in Lashkar-i Bazar from the middle of the eleventh century.⁴⁸ A tombstone in Ghazna dated 530 (1136),⁴⁹ another one attributed to Yazd and dated 516 (1122),⁵⁰ and a minbar panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art also carved in Yazd and dated Jumada I 546 (August–September 1151)⁵¹ are all fine examples of this calligraphic feature (fig. 11). By this

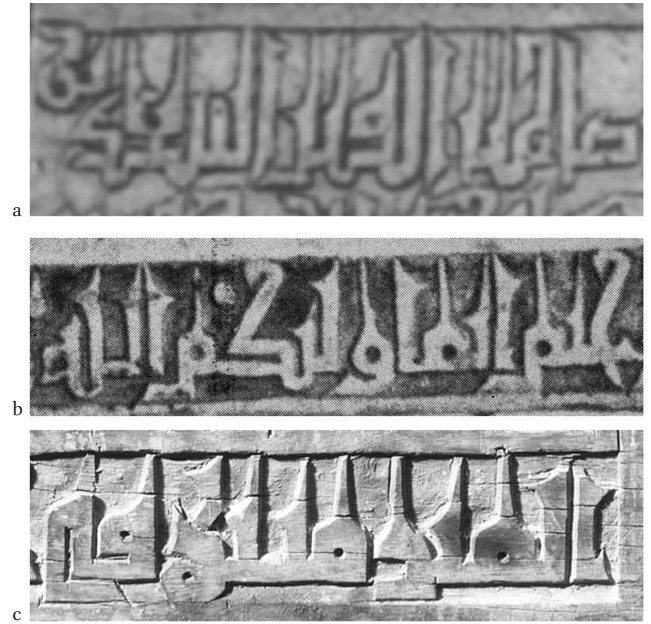


Fig. 11. Comparative calligraphy: a) tombstone, Ghazna, 530 (1136) (Samuel Flury, “Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna,” *Syria* 6 [1925]: pl. 19 [detail]); b) tombstone, Yazd, 516 (1122) (Iraj Afshar, “Two 12th Century Gravestones of Yazd in Mashhad and Washington,” *Studia Iranica* 2, 2 [1973]: pl. 21 [detail]); c) wood panel, Yazd, 546 (1151): New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 34.150.2.

epigraphic reasoning, the MMA and Detroit figures can be assumed to date to the decades between 1050 and 1150, but probably more toward the first half of the twelfth century, when we also find this style in western Iran. Thus the figures might predate the rise in the second half of the twelfth century of polychrome *mīnāʿī* ware, which, it has been suggested, may have been inspired in part by wall paintings.⁵²

II.3. The saber

The sabers are another datable feature on these figures. The left hands of both MMA figures either rest on the hilt of or hold large, slightly curved swords or sabers in richly studded scabbards. Although the Abbasid armies did not use them, sabers are known at least since the sixth century among the Turks outside the Islamic Empire, as seen on almost life-sized stone stelae from the Central Asian steppes (fig. 18).⁵³ A Turkic-influenced

sword of the ninth century was excavated in Nishapur, but it is long and straight.⁵⁴ The curved saber does not seem to have entered the Islamic Empire before the intrusion of the Türkmen tribes in the eleventh century and the subsequent Seljuq conquest. The earliest known dated appearance of a saber in Islamic art is on a Qarakhanid coin, a *fals* from Samarqand from 415 (1024–25),⁵⁵ and, within the Seljuq Empire itself, on a gold dinar from Herat dated 439 (1047–48) (fig. 12).⁵⁶ As a *terminus post quem* this would just correspond with the epigraphic style of the *ṭirāz* brassards, and date the figures to the Seljuq period. The excavation conducted by the Metropolitan Museum of Art at Nishapur yielded another early depiction of a saber on a fresco in a room that was sealed by an earthquake in 1145.⁵⁷ A horseman in a caftan with *ṭirāz* brassards is shown hunting with a slightly curved sword with a lozenge-shaped pommel.

III. THE ROYAL IMAGE

III.1. *The cross-legged ruler*

While the earliest Umayyad figures of caliphs are shown standing and enface, beginning in the late ninth century, royal and princely figures in the Islamic world were typically depicted in a cross-legged seated position that came from Central Asia, beyond the Islamic Empire. The earliest dated cross-legged figure in the Islamic world is on a presentation coin of the caliph al-Muqtadir Billah (r. 908–32).⁵⁸

Katharina Otto-Dorn has traced the invention of the Islamic cross-legged ruler with a wine cup in his right hand to the Old Turkic stelae, in particular to the stela of Chöl Asgat in Mongolia, which is dated, according to a recent new reading of the inscription, to the 720s.⁵⁹ The depiction of a cross-legged ruler without a wine cup, however, goes even further back in time, to at least the Kushans, as seen on coins of the second century A.D. In *mīnā'ī* and luster-painted ware of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries rulers in the cross-legged posture usually wear a felt cap, often fur trimmed, or a mitre-like *sarpūsh*. The ruler in the aforementioned mural from Old Samarqand is also cross-legged and seated on a throne, but instead of a wine cup he holds an arrow.⁶⁰

Standing figures shown frontally with swords in a



Fig. 12. Gold dinar, Herat, 439 (1047–48). Sabers on either side of the central inscription. Private collection. (Photo: courtesy of Michael Bates)

similar posture as our stucco figures are also known from other visual media and architectural contexts, such as carved stone niches in Sinjar in northern Mesopotamia, which can be dated to the period 1220 to 1229. Estelle Whelan and Melanie Gibson have each identified these figures as royal guards (*khāṣṣakiyya*; *ghilmān-i khāṣṣagī*). Gibson also includes the two figures of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in her argument.⁶¹ While the figures in Sinjar clearly function as guards, we propose, however, that the figures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art depict princes or royal personages, based on the crowns and the Turkic Central Asian tradition of standing royal figures, neither of which has previously been considered.

III.2. *Royal crowns, hairstyle, and jewelry*

The two MMA figures are distinguished by their crowns, headgear, and hairstyles. Rather than the ordinary *kulāh* (felt cap), pointed *qalansuwwa*, or mitre-like *sarpūsh*, both figures wear elaborate crowns (*tāj*)⁶² that appear to have been partly gilded and lavishly studded with jewels. One has a winged crown (fig. 13), the other a jeweled, triple-lobed diadem (fig. 14). The better-preserved headgear of the latter consists of three parts, beginning with a felt cap, which was originally worn by Turks but became an ordinary part of the headdress of the ruling military class.⁶³ Felt caps are also commonly worn by figures on *mīnā'ī* ware. Next, a pleated veil (*dastār*?)⁶⁴ covers the top of the cap (fig. 15) on both of the MMA figures, as well as on at least two of the V&A figures. It is uncertain whether the gilding of the central figure on a *mīnā'ī* bowl of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century represents a “golden veil” over a felt cap or is a crude



Fig. 13. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): winged crown and jewelry. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, N.Y.



Fig. 14. Detail of figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119): jeweled diadem and jewelry. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, N.Y.



Fig. 15. Detail of figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119): pleated veil. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)



Fig. 16. Detail, showing the golden veil, of bowl with a ruler and attendants. Attributed to Iran, twelfth to thirteenth century. Stonepaste; polychrome in-glaze and overglaze painted and gilded on an opaque monochrome glaze (*mīnā'i*). $3 \frac{1}{4} \times 7 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (8.3×18.7 cm), $7 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (18.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 57.36.5. Purchase, Rogers Fund, and Gift of The Schiff Foundation. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)

depiction of a standard halo (fig. 16). Both interpretations, nevertheless, would distinguish the figure in the center as a ruler.⁶⁵ A veil covering the braids of a cross-legged ruler is clearly depicted on a luster-painted plate in the Iran-i Bastan Museum in Tehran.⁶⁶ The third component of the better-preserved MMA crown is the triple-lobed jeweled diadem, which also appears on two of the V&A figures. In each example, the three “panels” of the diadem are distinctly adorned. Clearly, these diadems are meant to look as if they are made of metal, and those of the V&A figures suggest a repoussé work. This form of paneled crown seems to be more common among the Chinese-influenced nomads in eastern Central Asia than in the western parts of the Islamic Empire, and is also found among the contemporary Northern Song and Khitan in Central Asia.⁶⁷ It does not—to the best knowledge of the authors—seem to have any parallel in *mīnā'i* and luster-painted ware.

The hair on both MMA figures is bundled and braided, with the braids bound back into impressive loops (figs. 13 and 14). The Detroit, Worcester, and V&A figures (with the exception of the sitting one), have the same long braids doubled back into loops. The seated figure of the V&A and the Berlin figure have long flowing braids under their crowns, which were fashionable among the Turks. Looped braids—round and thicker at the bottom of the loop—may be depicted in a more cursory fashion in Kashani *mīnā'i* ware, as seen on a bowl in the MMA (fig. 17), but there are many other examples on luster-painted and *mīnā'i* ware.⁶⁸

A pair of pearls dangles from the ears of the diademed figure, and two chain necklaces embellish his chest. The lower chain has a large almost rectangular bead at its center, which might represent an amulet box. While earrings and necklaces are common as signs of royalty on



Fig. 17. Detail, showing looped braids, of bowl with a ruler and attendants (see fig. 16, MMA 57.36.5). (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)

Sasanian images, they are rarely seen on later *mīnā'ī* and lusterware.⁶⁹

The right hand of the diademed figure grasps an object, which can probably be identified as a *mandil*—another symbol of royalty.⁷⁰ The winged-crown figure may have held something similar in his right hand, which is only partially preserved. The figures in Detroit and Worcester, along with the figure with the winged crown in the V&A, also appear to be holding a royal napkin in their left hand. Surprisingly, except for the figure in the al-Sabah collection (fig. 9) and the pair in the Kevorkian panel (fig. 19), none of them holds the usual Iranian symbol of royalty, the wine cup of Jamshid, well known from generic depictions.⁷¹

The other MMA figure has the same hairstyle and composition of headdress as his companion, but the crown itself features two wings pointing in opposite directions and a central teardrop-shaped palmetto projecting upwards in the middle. The Detroit figure,⁷² the Worcester figure, and one of those at the V&A (fig. 4)

each wear a similarly stylized winged crown. Renowned from the Sasanian period onwards as the symbol of Verethragna or Vahram, the god of war and victory, it became an icon of Iranian royalty.⁷³ As far as we know, winged crowns were not used for Islamic royalty in the first three centuries of the Islamic Empire except for some early coin issues, which continued to use the distinct designs of late Sasanian coins. Winged crowns reappear as adornment in the iconography of rulers in the tenth century. We know that the Ziyarid ruler Mardawij ibn Ziyar (r. 927–35) had commissioned a crown in the Sasanian fashion, which implies one with wings.⁷⁴ The first known dated renderings of such crowns are found on presentation coins of rulers of the Buyid dynasty (945–1045) such as Rukn al-Dawla (r. 947–77) and 'Adud al-Dawla (r. 952–83) in western Iran and Iraq. The Samanids (819–1005), and the successive Ghaznavid dynasty (977–1117) in eastern Iran, also re-enacted pre-Islamic Sasanian, and even Soghdian forms and iconography.⁷⁵ These images were meant to shed a favorable light on

the new dynasties of Iranian and Turkish origin as revivers of past glory, which the Abbasids in Iraq failed to provide after the political collapse in the core lands of the empire in the early tenth century.⁷⁶ A number of silver bowls from eastern Iran that presumably date to the tenth and eleventh centuries feature a ruler sitting in cross-legged fashion and a Sasanian-style winged crown.⁷⁷ We also find winged crowns in other media such as polychrome *mīnā'ī*⁷⁸ and luster-painted pottery, as well as, unexpectedly, on Mediterranean Tell Minis luster-painted ware from Syria (outside the Iranian world proper)—always associated with the depiction of a ruler.⁷⁹

The top of the head of the MMA figure with the winged crown is covered, as already mentioned, with the same pleated veil as its diademed twin (fig. 15). His braids were gathered to match those of the diademed figure, but the necessary loopholes were not carved, suggesting a hasty termination to the carving. Similar to the Iranian-Sasanian fashion,⁸⁰ each of the earrings has three large pearls and the figure wears necklaces consisting of three chains of beads with what seems to be a cross suspended from the lowest one.⁸¹

To summarize, two forms of crowns are consistently used within this royal group, a winged crown or a triple-lobed metal diadem, and all the figures have beads dangling from their ear lobes and multiple strands of pearls draped around their necks.⁸² The dubious figures are excluded here. All of these characteristics are consistent with an older Sasanian model for depicting royalty, allowing us to identify these two figures as rulers in the Iranian tradition, despite the fact that Sasanian *shāhanshāhs* are almost always bearded. For example, representations on coins show the Buyids bearded like Sasanian emperors,⁸³ and the Turkish rulers depicted on the Central Asian stone stelae all have mustaches—a tradition that was continued by early Seljuq rulers such as Alp Arslan, Malikshah, and Sanjar, as we know from literary sources.⁸⁴ However, rulers depicted on later twelfth- and thirteenth-century *mīnā'ī* ware, luster-painted ware, and turquoise underglaze-painted ware are mostly beardless with some exceptions.⁸⁵ The clean-shaven, moon-shaped faces of these stucco figures most likely represent youthful and powerful rulers.

III.3. *The standing ruler*

While models for the image of the standing ruler may be found in Sasanian and early Umayyad stucco reliefs, the influence of eastern Turkish depictions of royalty in the conception of these figures appears to have been strong and may have come from a class of Old Turkic stelae found in the Central Asian steppes⁸⁶ and dating from the sixth to tenth century. The figures on these stelae are standing frontally, right arm over left; in some cases the left hand rests on a dagger, sword, or saber (fig. 18).⁸⁷ These stelae served as funeral memorials of rulers and dignitaries, and may have also played a role in religious rituals. The Seljuqs originated from these Central Asian steppes, east of the Syr Darya. The tradition of erecting huge stone stelae of a different type was later continued in the Polovtsian steppes until the early thirteenth century.⁸⁸

Stripped of their traditional functions, the representations of these stelae may have been adopted as a model for depicting Turkish rulership in palatial contexts with clean-shaven,⁸⁹ round faces that corresponded more closely to Turkish concepts of beauty as we find them depicted on Kashani *mīnā'ī*, and luster-painted and other contemporary pottery.

III.4. *The awkward posture*

The left hand of the winged crown figure, which holds the saber beneath the cross guard, bends unnaturally, and the saber itself is inaccurately depicted, raising doubts about the authenticity of both figures. However, art historical analysis seems to support the theory that the two figures are a matching pair intended originally to mirror one another in posture, and this may explain these anomalies. Changes in the composition provide us with clues about the decorative function of the figures. The positioning of their forearms indicates that the figures were intended to be a symmetrical pair. As one would expect according to the prevailing convention, the diademed figure has his left arm below the right one. All comparative stucco figures have the same arm position. This tradition can be traced back at least to the numerous depictions of attendants in Sasanian reliefs and on coins. The same arm position, with the left hand resting on a dagger, sword, or saber is also found on all

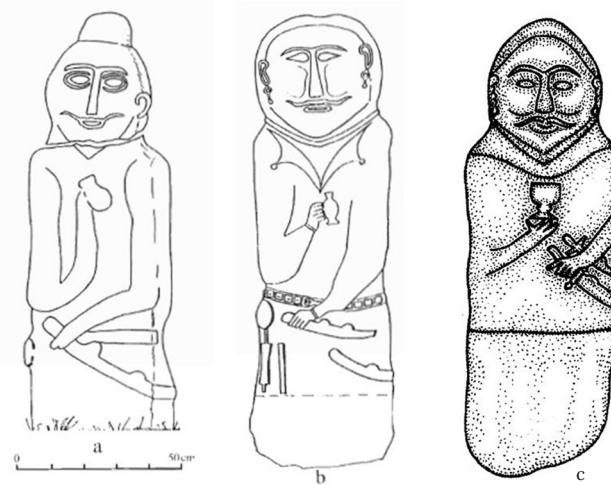


Fig. 18. Old Turkic stelae with sabers, seventh to eighth century: a) and b) from Kypchyl, Russian Altai (Sören Stark, *Die Alttürkenzeit in Zentralasien: Archäologische und Historische Studien*, Nomaden und Sesshafte 6 [Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2008], illus. 45); c) Aerkate, Kyrgyzstan (Alisa Borisenko et al., “Die Bewaffnung der alten Turkvölker, der Gegner der Sasaniden,” in *Arms and Armour as Indicators of Cultural Transfer: The Steppes and the Ancient World from Hellenistic Times to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Markus Mode and Jürgen Tubach, Nomaden und Sesshafte 4 [Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2006], 128).

Old Turkic stelae (fig. 18).⁹⁰ The arms of the winged crown figure follow this arrangement in principle but are necessarily reversed, with the right arm below the left, an uncommon position.⁹¹ The initial necessity for a symmetrical pair might be explained by both being set up on one wall within an axial hall rather than as figures on the opposite walls of a hall or court. At the same time, their royal attire was intended to be a realistic symbol for their rank. As a result, the sabers of both figures had to be positioned correctly on the left side in order to be regarded as acceptable representations by members of the military elite. This dilemma during the design or modeling process might have caused the aesthetically unsatisfactory changes that were made.

The mirrored representation of a pair of princes is also found on a heavily restored stucco panel that was, as mentioned earlier, in Hagop Kevorkian’s possession in 1926 but whose present whereabouts are unknown (fig. 19). Although it is impossible to assess its authenticity and distinguish between original and restored sections based solely on the photograph, the panel depicts a pair of courtiers, each wearing a jeweled *kulāh*, and

holding beakers and probably napkins in their hands, if we can trust the restoration.⁹² The right figure has his right hand over his left hand, while the left figure has his left hand over his right hand. If the MMA figures followed this order, the winged crown figure would be on the left side and the diademed figure on the right side. Since seemingly neither figure in the Kevorkian panel has a saber, the issue of its placement does not arise.⁹³

For the winged MMA figure, the only way to adjust the mirrored arm position with the saber on the correct left side was to redirect the position of the hands with the left one rather awkwardly resting on the upper part of the scabbard, which has been pulled up against the chest, resulting in an unusually long saber (fig. 21). Although the jeweled pommel and cross guard each correspond to the depiction of a saber on a dinar from Herat (fig. 12), this composition does not leave any space for a hilt in between.

Further alterations in the region of the chest hint at a sequence of changes in the design of this figure until the finishing (see section V.4). A buttoned caftan ought to be worn open and with an embroidered button border,



Fig. 19. Stucco relief with two figures in the Kevorkian Collection in 1926 (from H. Kevorkian, 1926, frontispiece). (Photo: unknown)

as it is shown on the diademed twin, so that the rich embroidery of the undergarment becomes visible. Looking from the hemline of the winged crown figure up to the belt, the caftan is open and two golden sashes are presented similar to its pendent figure. However, above the belt line, we unexpectedly find a single unbuttoned chest area of finely woven textile that does not continue the caftan concept and the button border of the lower part. This obvious change in design resulted in the chest piece being slightly more raised—possibly over an earlier design—than the lower parts of the caftan. It thus



Fig. 20. Detail of fig. 19, showing the figure on the right.



Fig. 21. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): hand and saber. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)



Fig. 22. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): chest piece with unrelated “bow-tie” lace joints, numbered 1 to 4. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)

lacks the natural flow from the hemline to the chest seen in the profile of the diademed figure. To the right of the left hand are the remains of four red “butterfly”- or “bow-tie”-shaped raised ornamentations (fig. 22). A parallel row of ornamentations can also be found to the left of the left hand, the parallel third and fourth invisible, but possibly with a lower fifth ornament (fig. 21). These elements may represent the remains of “bow-tie” lace joints or buttons of a dismissed earlier, possibly open caftan design. They do not serve any function in the current composition. A raised elongated element running between both hands, behind the left hand, is painted red and may have represented an element in the earlier scheme whose function is no longer apparent (figs. 21

and 26). Further alterations of the “textile” pattern, such as incised wavy stripes in a vegetal ornament, also suggest that an adjustment was made to the design (fig. 26). Given that the right hand is largely missing, we cannot tell how it may have been employed. Areas of the diademed figure show that there were similar, though fewer, instances of adjustments and remodeling. The right upper arm was already carved and incised when a second layer was applied to strengthen the proportionate features of the figure (fig. 23) (see section V.3 below for further detail). With the help of a CT scan similar additive applications of layers of plaster in the modeling process were observed on the V&A figures and also on the Detroit figure.⁹⁴



Fig. 23. Detail of figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119): right upper arm. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)

IV. THE AUDIENCE HALL

IV.1. *The polychrome mural tradition*

While figural stucco decoration depicting humans was, with few exceptions, not continued after the eighth century, almost life-sized depictions of courtly figures on murals were continuously known in Central Asia.⁹⁵ For western Iran, Iraq, and Syria, evidence of murals is still largely missing. The closest parallels within an architectural context are provided by the frescoes of Central Asian palaces such as the one in Lashkar-i Bazar or in Tepe Afrasiyab, Old Samarkand. If we see the MMA figures in this mural tradition, then it becomes apparent that their polychromy was more important than their sculptural aspect. Indeed, the figures should be seen as three-dimensional substrates for a mural painting. The above-mentioned unprovenanced smaller relief figures (height about 40 cm) on marble slabs from the vicinity of Ghazna, presumably from around 1100, point to a similar direction.⁹⁶

The palace complex of ancient Bust is located in the Helmand province in present-day Afghanistan. This palace was built during the reign of Mahmud of Ghazna (r. 998–1030) and expanded by his son Mas'ud



Fig. 24. Mural in the audience hall in Lashkar-i Bazar. (*Lashkari Bazar, une résidence royale ghaznévide et ghoride*, t. 1A: *L'architecture*, ed. Daniel Schlumberger [Paris, 1978], pl. 122.a)



Fig. 25. Detail of fig. 24, mural in the audience hall of Lashkar-i Bazar.

(r. 1031–40), who took up residence there in 1036–37. In about 1150, during the Seljuq conquest by Sanjar (r. 1118–57), the palaces were pillaged and Bust was destroyed.⁹⁷ A famous fresco in the reception hall has been interpreted as a royal audience; it shows forty-four standing courtly figures almost the same size as the MMA figures (figs. 24 and 25). All these figures have a beardless Turkic “moon face” and wear *qabās* in blue and red with *tirāz* brassards and belts ending in two long sashes.⁹⁸ The chronicler Bayhaqi (d. 1066) describes similarly lavish receptions at the Ghaznavid court.

On the lower terrace of the citadel in Samarqand was a *kūshk* with a courtyard for receptions, decorated with murals of the same color scheme. Karev has suggested that the *kūshk* was built by either the Qarakhanid ruler Mas‘ud ibn Hasan (r. 1150–71) or his son Muhammad (r. 1170–79). To the left of the ruler’s niche, on the eastern wall, is an almost life-sized attendant in three-quarter profile, and on the northern wall a cross-legged ruler sits on a throne; both hold an arrow in their hands as a sign of power.⁹⁹

The MMA figures appear to have been brightly painted and gilded. As will be discussed below (see section V.4), recent analyses of their pigments, as well as of those on the related figures in Berlin and Detroit, have revealed that many if not all are of modern origin. It is beyond doubt, however, that vivid colors originally endowed these figures with a striking visual power and it is possible that the modern pigments were added to revive the faint traces that remained after centuries of being buried.

The palette, which was restricted to blue, red, and gold, with black outlines and elements in white, was used with a different emphasis on each figure. The same color scheme is found in the murals of Lashkar-i Bazar. The background color of the caftan of the winged-crown figure is blue with white floral ornaments arranged in wide bands between red stripes (fig. 26). Some of these stripes are separated by incised grooves (fig. 27). Special attention was taken with the cuffs of the figure with the winged crown. They were each “embroidered” with a carved cartouche showing an arabesque and three

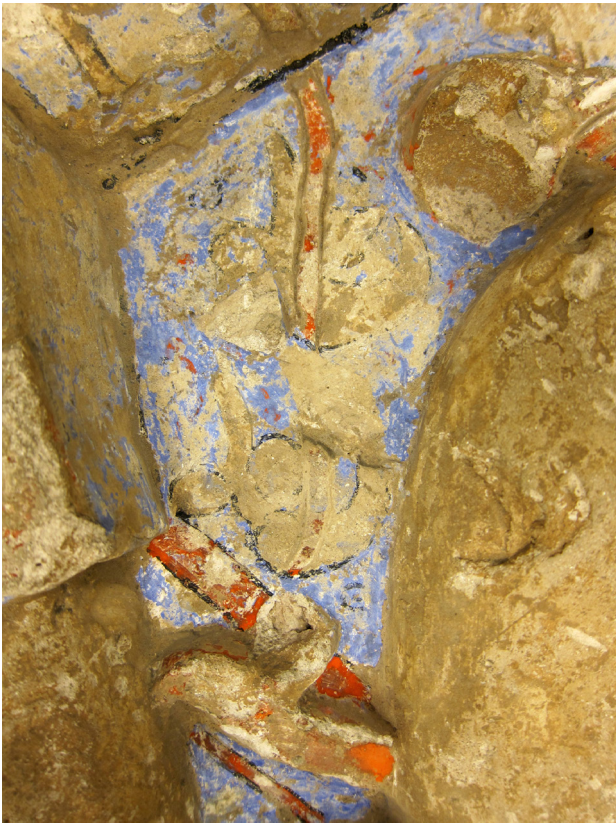


Fig. 26. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): the embroidery on the chest piece. (Photo: Stefan Heidemann)

raised gilded studs (now abraded) between the wavy incised grooves (fig. 21). This caftan is worn over a red undergarment. The scrolling tendrils may have represented silver wefts. Textiles shown in Lashkar-i Bazar and those depicted on polychrome *mīnā'ī* ware have a similar pattern. The hem area of the caftan is also richly embellished with studs in the form of rosettes.

The main color of the caftan worn by the figure with the diadem, on the other hand, is defined by the wide red bands that appear between narrow blue stripes; this garment is worn over a blue robe. The separating grooves serve as proof of a similar original textile pattern. The sashes and much of the raised embroidered decoration and studs appear to have been gilded, adding to the opulence of the clothing. This caftan seems richer, with a larger number of studs, than that of its pendant with

the winged crown. From a distance, the two figures might have appeared as a contrasting pair. In this context, it is interesting to note that at the Ghaznavid court, as witnessed by Bayhaqi, clothing served as an indicator of one's place in the court hierarchy.¹⁰⁰

IV.2. The architectural context

Polychromed relief figures impart a sense of drama and verisimilitude to flat mural decoration. These figures would have created the illusion of an increased presence at the hall, thus fulfilling a function similar to the reflective surfaces found in the Great Hall of Mirrors at Versailles and in numerous other palaces. In a reception area already filled with ostentatiously dressed dignitaries, these lavishly painted and gilded figures enhanced the splendor and largess of the receiving ruler. But where would the MMA figures have been placed? All of the figures in Lashkar-i Bazar are shown in a three-quarter profile looking at a central figure who is now missing, and who probably faced the audience. In Samarqand we have attendants in three-quarter profile turning to the throne niche.¹⁰¹ *Mīnā'ī* and luster-painted ware of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries always show one ruler sitting cross-legged and facing forward while the attendants stand in three-quarter profile. The Berlin figure in three-quarter posture might have served as an attendant in such a position. It seems unlikely that the MMA figures stood beside the ruler's throne; therefore, they would have been turning toward him. In addition, as a pair they could not be central figures. It seems more likely that they stood opposite the ruler's throne, standing at attention and within his sight. Their youthful power, as reflected in their round beardless faces, complements their royal presence, manifested in their crowns and accoutrements. More than a single princely figure, the presence here of two royal princes might have reinforced the sultan's claim as *shāhānshāh*, king of kings, in an artificially enlarged royal audience. The proposed time frame of 1050 to 1150, with a likely dating to the first half of the twelfth century, suggests that Sanjar, who ruled as supreme sultan between 1118 and 1157, might have been the patron of these revetments. These royal figures could be representations of subdued kings¹⁰² serving as vassals or royal princes of the Seljuq

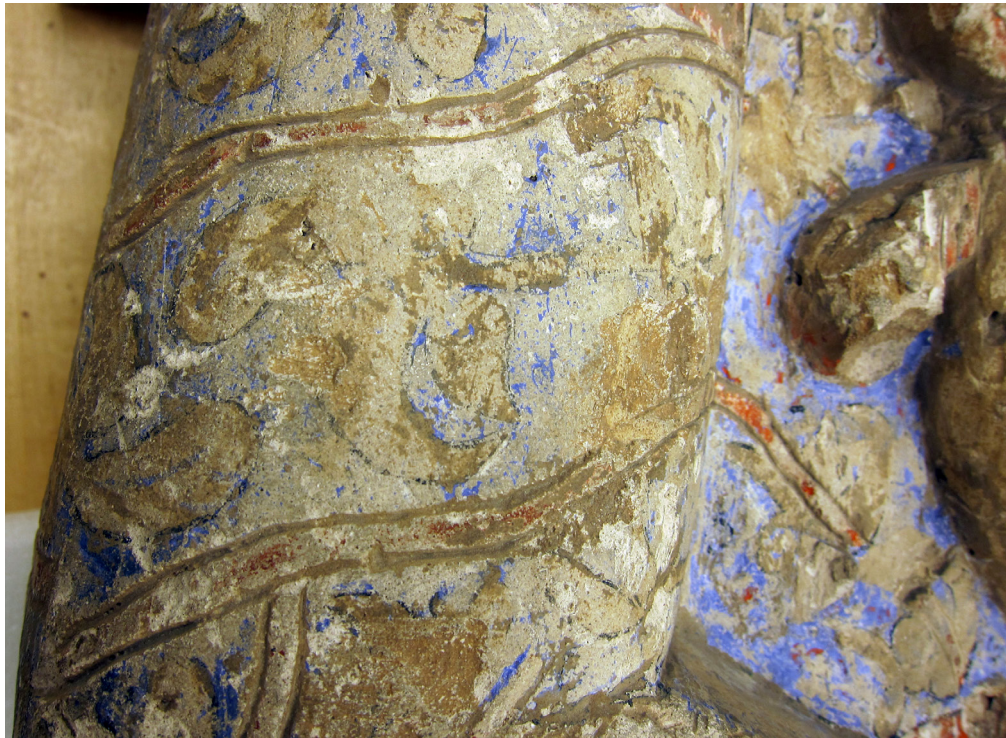


Fig. 27. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): the embroidery on the right arm. (Photo: Stefan Heide-
mann)

family. Individual representations were most probably not intended; the *ṭirāz* brassards would have been a likely place for such an identification.

While these figures seem to indicate a royal audience hall, the setting and location of such a venue remains open. Our knowledge of Seljuq palatial architecture is limited. No Seljuq palace has yet been excavated in Iran, which could provide a useful comparison. A small structure in the Shariyar Ark in Marv was cautiously identified as an audience hall but no architectural decoration remained.¹⁰³ Stucco-relief figures need to be affixed to rigid structures such as walls. If these figures had come from an urban context the chances of their survival would have been minimal, due to the cycle of destruction and rebuilding in subsequent centuries and various periods of iconoclasm.

David Durand-Guédy recently analyzed the literary sources on audiences and lodgments of the Seljuq sultans.¹⁰⁴ The Seljuq court was itinerant and usually camped away from city centers, holding audiences in

tent enclosures (*surādiq* [Arab.] or *sarāparda* [Pers.]), either outside under a canopy or within trellis tents (sing. *khargāh*). Nevertheless, outside their main cities, such as Hamadhan, Isfahan, Sava, and Baghdad the Seljuqs erected more substantial temporary structures, referred to as *kūshks* in the literary sources. For most of the time these lands were under the rule of the subordinate Western Seljuq sultan.

A *kūshk* was a kind of pavilion, and could be synonymous with *dār* or *sarāy*. Unlike *khargāh* tents, they may have been built with wooden beams, adobe, or mud bricks, all of which create rigid walls. These were light structures of up to two stories and intended for temporary use. Perhaps we should see these royal stucco figures as a hastily formed part of the decorative program of just such a reception structure, which was not meant to last.

A direct comparison can be made with the seven Qarakhanid *kūshks* on the elevated northern citadel plateau of Samarqand and the reported palaces in Bukhara.

One of them was carefully excavated. As far as we can discern from the texts and the archaeological evidence, these were light structures, constructed with adobe using a wooden frame technique (*Fachwerk*) and intended for receptions by the ruler.¹⁰⁵

Ironically, this suburban context for *kūshks*—as proposed by Durand-Guédy—may have helped to preserve these figures until the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when expanding urban development began to encroach on peripheral areas. This was precisely the moment when such objects were to be discovered, and when a market was created for Persian antiquities in Europe and North America. From our knowledge of Seljuq building activities, it seems likely that the figures come from western Iran. This is also the period when Hagop Kevorkian was excavating in Rayy, which may explain why he is so closely connected with this material.¹⁰⁶ It should be noted as well that Lord Marling was in Tehran, which is close to Rayy, when he was offered the figures that his widow, Lady Marling, later sold to the V&A. Compared to Hamadhan or Isfahan, the historical sources for Rayy are scarce. The supreme sultan Sanjar visited there in 1117–18 and 1148–49, but no building activity is mentioned.¹⁰⁷ Zahir al-Din reports that Sultan Arslan ibn Tughril (r. 1161–76) stayed in a pavilion within a walled garden (*kūshk-i bāgh*) of a powerful local amir.¹⁰⁸

V. TECHNICAL EXAMINATION

V.1. Overview

All of the objects selected for exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Islamic art galleries, which opened in 2011, were subject to art historical and technical examinations. Few works of completely dubious authenticity were discovered in this process, but several examples of pastiches were identified, composed of fragments from different if contemporary objects, as well as objects enhanced for the market with modern embellishments. With its rich figural imagery, the art of the Seljuq period has been highly valued in Western Europe and North America since the early part of the twentieth century, as evidenced by the extensive and sometimes deceptive restorations that were performed on *mīnā'i* ware.¹⁰⁹ Since no information had come to light re-

garding the recovery of the two painted figures under consideration here, an in-depth technical study was urgently required. Similar examinations are being performed on the comparable figures in the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin, the Detroit Institute of Art, and the Victoria and Albert Museum.¹¹⁰

V.2. Stucco composition

The term “stucco” is rather imprecise and can refer to either lime or gypsum-based plasters mixed with temper and other additives to achieve the desired working qualities.¹¹¹ The approximate age of lime plasters can be determined at least theoretically by radiocarbon dating, provided that they are free of organic contaminants and/or not tempered with carbonaceous minerals. Lime plaster, a mixture of water and calcium oxide obtained by the roasting of a calcium carbonate rock such as limestone, sets in a process known as carbonation, in which atmospheric carbon dioxide reacts with calcium hydroxide to reform calcium carbonate. Determining the ratio of the absorbed carbon-14 isotope fraction remaining in the plaster to that normally expected can provide the basis for dating. In the Middle Eastern tradition, however, stuccos are often based on gypsum plaster. Heating above 300° Celsius converts gypsum rock, which is commonly found across the region, from calcium sulphate dihydrate to a hemihydrated form, while higher temperatures produce calcium sulphate anhydrite. When the calcined mineral is pounded into a powder and mixed with water, it readily reverts to the dihydrate form in an exothermic reaction. Temper and prolonged stirring serve to improve its working qualities and extend the time available until the plaster sets and hardens. Unfortunately, there is currently no scientific method that can be used to date gypsum plaster unless there are embedded charcoal fragments remaining from the calcining process.

Although more brittle and softer than stone, gypsum stucco provides a durable surface well suited for architectural decoration. Stucco has numerous advantages over stone: its components can be easily carried to the site where it is needed, and it can conform to any surface and be carved and smoothed readily before it has dried using very simple tools. Stucco also permits alterations and additions if the original concept of the artist changes over time, as we see in both figures. Despite its slight

solubility in water, early Islamic stucco has survived burial for centuries at sites such as Nishapur with much of its surface detail and traces of applied paint still preserved.

An examination of the bottom edge of the figure with the winged crown reveals that at least two plaster mixtures were used in its creation. The basic form was obtained using plaster mixed with a rather coarse temper, while the upper layer and surface details were executed using a fine-textured plaster that was more suitable for carving and burnishing. Open-architecture X-ray diffraction (XRD) analysis of the coarse lower layer indicated a mixture of gypsum with traces of quartz, anhydrite, and calcite.¹¹² Microscopic examination combined with Fourier-transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) allowed for the identification of the temper as coarsely-ground gypsum with quartz, feldspar, sedimentary rock fragments, and vegetal remains, but with no charcoal present. Analysis of the surface plaster layers on both figures indicates the presence of gypsum dihydrate with traces of anhydrite and quartz. Although anhydrite will convert to gypsum over time when exposed to moisture, it has been found in ancient plasters recovered from dry environments.¹¹³

V.3. Condition of both figures

No written examination report accompanied the acquisition of either figure, but black and white photographs taken at that time indicate that structural damage was repaired before they entered the Museum's collection, including the horizontal fractures visible in the photograph of the figure with the jeweled diadem found in Riefstahl's article.¹¹⁴ Recent X-radiographs made of both figures reveal that fractures were repaired using long metal tubes, pins, and large staples. Losses along these break lines were filled with plaster and disguised with paint.

Of the two figures, the one with the diadem crown has suffered more extensive damage (fig. 29). Horizontal break lines run across the figure at the level of the shoulders, at the waist, and at the juncture between the caftan and the lower legs. The fracture at the waist caused the loss of the proper left hand and part of the saber, including the top of the scabbard and the hilt. The outer edges of both upper arms, particularly the proper right one, have been shattered into many pieces and reattached.

Based on the variations in opacity seen in the radiographs, it appears that the upper body of this figure was enlarged after the previously modeled plaster had hardened, resulting in a structural weakness at the interface between the two applications (fig. 23).¹¹⁵ A vertical seam also runs up the center of the lower caftan section. Unlike all the other break lines, this seam is very straight, is not pinned, and is virtually undetectable on the surface. Given the radio-transparency along this seam line, it is probable that a modern organic adhesive was used in this join. The bottom section with the boots has been reassembled using several fragments that have been pinned together. Losses between these fragments suggest that this section either was extensively shattered or is a pastiche of disparate fragments. Whether or not this bottom section originally belonged to this sculpture or another figure of the original revetment cannot be ascertained without disassembly.¹¹⁶ By contrast, the figure with the winged crown was only fractured at the waist, resulting in the loss of a part of the right hand, the lower edge of the proper right cuff, and part of the scabbard.

The surfaces of both figures exhibit a considerable amount of modern scraping and knife marks that appear to be related to the removal of apparent burial incrustations. The stucco has suffered erosion at high spots as well as scratching and shallow pitting that could be consistent with the proposed age of these figures (figs. 21–23). The contention that these figures were designed for placement in a larger wall composition is supported by details such as the unfinished surfaces at the tops of the heads, as well as the remnants of a background plane extending out from the edges of the figures—under the proper right elbow of the figure with the winged crown (fig. 28) and around the legs of the jeweled diadem figure (fig. 2). At the same time, in accordance with the presence of anhydrite in the surface plaster, there is surprisingly little evidence of aqueous erosion on the surface of either figure.

V.4. The color scheme

Before any pigments were analyzed partial reconstructions of the present traces of polychromy on each figure were made (figs. 30 and 31). On both figures, the surface decoration is limited to various shades of red and blue—



Fig. 28. Detail of figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18): the background wall surface preserved under proper right arm of the figure with the winged crown. (Photo: Jean-François de Lapérouse)

often painted over a thin layer of white—with black and traces of gilding.

The figure with the winged crown wears a blue caftan with a repeating motif of leaves and tendrils outlined in black and aligned between thin orange-red stripes. Faintly incised scribe lines are still visible on the surface of this figure outlining the vegetal ornaments—a feature also noted in the layout of the painted plaster wall panels from Nishapur.¹¹⁷ The spaces around these vegetal elements are filled with a circle and dot motif (fig. 30). In the chest area, the red stripes were cut through the vegetal ornaments after they had already been painted, which is consistent with the alterations in this area that were already noted (fig. 21). Under the caftan this figure wears a red skirt with a repeating cross motif that is largely obscured by surface dirt. The same motif is found on the coat of the right-hand figure in a relief said to have come from Rayy that was in the Hagop Kevorkian collection in 1926 (fig. 20).¹¹⁸ Similar, but not identical is the cross pattern on the squatting figure from the V&A.

The bottom edge of the undergarment of the figure with the winged crown (fig. 1) features “embroidered” seven-petalled golden blossoms or appliqués with black tendrils thinly outlined on a blue field. Very faint traces of gilding are found on the wide sash ends that hang down over the skirt, as well as on raised elements of the jewelry and crown.

The figure with the jeweled crown wears a caftan featuring thin blue stripes alternating with wider bands decorated with black crosses on a red field (figs. 2 and 31). The vertical border of this caftan is decorated with embroidered or applied gilded quadripartite elements, with a central boss on a wide red border with a finely beaded edge.¹¹⁹ The two ends of the sash hang down over a blue skirt with a raised embroidered or applied palmetto design rising from the bottom edge, with a row of closures in a chevron-shaped formation on the chest of the caftan (fig. 2). *Ṭirāz* brassards with carved inscriptions against red or blue fields are found on the upper arms of both figures. The long hair braids as well as de-

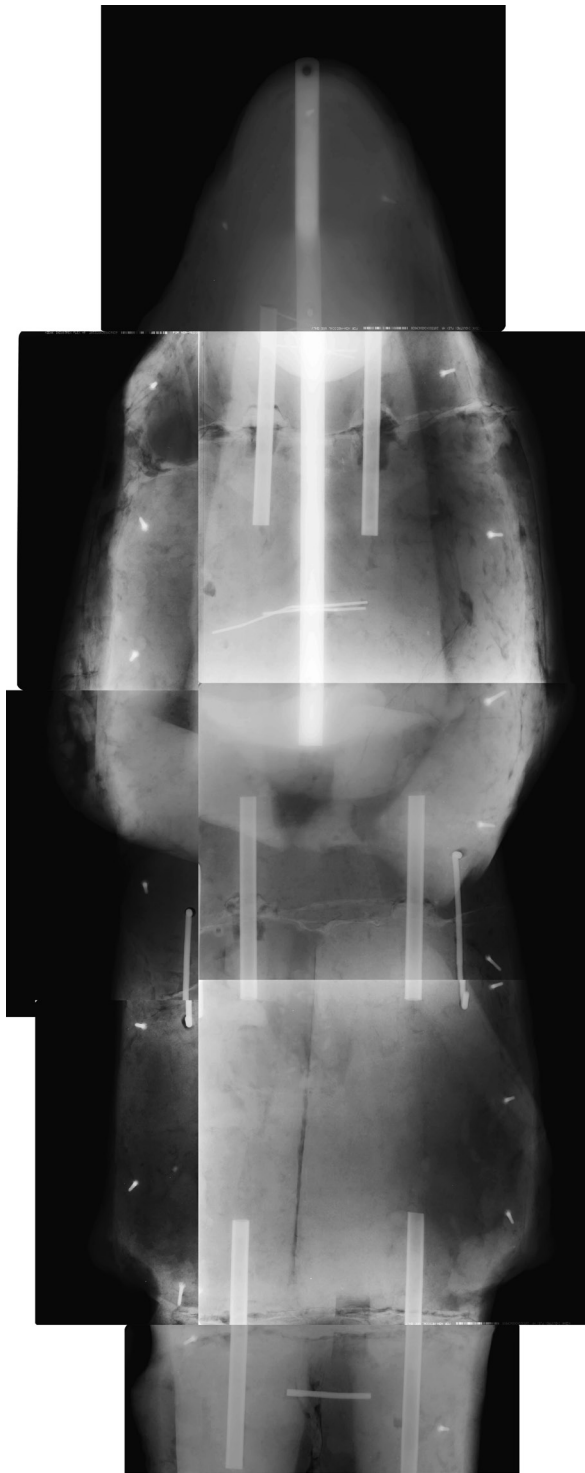


Fig. 29. Composite X-radiograph of the figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119). (Photo: Jean-François de Lapérouse)

tails of the eyes and eyebrows are rendered in black. The color of the veil has not yet been determined. Although the face and hands presumably were painted, it has so far been difficult to differentiate between burial dirt and vestiges of paint in these areas.

V.5. Pigment analyses

Numerous pigment samples were taken for analysis by energy dispersive spectroscopy, FTIR, X-ray diffraction (XRD), and polarized light microscopy (PLM).¹²⁰ Care was taken not to take samples from obvious areas of previous restoration. All of the pigments were thinly applied and are extremely friable, and FTIR analyses have not yet detected the presence of any binding media. Charcoal black was used extensively to color the hair, indicate the pupils and eyebrows, and add linear decoration to the garments worn by both figures. All of the blue samples obtained from both figures were found by EDS to be chemically consistent with ultramarine over a layer of lead white. Ultramarine is a complex sulphur-containing sodium silicate that could only be obtained from the processing of lapis lazuli, which was procured from the Badakhshan region in present-day Afghanistan until the 1820s, when the synthetic process was first developed.¹²¹ Visual examination of over twenty samples of blue pigment by polarized light microscopy revealed that they are morphologically similar and consist of large, irregularly shaped mineral particles (fig. 32). Although synthetic ultramarine is normally finely ground, the FTIR spectrum of this blue pigment did not match the reference spectrum for Afghan lapis lazuli; the complete absence of calcite, which is always found as an impurity in lapis lazuli, was confirmed by X-ray diffraction. These findings, as well as the fact that this pigment's large particles tend to be rounded and deeply colored, indicates that the blue pigment is a coarsely ground, synthetic product.¹²²

The primary red pigment was found to be red lead—a lead tetroxide obtained by the calcination of lead white. The production of this pigment in both the East and the West predates the proposed provenance of these figures by many centuries and its use in early Persian manuscript painting has been confirmed, though it is often found in association with cinnabar (mercuric sulphide), which was not found on either figure.¹²³



Fig. 30. Reconstructed detail of the polychromy on the figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18). (Painting: Jean-François de Lapérouse)



Fig. 31. Reconstructed detail of the polychromy on the figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119). (Painting: Jean-François de Lapérouse)

Crudely applied bright orange splashes of red lead on eroded surfaces contrast with darkened red lead pigment on smooth, undamaged surfaces (fig. 33). This darkening may represent the alteration of this pigment to plattnerite, a phenomenon observed in the wall paintings in the cave temples of Mogao, near the Dunhuang oasis in northwestern China.¹²⁴ However, the rate at which plattnerite forms depends on many variables and its appearance cannot be used as a proof of age. Red earth was present in some samples, but it is not clear to what extent this iron oxide was actually a contamination from the overlying dirt layers. In several red samples—particularly those taken from the figure with the jeweled crown—the red lead is mixed with barium sulphate, an inorganic compound not normally found as a main constituent in pigments before the late eighteenth century.¹²⁵ FTIR analysis of these samples also revealed the presence of an azo dye—sodium lithol rubine (Color Index Name Code: PR57)—that was not formulated before the beginning of the twentieth century.¹²⁶ Microscopic examination of this red pigment reveals that the red dye stained the barium sulphate, forming a red lake pigment (fig. 34). The same red lake pigment has been identified on the Detroit figure, and barium sulphate was also found in the red pigment on the Berlin figure by X-ray fluorescence analysis.¹²⁷

The gilding is only discernible when viewing flat surfaces at an angle and is not found on eroded surfaces. Given that there is no sign of an underlying ground layer that would be required for burnishing or any sense of physical cohesiveness between the gold particles, it appears to have been applied as a ground pigment rather than as leaf or foil. EDS analyses of samples of the gold indicate that it contained 11–14% silver and 2–2.5% copper. Since the gold is so difficult to detect visually, XRF scans of the surface were made in several locations to determine if any trace of it was present.¹²⁸ Traces are also found on the cross-legged figure of the V&A.

It is possible that these two figures were found with only traces of their original polychromy remaining and that they were subsequently enhanced to make them more attractive for the art market. If so, the painted reconstructions may hint at the original appearance of authentic relief sculptures from the Seljuq period. However, since these pigments provide the only material

basis for authenticating these sculptures given that the plaster itself cannot be dated, the fact that modern pigments were not only used extensively but were also distressed to give them an archaeological appearance is a cause for concern.¹²⁹

V.6. *Plans for further technical research*

Despite the compelling art historical evidence that has been presented, no material observation or analytical result obtained so far can confirm or disprove conclusively that these figures date to the Seljuq period and it is possible that this issue will not be fully resolved unless and until similar figures or fragments are recovered from controlled excavations. This case illustrates the difficulty of authenticating works of art whose original context has been lost and which have been the subject of modern interventions. It is hoped that continuing technical analysis of the entire corpus of related Middle Eastern stucco figures, including an in-depth examination of the plasters used, will provide further insight into this question.

CONCLUSION: THE AUDIENCE HALL

Based on the particular calligraphic style of the brisards and, as a *terminus post quem*, the first appearance of sabers in Islamic art, the two stucco figures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art can be ascribed to the time period between 1050 and 1150, with a likely date of production in the early twelfth century. The crowns mark them clearly as royal representations, although they do not follow the Islamic model of a cross-legged sitting ruler. With parallels found in Old Turkic stone stelae of Central Asia, the figural marble slabs of the Ghazna area, murals from Lashkar-i Bazar and Samarqand, and triple-lobed diadems from eastern Central Asia, these figures have several features pointing to a Central Asian origin. However, our knowledge of the building activities of Seljuq rulers and the origin of similar figures apparently from the western Iranian antiquity market of the early twentieth century point to their creation in western Iran. Figures in high relief endowed a decorative pro-

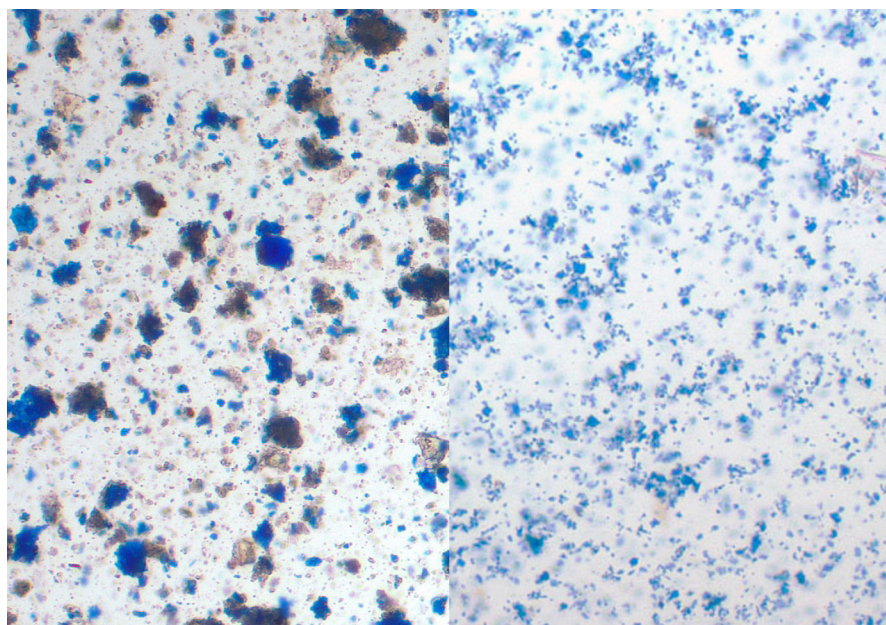


Fig. 32. Left) Sample of blue pigment from the figure with winged crown (fig. 1, MMA 57.51.18); right) finely ground synthetic ultramarine, magnified 600x. (Photo: Jean-François de Lapérouse)



Fig. 33. Detail of palmetto near the bottom hem of the figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119), with bright orange and darkened red lead. (Photo: Jean-François de Lapérouse)

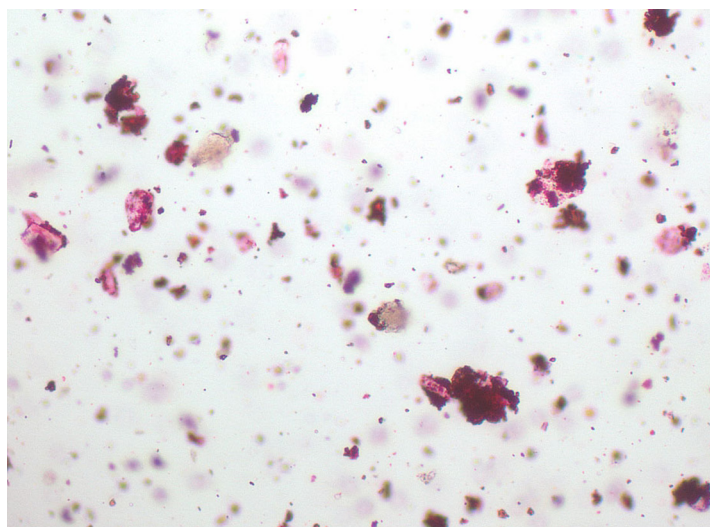


Fig. 34. Bright red pigment sample from the figure with jeweled diadem (fig. 2, MMA 67.119), consisting of barium sulphate stained with a red azo dye, magnified 600x. (Photo: Jean-François de Lapérouse)

gram with a greater verisimilitude than two-dimensional wall paintings. With their dazzling polychromy, these life-sized figures effectively augmented the gathering of ostentatiously dressed dignitaries already assembled in an audience hall, thus enhancing the splendor and the largesse of a receiving ruler. It was suggested that the postures and arm positions of the MMA figures were meant to mirror each other, but their respective swords were realistically placed at the left side of each figure. This resulted in an awkward hand position for the figure with the winged crown, while his saber was without a hilt, something that was technically impossible. All of the figures in the murals of Lashkar-i Bazar are shown in a three-quarter profile, as are the attendants of the murals of Samarqand; the former are presumably looking at a central figure, which did not survive, the latter at a throne niche. Since the MMA figures are not turning in this way, it seems unlikely that they formed part of a similar composition. They were meant to be viewed as a pair, and thus cannot be the central figures. Instead, it is proposed that they originally stood opposite and within the gaze of a ruler. Having two clearly marked royal personages in attendance enhanced the sultan's claim of being the *shāhānshāh*. While the representation of specific individuals was most likely not intended, the youthfulness of their beardless moon faces complemented the royal power manifested in their crowns and accoutrements. Given the date proposed, it is possible that Sanjar, the supreme sultan (r. 1118–57), was the patron of the artists responsible for their creation.

These stucco figures would have required a rigid framework and protection from the elements. To date our knowledge of Seljuq palatial architecture is limited, as no relevant structure has been excavated in Iran. Indeed, if they had been created for palaces that were situated within urban centers, the chances of their survival would have been minimal due to the waves of subsequent destruction and iconoclasm. It is known, however, that the Seljuq court was itinerant and often camped away from cities, with the sultan holding audiences in tent enclosures known as *surādiq* (Arab.) or *sarāparda* (Pers.). On the outskirts of their capitals, including Rayy, Hamadan, Isfahan, Sava, and Baghdad, the Seljuqs erected more solidly built but still temporary pavilion-like structures known as *kūshks* for receptions. These

would make it likely that the figures came from western Iran. The archaeological remains of such structures had a better chance of survival until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the aforementioned cities expanded beyond their earlier borders.

The technical study of these figures has not been able to provide conclusive proof of their authenticity on material grounds. While modern pigments similar to those found on related figures in other collections have been identified in their decoration, it is possible that these were applied to heighten original patterns that had largely been lost over time. Further compositional analysis of the stucco mixtures used to produce these figures and related examples in other collections will hopefully provide further insight into these impressive vestiges of Islamic architectural decoration.

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NOTES

Authors' note: The historical and art historical aspects of this study (sections I–IV) are by Stefan Heidemann, University of Hamburg; the technical analysis (section V) was conducted by Jean-François de Lapérouse and Vicki Parry, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. We are extremely grateful to David Durand-Guédy and an anonymous reviewer for their critical comments, and to Melody Lawrence for her careful revision of the English draft. We also wish to express our gratitude to Sheila Canby, Patty Cadby Birch Curator in Charge of the Department for Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for permission to publish the figures and for her kind support during the entire project.

1. Figure with winged crown: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 57.51.18. Stucco; free formed, incised, painted, gilt; H. 47 in. (119.4 cm). Cora Timken Burnett Collection of Persian Miniatures and Other Persian Art Objects, Bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1956. Figure with jeweled diadem: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 67.119. Stucco; free formed, incised, painted, gilt; H. 56 3/4 in. (144.1 cm). Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Wolfe, 1967.
2. Hagop Kevorkian excavated in Rayy in northwestern Iran but also acquired objects from Anatolia, the Levant, Iraq, and western Iran. In the first half of the twentieth century, European dealers still rarely had the opportunity to acquire objects from eastern Iran and Central Asia. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, "Collecting the 'Orient' at the Met: Early Tastemakers in America," *Ars Orientalis* 30 (2000): 69–89, esp.

- 72–73. Large stucco panels of royal images of the so-called princely cycle were said to be from late twelfth-century Seljuq palace complexes in Rayy, and perhaps also from Sava, in northwestern Iran. While some of them certainly integrate original material, their authenticity is disputed. For these figures, see n. 11 below.
3. We are grateful to Mariam Rosser-Owen, curator of Islamic art at the Victoria and Albert Museum, for this information.
 4. Worcester, Mass., Worcester Art Museum, inv. no. 1932.24. P. B. Cott, "A Persian Stucco Figure," *Bulletin of the Worcester Art Museum* 23 (1932): 104–10.
 5. The Walters Art Museum, art.thewalters.org/detail/13647/standing-warrior-holding-a-sword, accessed March 21, 2014. Dimensions: 60.4 cm × 25.1 cm. It was acquired by Henry Walters on December 16, 1926, from Dikran Kelekian, New York and Paris. This figure was not personally studied for this article. Published also in Eva Baer, *The Human Figure in Islamic Art: Inheritance and Islamic Transformations* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2004), 21, fig. 27.
 6. For the head and torso from Nizamabad, see n. 12 below. For the Seljuq period, see *Islamische Kunst in Berlin: Katalog*, ed. Klaus Brisch (Berlin: B. Hessling, 1971), 106, nos. 405, 406, illus. 55.
 7. The frieze in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is at best regarded as just such a composite. See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "A Persian Stucco Frieze, and Other Fragments," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 28, 170 (December 1930): 104–7. The object was deaccessioned in the 1930s, probably due to questions of authenticity.
 8. Rudolf M. Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," *The Art Bulletin* 13, 4 (December 1931): 438–63.
 9. Regarding fig. 1 (MMA. 57.51.18), see Stefan Heidemann, "62. Princely Figure with Winged Crown," in *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Maryam D. Ekhtiar, Priscilla P. Soucek, Sheila R. Canby, and Navina Najat Haidar (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 102–4. Oya Pancaroğlu in *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600–1600*, ed. David J. Roxburgh (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 86–87, 386–87, no. 39, suggests twelfth-century Afghanistan or Iran as the origin of the winged-crown figures. See also Celâl Esad Arseven, *Menşeyinden Bugüne kadar Heykel, Oyma ve Resim*, Türk Sanatı Tarihi 3, 3 (Istanbul: Maarif Basımevi, n.d. [ca. 1960]), 11 (photo: Riefstahl). Regarding fig. 2 (MMA 67.119), see Stefan Heidemann, "63. Princely Figure with Jeweled Crown," in Ekhtiar et al., *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art*, 102–4. See also Eleanor Sims, with Boris I. Marshak and Ernst J. Grube, *Peerless Images: Persian Painting and Its Sources* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 38, fig. 52 (dating it to the twelfth to thirteenth century), and Farhad Daftary and Zulfikar Hirji, *The Ismailis: An Illustrated History* (London: Azimuth Editions, 2008), 107 (dating it to Seljuq Persia, around 1200). Baer, *Human Figure*, 23, recently dated the group of stucco figures to the late twelfth century on the basis of *mīnā'i* ware. Surprisingly, she does not include the two figures of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in her study.
 10. Estelle Whelan, "Representations of the *Khāssakīyah* and the Origins of Mamluk Emblems," in *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World: Papers from a Colloquium in Memory of Richard Ettinghausen*, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2–4 April 1980, Planned and Organized by Carol Manson Bier, ed. Priscilla P. Soucek (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 219–43, figs. 9–12; Melanie Gibson, "A Symbolic *Khassakiya*: Representations of the Palace Guard in Murals and Stucco Sculpture," in *Islamic Art, Architecture and Material Culture: New Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Graves, British Archaeological Reports: International Series 2436 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012), 81–91. See also Martina Rugiadi, *Decorazione architettonica in marmo da Ġaznī (Afghanistan)* (Ph.D. diss., Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'; Bologna: Routes Associazione Culturale, 2012), 1302–3, on the human figures on the Ghaznavid marble slabs, from the vicinity of Ghazna (available online at http://www.academia.edu/3312644/2012_Decorazione_architettonica_in_marmo_da_Ghazni_Afghanistan_.Tesi_Dottorale_Bologna_Bradypus_Communicating_Cultural_Heritage_ISBN_978-88-908109-0-9).
 11. Cf. other stucco panels: most recently, Robert Hillenbrand, "A Monumental Seljuk Stucco Panel," in *Treasures of the Islamic and Indian Worlds*, Christie's, London, October, 5, 2010, pp. 95–99, no. 99; Arthur Upton Pope, *Survey of Persian Art* (Oxford, 1939), 1305–8, pls. 516–18; Arthur Upton Pope, "Some Recently Discovered Seldjuk Stucco," *Ars Islamica* 1 (1934): 110–17; Coomaraswamy, "Persian Stucco Frieze" (see n. 7 above); Friedrich Sarre, "Stuckdekoration und Lüster Vasen der persischen Mongolenzeit," *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 172–78.
 12. For the lesser-known stucco figures of Nizamabad (south-east of Tehran), see, recently, Jens Kröger, "Kopf eines Großkönigs" and "Relieffigur eines Caftanträgers," in *Heroische Zeiten: Tausend Jahre persisches Buch der Könige*, ed. Julia Gonnella and Christoph Rauch (Berlin, 2011), 88–89; Jens Kröger, *Sasanidischer Stuckdekor* (Mainz, 1982), 162–64. See also the carved stucco head with a felt cap, MMA 42.25.17. The MMA also owns a very rare stone head (MMA 33.111). Two stucco heads are preserved in the David Collection in Copenhagen: see Kjeld von Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam in the David Collection* (Copenhagen, 2001), 230, 248–49, nos. 397 and 398 (inv. nos. 44/1978; 5/1976).
 13. Sheila Blair, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York, 1985–2012), s.v. "Gač-Bori"; Neilson C. Debevoise, "The Origin of Decorative Stucco," *American Journal of Archaeology* 45, 1 (1941): 45–61.
 14. London, British Museum, inv. no. MAS.1061 (height: 43 cm), excavated in Mingoi, Xinjiang, China.
 15. Michael Meinecke, "Early Abbasid Stucco Decoration in Bilād al-Shām," in *Bilād al-Shām during the 'Abbāsid Period (132 A.H./750 A.D.–451 A.H./1059 A.D.)*, *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference for the History of the Bilād al-Shām*, March 4–8, 1990 (Amman, 1991), vol. 2, ed. Muḥammad 'Adnān al-Bakhīt and Robert Schick, pp. 226–37.

16. Stucco friezes of camels were also found in Samarra. Ernst Herzfeld, *Die Malereien von Samarra* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1927), 100ff., illus.; 78ff., pls. 75ff.
17. Cf. the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo. While Fatimid stone and wood sculpture is richly decorated with images, stucco—which may have included figural images—did not survive.
18. Charles K. Wilkinson, *Nishapur: Some Early Islamic Buildings and Their Decoration* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986).
19. Raya Shani, "On the Stylistic Idiosyncrasies of a Saljūq Stucco Workshop from the Region of Kāshān," *Iran* 27 (1989): 67–74; and Samuel R. Peterson, "The Masjid-i Pā Minār at Zavāreh: A Redating and an Analysis of Early Islamic Iranian Stucco," *Artibus Asiae* 39, 1 (1977): 60–90.
20. Herzfeld, *Die Malereien von Samarra*, pls. 60–71.
21. Wilkinson, *Nishapur*, 245–50.
22. Alessio Bombaci, "Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan, I: Introduction to the Excavations at Ghazni," *East and West* 10, 1–2 (1959): 3–22, esp. 9–16. The figures are in flat relief and appear clumsy and awkward. For the polychromy of the stucco of that time, see Martina Rugiadi, "As for the Colours, Look at a Garden in Spring': Polychrome Marble in the Ghaznavid Architectural Decoration," in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 12 April–16 April 2010, British Museum and UCL, London*, ed. Roger Matthews and John Curtis, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), vol. 2, *Ancient and Modern Issues in Cultural Heritage; Colour and Light in Architecture, Art and Material Culture; Islamic Archaeology*, 254–73.
23. Yuri Karev, "Un cycle de peintures murales d'époque qarākhānide (XIIe–XIIIe siècles) à la citadelle de Samarkand: Le souverain et le peintre," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 147, 4 (2003): 1685–731; Yuri Karev, "Qarakhanid Wall Paintings in the Citadel of Samarkand: First Report and Preliminary Observations," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 45–84; Yuri Karev, "Les palais de Samarkande à l'époque islamique: Le souverain et le peintre," *Les Dossiers d'Archéologie* 341 (2010): 62–67; and Yuri Karev, "From Tents to Cities: The Royal Court of the Western Qarakhānids Between Bukhārā and Samarkand," in *Turko-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life*, ed. David Durand-Guédy, Brill's Inner Asian Library 31 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 99–147.
24. See, for example, Oya Pancaroğlu, "Socializing Medicine: Illustrations of the *Kitāb al-Diryāq*," *Muqarnas* 18 (2001): 155–72. Most of the known early manuscripts seem to have come from the Jazira and Iraq.
25. Robert Hillenbrand, *The Dictionary of Art* (London: Macmillan, 1996), s.v. "Islamic Art, §II.9(i)(b): Architectural Decoration: (b) Figural Sculpture"; Oya Pancaroğlu, "A World Unto Himself: The Rise of a New Human Image in the Late Seljuk Period (1150–1250)" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2000), at 25–35. See also Joachim Gierlichs, *Mittelalterliche Tierreliefs in Anatolien und Nordmesopotamien: Untersuchungen zur figürlichen Baudekoration der Seldschuken, Artuqiden und ihrer Nachfolger bis ins 15. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1996); and Joachim Gierlichs, "A Victory Monument in the Name of Sultan Malikshāh in Diyarbakir: Medieval Figural Reliefs Used for Political Propaganda," *Islamic Art: Studies on the Art and Culture of the Muslim World* 6 (2009): 51–79. For metalware, see Oleg Grabar, "The Visual Arts, 1050–1350," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. J. A. Boyle, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 5:626–58, at 645; Oleg Grabar, "Les arts mineurs de l'Orient musulman à partir du milieu du XIIe siècle," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 11 (1968): 181–90, at 186.
26. The use of cast plaster and models is unlikely for singular figures. This technique ended in the Umayyad period. See Kröger, *Sasanidischer Stuckdekor*, 213; Jens Kröger, "Werkstattfragen iranisch-mesopotamischen Baudekors in sasanidisch-frühislamischer Zeit," in *Künstler und Werkstatt in den orientalischen Gesellschaften*, ed. Adalbert J. Gail (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1982): 17–29, at 25–26.
27. Currently none of the pigments on the MMA figures and the others could be scientifically verified as being consistent with the proposed dating of the figures (see section V.4 of the present article).
28. Cf. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam: Jean Müller, 1845), 1:162–68; and Soheila Amirsoleimani, "Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts: Hierarchy and Mystification," *Studia Iranica* 32, 2 (2003): 213–42, at 219.
29. Cf. Dozy, *Dictionnaire*, 354–62.
30. Priscilla Soucek, "Ethnicity in the Islamic Figural Tradition: The Case of the 'Turk'," *Tārīḥ* 2 (1992): 73–103, at 86, citing a document for the 'Izz al-Dīn Tughra'i, in Heribert Horst, *Die Staatsverwaltung der Grosselgüen und Hörzmsāhs (1038–1231), Eine Untersuchung nach Urkundenformularen der Zeit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1964), 100.
31. For the material evidence for gilding, see section V.3.
32. Soucek, "Ethnicity in the Islamic Figural Tradition," 83; Amirsoleimani, "Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts," 225 (complete list of references for *kamar* in Bayhaqī), 230. See also Ṣāḥir al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Zayd al-Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, ed. Qāsim Ghanī and 'Alī Akbar Fayyād (Tehran, 1324 [1945]), 155 (describing a delicate, gold-threaded silken robe with a belt, studded with 1,000 *mithqāl* [a unit of measurement of 4–5 gr.] of turquoise in the year 422 [1031]: *va-kamar-i az hazār miṣqāl-i pīrūzhā*); 266 (a golden belt: *kamar-i zar*); 492 (robes of honor with golden belts in the year 426 [1035]: *va-kamar bi-zar hum bi-rasm-i turkān*). See as well al-Bayhaqī, *The History of Beyhaqī*, trans. and ed. C. E. Bosworth, rev. Mohsen Ashtiany, 3 vols. (Boston, Washington, D.C.: Ilex Foundation, 2011), the same quotations on 1:244, 1:372, and 2:157.
33. We find two such ribbons on Sasanian reliefs from Taq-i Bustan in the seventh century. They were also commonly depicted in various media on eastern Iranian frescoes (see, for example, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston [henceforth

- MFA], inv. no. 63.1363), such as those at Lashkar-i Bazar of the eleventh century; on *mīnā'ī* ware of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and even on a small, contemporary bronze figurine (MMA, inv. no. 68.67).
34. Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 25.64. Mehmet Aga-Oglu, "Polychrome Stucco Relief from Persia," *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 11, 1 (1929): 41–42; and Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," fig. 5.
 35. Franz Rosenthal, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (Leiden, 1954–2002), s.v. "Mandil." The Persian word for *mandil* is *dastār*. In the Sasanian period, *dastār*, as the ribbon of victory, was almost synonymous with the royal aura (*farr*), in the time of the Islamic empire often called *dastārcha*, as opposed to to *dastār*, or turban; see Abolala Soudavar, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Farr(ah) II. Iconography": www.iranicaonline.org/articles/farr-ii-iconography, accessed March 20, 2014; Abolala Soudavar, *The Aura of Kings: Legitimacy and Divine Sanction in Iranian Kingship* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 9–16; and Amirsoleimani, "Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts," 225 (references). See also Katharina Otto-Dorn, "Das islamische Herrscherbild im frühen Mittelalter," in *Das Bildnis in der Kunst des Orients*, ed. Martin Kraatz, Jürg Meyer zur Capellen, and Dietrich Seckel, *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 50, 1 (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1990): 71–78, esp. 64; and Katharina Otto-Dorn, "Das seldschukische Thronbild," *Persica* 10 (1982): 14–94, 157–58. The *mandil* can be traced to the time of al-Muqtadir billah (r. 908–929), where it appears on a presentation coin: Heinrich Nützel, "Eine Portraitmedaille des Chalifen el-Muktadir billah," *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 22 (1900): 259–65 (where it is misidentified as a dagger). On the bag of money as royal paraphernalia, see Abbas Daneshvari, "Cup, Branch, Bird and Fish: An Iconographical Study of the Figure Holding a Cup and a Branch Flanked by a Bird and a Fish," in *The Iconography of Islamic Art: Studies in Honour of Robert Hillenbrand*, ed. Bernard O'Kane (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 103–26, at 116.
 36. Aga-Oglu, "Polychrome Stucco Relief," 43, interprets the object in the left hand as a "drinking horn (oliphat)." This suggestion of a rhyton is unlikely for Iran during that time, and lacks parallels.
 37. Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," fig. 8 (standing figure, diademed), fig. 9 (squatting figure), fig. 10 (standing figure, winged crown). In addition, the gift included a stucco face fragment and a harpy. Inv. nos. A.20 to A.24-1928, gift of Lady Marling. Her husband, Sir Charles Murray Marling (d. 1933), a British diplomat in the Middle East, bought them in the Tehran market between 1916 and 1918. Stylistically, this group belongs together. A wedge-like triangular piece is the only original part of the face, most of which is invented. The "wedge" might have belonged to a similar figure.
 38. Baer, *Human Figure*, 22, interprets the object in the hand as a "scepter."
 39. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum: see references in n. 5 above. The figure holds a straight sword in front, almost imitating Sasanian models, which were well known in the 1920s. Its helmet headgear is unusual for this group. The composition looks similar to the guard in Sinjar; see Gibson, "A Symbolic *Khassakiya*," 86, fig. 2a (the "lance bearer"). Only a detailed scientific study can distinguish the authenticity of the parts of the figure.
 40. Kuwait, al-Sabah Collection, inv. no. LNS 2 ST; photo courtesy of Walter Denny. The figure in the Sabah Collection seems to have been heavily restored. It might even be questioned whether the head and body once formed one figure; moreover, certain details might be interpreted as having been added by the restorer, such as the beaker or the empty left hand, where one would expect a saber or a sword.
 41. Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, inv. no. I.2658. See Friedrich Sarre, "Figürliche persische Stuckplastik in der Islamischen Kunstabteilung," *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königlichen Kunstsammlungen* 35, 6 (1914): 1–5, columns 181–89; and Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," fig. 1. Cf. Volkmar Enderlein, Almut von Gladiss, Gisela Helmecke, Jens Kröger, and Thomas Tunsch, *Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2001), 55–56. The cataloguers date the figure to about 1200.
 42. For example, MMA 57.36.5. Esin Atıl, *Ceramics from the World of Islam*, Freer Gallery of Art Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1973), 82–83, cat. no. 35 (inv. no. 37.5). See Oya Pancaroğlu, *Perpetual Glory: Medieval Islamic Ceramics from the Harvey B. Plotnick Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 109, cat. 67. Baer, *Human Figure*, 23, was the first to identify the Berlin figure as an attendant.
 43. For references, see n. 23 above.
 44. Hagop Kevorkian, *Special Exhibition: The Arts of Persia and Other Countries of Islam* (New York: The Anderson Galleries, 1926), frontispiece; Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," fig. 11.
 45. Personal communication: Abdullah Ghouchani, Dec. 2010.
 46. On the murals in Lashkar-i Bazar, the arabesques on the brassards could hardly be script. The letters of the brassards on the Berlin figure are blundered.
 47. See, for example, Florian Schwarz, "Ġazna/Kābul XIV d Ḥurāsān IV," in *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen* (Berlin: Wasmuth, 2002), nos. 260, 302.
 48. Note also the calligraphic style of the stucco from the southern Great Palace of Lashkar-i Bazar, which was probably carved after the destruction of the palace ca. the 450s (1056–1165); see Janine Sourdél-Thomine, "Le décor non figuré," in *Lashkari Bazar: Une résidence royale ghaznévide et ghoride, t. 1B: Le décor non figuratif et les inscriptions*, ed. Jean-Claude Gardin, Daniel Schlumberger, and Janine Sourdél-Thomine (Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 1978), 7–50.
 49. For Ghaznavid inscriptions, see Samuel Flury, "Le décor épigraphique des monuments de Ghazna," *Syria* 6 (1925): 61–90, esp. no. 12; and Roberta Giunta, *Les inscriptions funéraires de Ġaznī (IVe–IXe/Xe–XVe siècles)* (Napoli: Università degli studi di Napoli "L'Orientale," Dipartimento di studi asiatici, 2003), 126–34 (no. 21), 403, pls. XXXIX–XLI, the

- tomb of a certain As'ad ibn 'Ali, which is dated Shawwal 530 (July 1136).
50. Iraj Afshar, "Two 12th Century Gravestones of Yazd in Mashhad and Washington," *Studia Iranica* 2, 2 (1973): 203–11, at 208, pl. 21.
 51. MMA inv. no. 34.150.2. Cf. especially the rendering of the word "*al-mu'minīn*" in the last line.
 52. The *mīnā'ī* beaker in the Freer Gallery with motifs from the *Shāhnāma* is thought to have its models in Central Asian wall painting. Marianna Shreve Simpson, "The Narrative Structure of a Medieval Iranian Beaker," *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981): 15–24, at 22.
 53. Alisa Borisenko, Kubat Tabaldiev, Oroz Soltobaev, and Yulij Chudjakov, "Die Bewaffnung der alten Turkvölker, der Gegner der Sasaniden," in *Arms and Armour as Indicators of Cultural Transfer: The Steppes and the Ancient World from Hellenistic Times to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Markus Mode and Jürgen Tubach, Nomaden und Sesshafte 4 (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2006): 107–28, at 118 (with extensive literature), pl. III.1 (shows the only saber which was found in the Tien Shan), pl. V (images of stone babas with sabers); Sören Stark, *Die Alttürkenzeit in Mittel- und Zentralasien: Archäologische und historische Studien*, Nomaden und Sesshafte 6 (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2008), 155, pl. 66.
 54. Found in Nishapur, it is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (40.170.168). It is dated to the ninth century, showing Turkish influence. James W. Allan, *Nishapur: Metalwork of the Early Islamic Period* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), 56–57, 108–9, no. 208; and James W. Allan, "The Nishapur Metalwork: Cultural Interaction in Early Islamic Iran," in Soucek, *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World*, 1–12, at 5–6. In eastern Iranian buff ware of the ninth and tenth century we find straight swords: see Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, gen. eds., *Oriental Ceramics: The World's Great Collections*, 11 vols. (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1980–82), vol. 4, *Iran Bastan Museum, Teheran*, ed. Firouz Bagherzadeh et al., fig. 23 (inv. no. 3909). Still, a straight sword can be found in late twelfth-century Iranian luster-painted ware: Ernst Grube, *Islamic Pottery of the Eighth to the Fifteenth Century in the Keir Collection* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), fig. 151, between 216 and 217.
 55. Boris Dmitrievich Kochnev, *Numizmaticheskaja istoriia Karakhanidskogo kaganata, 991–1209 gg.*, vol. 1, *Istochnik-ovedcheskoe issledovanie* (Moscow: Sofia, 2006), 56. A similar coin is located in the Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik at Tübingen University, inv. no. 2006-15-17. We express our gratitude to Lutz Ilisch, Tübingen University, for this information.
 56. The second known dated occurrence of a saber in Islamic art is on a gold dinar of Herat from the year 439 (1047–48) by the Seljuq Yabghu al-Malik al-'Adil Abu 'Ali al-Hasan b. Musa (www.zeno.ru, no. 45966). Although sabers have been known in Central Asia for a long time, before these the images of swords on coins always showed only straight ones. Later numismatic depictions of two sabers include a dinar from Zanjan, 494 (1100–1); Coşkun Alptekin, "Selçuklu Paraları," *Selçuklu Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3 (1971): 435–591, at 518, no. 148, pl. 5. I am grateful to Aleksandr Naymark, Hofstra University, and Michael Bates, American Numismatic Society, New York, for providing me with this information.
 57. Wilkinson, *Nishapur*, 205–214, at 212. This fresco was said to have been brought to Tehran. It is frequently incorrectly cited in the literature as being from the ninth century; see, for example, Sims, *Peerless Images*, 29, fig. 38 (ninth–tenth century).
 58. Nützel, "Eine Portraitmedaille des Chalifen el-Muktadir billah."
 59. Otto-Dorn, "Das islamische Herrscherbild," 64. About this stela, see also Stark, *Die Alttürkenzeit in Mittel- und Zentralasien*, 502, fig. 36a; and Takashi Ōsawa, "Revisiting Khöl-Asgat Inscription in Mongolia from the Second Turkic Qaghanate," *Nairiku Ajia gengo no kenkyū* 25 (2010): 1–73.
 60. For references, see n. 23 above.
 61. Gibson, "A Symbolic *Khassakiya*"; Whelan, "Representations of the *Khassakiyah*," 222.
 62. Amirsoleimani, "Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts," 225.
 63. Soucek, "Ethnicity in the Islamic Figural Tradition," 80–81.
 64. Amirsoleimani, "Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts," 225, with all references from Bayhaqi. She translates *dastār* as "headscarf." These headscarves could be used as turbans. Bayhaqi does not mention a golden *dastār*.
 65. MMA 57.36.5. Whereas on the bowl of the MMA it appeared to be a veil on his head, similar scenes on *mīnā'ī* ware clearly show a golden halo; see, for example, Boston MFA 63.1391. For a similar interpretation of the MMA bowl, see R. Meyer Riefstahl, *The Parish-Watson Collection of Moham-madan Potteries* (New York: E. Weyhe, 1922), 105, fig. 26.
 66. Bagherzadeh, *Iran Bastan Museum, Teheran*, fig. 35 (inv. no. 3181).
 67. See, for example, a crown for a Khitan envoy, Northern Song dynasty, gilt silver in repoussé, early eleventh century, Boston MFA, inv. no. 40.749 (William Sturgis Bigelow Collection, by exchange). The attribution is based on a similar crown unearthed in the northeastern Chinese province of Liaoning. Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, *Unearthing China's Past* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 1973), 185–87, cat. no. 97. In Central Asia in general, and in Mongolia in particular, the paneled diadem as a sign of rulership might go even further back, as the paneled crown of the Bilgä Kagan of the eighth century in Archangaj Province might show: *Dschingis Khan und seine Erben: Das Weltreich der Mongolen* (exh. cat.) (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2005), 75, cat. no. 45.
 68. See, for example, Boston MFA 63.1393.
 69. For an example showing earrings, see Pancaroğlu, *Perpetual Glory*, 130–31, cat. no. 83.
 70. For references, see n. 35 above.
 71. An exception might be the heavily restored and remodeled figure in the Sabah Collection in Kuwait. Panel in Kevorkian's possession: Kevorkian, *Special Exhibition*, frontispiece;

- Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," fig. 12. While there are a number of royal paraphernalia, the generic depiction of a ruler in that time includes a wine cup. For the cup, see Otto-Dorn, "Das islamische Herrscherbild," 64–65; Otto-Dorn, "Das seldschukische Thronbild" 154–57; Daneshvari, "Cup, Branch, Bird and Fish." A study on the paraphernalia of Seljuq kingship remains a desideratum.
72. In addition, the Detroit figure wears a diadem richly studied with jewels on which the wings rest. Whether it has a palmetto cannot be determined due to damage.
 73. Touraj Daryaei, "The Use of Religio-Political Propaganda on the Coinage of Xusrō II," *American Journal of Numismatics*, 2nd ser., 9 (1997): 41–52, pl. 1 on p. 43; Jens Kröger, "Vom Flügelpaar zur Flügelpalmette," in *Rezeption in der islamischen Kunst*, ed. Barbara Finster, Christa Fragner, and Herta Hafenrichter, Beirut Texte und Studien 61 (Beirut: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 183–205, pls. xxv–xxvii; and Soudavar, *Aura of Kings*, 19–25.
 74. Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh, *Kitāb Tajārib al-umam wa-'awāqib al-himam* = *The Eclipse of the 'Abbasid Caliphate: Original Chronicles of the Fourth Islamic Century*, ed. and trans. A. H. Amedroz and D. S. Margoliouth, 4 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1920–21), 1:116–18 (*wa-kāna fi naṣiḥi an yamlaku Baghdāda wa-ya'qida l-tāja 'alā ra'sihī wa-yu'īdu mulka l-fursi fa-'ūjila bil-qatl [...]* *wa-kāna qad šāgha tājan 'aẓiman wa-raṣṣa'a bil-jawharī...*). Ibn al-Athīr explains that it was a Sasanian crown (*qad 'amala tājan muraṣṣa'an 'alā šifati tāji Kisrā*). 'Alī 'Izz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī, *Al-Kāmil fī'l-tārīkh*, ed. Carl J. Tornberg, 13 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1851–74), 8:226; ed. Beirut VIII, n.d., 302.
 75. George C. Miles, "A Portrait of the Buyid Prince Rukn al-Dawlah," *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 11 (1964): 283–92; Luke Treadwell, "Shāhānshāh and Malik al-Mu'ayyad: Legitimation of Power in Sāmānid and Būyid Iran," in *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honour of Wilferd Madelung*, ed. Farhad Daftary and Josef W. Meri (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 318–37.
 76. The Abbasids never embraced the winged crown as their symbol.
 77. For the dating of a whole group of Sasanian-style silverware to the Buyid period of Iran, see Ernst J. Grube, *The World of Islam* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 41. By referring to the Central Asian look of these images, Grube also implicitly allows for their Ghaznavid origin.
 78. The *mīnā'ī* ware of the Boston MFA 63.1386, for example, dates to Kashan from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.
 79. The David Collection, Copenhagen; Folsach, *Islamic Art*, 142, no. 135 (Isl. 195).
 80. The iconic image of a Sasanian ruler is derived from the portraits of the abundant coins of Khusrāw II.
 81. Though a cross, it presumably has no Christian connotation. The V&A seated figure also shares a cross-shaped pendant. Here it seems to represent a square amulet box with deep grooves at each corner, resulting in a cross-like appearance.
 82. Cf. Soucek, "Ethnicity in the Islamic Figural Tradition," who cites Sayyid Hasan Ghaznavi (d. 1153–54), who in his poems distinguishes between the *kulāh* (cap) of an amir and the *tāj* (crown) of a ruler.
 83. For the references, see n. 75 above.
 84. Zāhīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *The Saljūqnāma of Zāhīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī*, ed. A. H. Morton (Chippenham: The E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 21, 42, and 49; Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Saljūq-nāma* = *The History of the Seljuq Turks, from the Jāmī' al-Tawārīkh: An Ilkhanid Adaptation of the Saljūq-nāma of Zāhīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī*, trans. Kenneth Allin Luther, ed. C. E. Bosworth (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001), 47, 72, 95.
 85. But some bearded royal figures do exist; cf. the underglaze-painted turquoise-blue bowl in Atil, *Ceramics from the World of Islam*, 118–19, cat. no. 62 (inv. no. 67.25); Grube, *Islamic Pottery*, fig. 183, after p. 232 (Keir Collection). For a luster-painted tile, see the Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 40.181.1, in Stefano Carboni, *Persian Tiles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), 12n7.
 86. That is, the region from the Caspian Sea to the Altai Mountains.
 87. I would like to thank Aleksandr Naymark, who first suggested this idea. See Stark, *Die Alttürkenzeit in Mittel- und Zentralasien*, 128–37, 463; and Borisenko et al., "Die Bewaffnung." It is interesting to note that Aga-Oglu was the first to suggest a connection with the stone stelae, in 1929; see Aga-Oglu, "Polychrome Stucco Relief," 42.
 88. While we have a lacuna for this type of stone statue for about two centuries in Central Asia, another similar but distinct type of life-sized stone figure was made mainly north-east of the Black Sea, in the heart of the Polovtsian-Kiptchak steppes. They date from the second half of the eleventh century to the beginning of the thirteenth. Pletneva focuses on the northern and eastern region of the Black Sea, and does not extend her study to the area east of the Caspian Sea. The Cuman-Kiptchak confederation expanded the regions where they roamed into Central Asia, making them northern neighbors of the Turkmen tribes. This later type of figure differs from earlier Central Asian statues, both in their dress and in their symmetrical hand position instead of the classical left-arm-under-right-arm position. They are all distinctively gendered by their dresses. At least eight statues carry a saber at their left side. Svetlana Aleksandrovna Pletneva, *Polovetskie kamennye izvaianiia* (Arkheologiia SSSR, E 4-2) (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1974), esp. 29–39; G. A. Fedorov-Davydov, *Iskusstvo kočevnikov i Zolotoi Ord* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1976), 85–103. For the Cuman-Kiptchak confederation, see Peter Golden, "The People of the South Russian Steppes," in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 256–84, esp. 280.
 89. Only the figure in the Sabah Collection and the one in the Walters Art Museum have mustaches, but the reconstruction of both appears to be inventive.
 90. Stark, *Die Alttürkenzeit in Mittel- und Zentralasien*, 128–37, 463; Borisenko et al., "Die Bewaffnung."

91. A small bronze figurine of a standing ruler (MMA 68.67) also shows the “wrong” order of the arms.
92. The lower part gives the impression of a considerable amount of inventive restoration; compare especially the caftan at the hemline and the position of the tips of the boots. See n. 44 above.
93. Riefstahl, “Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures,” fig. 11.
94. Visual inspection of the V&A figures with Mariam Rosser-Owen and Victor Borges (V&A) on January 17, 2014. Cathy Selvius DeRoo kindly reported a CT scan of the head of the Detroit figure; the stucco figures appear to have been formed by an additive modeling process.
95. Cf. Alexander J. Kossolev and Boris I. Marshak, *Murals Along the Silk Road* (Saint Petersburg: Formica, 1999).
96. Bombaci, “Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission,” esp. cat. nos. I, II, III, and VI; Rugiadi, *Decorazione architettonica in marmo da Ġaznī*, 1177–87, 1237–40.
97. Daniel Schlumberger and Jean-Claude Gardin, “Tableau chronologique pour l’histoire du site de Bust-Lashkari Bazar,” in *Lashkari Bazar, une résidence royale ghaznévide et ghoride, t. 1A: L’architecture*, ed. Daniel Schlumberger (Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 1978), 97–98.
98. Geneviève Casal, “Description des peintures de la grande sale d’audience de château de sud à Lashkari Bazar (automne, 1949),” in Schlumberger, *Lashkari Bazar, t. 1A*, 101–8, pls. 13–15, 121–24. Some of the figures carry a kind of rod or mace over their right shoulder. These murals were brought to the National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul, and destroyed during the Taliban regime.
99. For references, see n. 23.
100. Amirsoleimani, “Clothing in the Early Ghaznavid Courts,” esp. 221.
101. For references, see n. 23.
102. Within the structure of the Seljuq empire were realms of kings, such as that of the king of Ghazna and Sistan, the Khwarazm-Shah, and others who served as vassals: C. E. Bosworth, “The Political and Dynastic History of the Iranian World (A.D. 1000–1217),” in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, *The Saljuq and Mongol Periods*, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 1–202, at 120.
103. Georgina Herrman, *Monuments of Merv: Traditional Buildings of the Karakum* (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1999), 97–99, 170–74.
104. David Durand-Guédy, “Ruling from the Outside: A New Perspective on Early Turkish Kingship in Iran,” in *Every Inch a King: Comparative Studies on Kings and Kingship in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, ed. Lynette Mitchell and Charles Melville (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 325–42; David Durand-Guédy, “The Tents of the Saljuqs,” in Durand-Guédy, *Turko-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life*, 149–89.
105. Kerev, “From Tents to Cities,” esp. 110–11.
106. Kevorkian, *Special Exhibition*; Riefstahl, “Persian Islamic Stucco Figures,” fig. 11.
107. Ṣāḥir al-Dīn Nishāpūrī, *Saljūq-nāma*, ed. Morton, 55, 59; trans. Luther, 82, 86.
108. *Ibid.*, 145.
109. See Jean-François de Lapérouse, Karen Stamm, and Vicki Parry, “Re-examination and Treatment of Mina’i Ceramics at The Metropolitan Museum of Art,” in *Glass and Ceramics Conservation 2007: Preprints of the Interim Meeting of the ICOM-CC Working Group, August 27–30, 2007, Nova Gorica, Slovenia*, ed. Lisa Pilosi (Nova Gorica: Goriski Muzej Kromberk, 2007), 112–19.
110. We are grateful to our colleagues in those institutions for sharing their findings with us. In particular we thank Stefan Weber and Jens Kröger for providing us with the detailed report on the pigments; Birgitta Augustin, curator for Asian arts, Cathy Selvius DeRoo, research scientist, and John Steele, object conservator, Detroit Institute of Arts; and Mariam Rosser-Owen, curator of Islamic art, and Victor Borges, senior sculpture conservator, both of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Stefan Simon, director, and Stefan Röhrs, scientist, at the Rathgen Research Laboratory, Berlin, for their kind cooperation in this project.
111. An argument against the continued use of this term appears in Claire Gapper and Jeff Orton, “Plaster, Stucco and Stuccoes,” *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 17, 3 (2011): 7–22. For a study of lime-based Seljuq period stucco fragments, see Evin Caner, “Archaeometrical Investigation of Some Seljuk Plasters” (M.S. thesis, Natural and Applied Sciences, Middle East Technical University [Ankara], 2003). For a general discussion of stucco production and use in Iran, see Hans E. Wulff, *The Traditional Crafts of Persia: Their Development, Technology, and Influence on Eastern and Western Civilizations* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1966), 125–27, 133–35. Two interesting studies on Nasrid stucco should also be noted: Carolina Cardell-Fernández and Carmen Navarete-Aguilera, “Pigment and Plasterwork Analyses of Nasrid Polychromed Lacework Stucco in the Alhambra (Granada, Spain),” *Studies in Conservation* 51, 3 (2006): 161–76; and Victor Hugo López Borges, María José de la Torre López, and Lucia Burgio, “Characterization of Materials and Techniques of Nasrid Plasterwork Using the Victoria and Albert Museum Collection as an Exemplar,” in *Actas de Congreso REMAI: I Congreso Internacional Red Europea de Museos de Arte Islámico* (Madrid, 2013), 571–96.
112. XRD and FTIR analyses of the stucco samples performed by Federico Caro, associate research scientist, Department of Scientific Research, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
113. M. Uda, “In Situ Characterization of Ancient Plaster and Pigments on Tomb Walls in Egypt Using Energy Dispersive X-Ray Diffraction and Fluorescence,” *Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research, Section B: Beam Interactions with Materials and Atoms* 226, 1–2 (2004): 75–82.
114. Riefstahl, “Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures,” 441. Recent treatment on both of these figures has been limited to local consolidation and toning of discolored restoration paint on the modern plaster fills.
115. Gypsum plaster shrinks slightly when setting and unless the previously set plaster is scored to improve adhesion, newly applied plaster may spill over under mechanical pressure.

116. At the present time, both figures are backed with modern plaster and composition board, preventing access to the reverse surfaces.
117. The use of these inscribed lines was noted by Amy Jones, associate conservator, when she worked on two painted wall fragments (MMA 40.170.176) excavated at Nishapur.
118. See frontispiece to Kevorkian, *Special Exhibition*. Also see Riefstahl, "Persian Islamic Stucco Sculptures," 446–47, fig. 12, who relates this pattern to designs from the Sasanian period.
119. An offset at the bottom of the vertical border of the caftan where the edges are not well aligned is the result of a modern join of a vertical break in the lower caftan (fig. 2).
120. EDS and FTIR analyses performed respectively by Mark Wypyski, research scientist, and by Adriana Rizzo, associate research scientist, Department of Scientific Research, Metropolitan Museum of Art; the PLM analysis was done by the authors.
121. See Joyce Plesters, "Ultramarine Blue, Natural and Artificial," in *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics*, 4 vols. (New York, 1993), vol. 2, ed. Ashok Roy, pp. 37–66.
122. Synthetic ultramarine has been found on the figure in Berlin: see Stefan Röhrs and Stefan Simon, *Stuckplastik Iran*, SMB, ISL-MI, Inv. Nr. I.2658 (Untersuchungsbericht 101_111709), Rathgen-Forschungslabor (December 11, 2009), 4. While ultramarine has been identified by Ramen Spectroscopy on the Detroit figure, as per personal communication with Cathy S. DeRoo on August 25, 2012, this method cannot distinguish between the synthetic and natural varieties.
123. See Elizabeth West Fitzhugh, "Red Lead and Minium," in *Artists' Pigments*, vol. 2 ed. Roy, 109–40.
124. See Ian N. M. Wainwright, Elizabeth A. Moffatt, P. Jane Sirois, and Gregory S. Young, "Analysis of Wall Painting Fragments from the Mogao and the Bingling Temple Grottoes," in *Conservation of Ancient Sites on the Silk Road: Proceedings of an International Conference on the Conservation of Grotto Sites*, ed. Neville Agnew (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1997): 334–40. Also see Sébastien Aze, Jean-Marc Vallet, and Olivier Grauby, "Chromatic Degradation Processes of Red Lead Pigment," in *ICOM Committee for Conservation, ICOM-CC: 13th Triennial Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, 22–27 September 2002; Preprints*, ed. Roy Vontobel (London: James and James, 2002): 549–55.
125. See Robert L. Feller, "Barium Sulfate: Natural and Synthetic," in *Artists' Pigments*, vol. 1, ed. Robert L. Feller (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1986), 47–64.
126. FTIR analysis performed by Adriana Rizzo, associate research scientist, Department of Scientific Research, Metropolitan Museum of Art. For a history of the development of artificial dyes, see Peter J. T. Morris and Anthony S. Travis, "A History of the International Dyestuff Industry," *American Dyestuff Reporter* 81, 11 (November 1992): www.colorantshistory.org/HistoryInternationalDyeIndustry.html, accessed July 30, 2014.
127. Röhrs and Simon, *Stuckplastik Iran*, 5. Note: XRF analysis will not identify organic compounds such as the azo dye.
128. EDS and XRF analyses performed by Mark Wypyski.
129. See Lucia Burgio, "Dating Alhambra Stuccoes," *V&A Conservation Journal*, 49, 1 (Spring 2005): 2–3.