The lower cover of a bookbinding; exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pasteboards; blind and gold tooling; doublure brown leather (goat) with blind tooling; hinge of block-pressed leather and one of blue leather tabs.

103mm × 149mm
Oriental Institute A12141
Dr. B. Moritz
Mephib 7th-16th century A.D.

Lower Cover. Two rows of tripartite fillets edge a frame with a running pattern of impressions of a square format single-axis tool forming linked knots of hatched brads. Its inner edge is defined by a tripartite fillet.

The inner panel is defined by a tripartite fillet. At its centre is a six-pointed star formed of two intersecting equilateral triangles whose outlines are formed by multiple fillets. The inner compartment of this star is filled with impressions of an eight-lobed rosette stamp with a circular grouping of six gold dots around a central gold dot. The triangular compartments of the star’s points are punctuated by three gold dots. Clusters of three such dots mark the outer points and the outer junctions of their arms.

Simple triangular corners are demarcated by two rows of tripartite fillets and contain three gold dots. The perimeter of the inner panel is delineated by double fillets with single gold dots at their angles.

Doublure. The doublure of this cover is tooled as for an exterior covering and is of the same material. It has a simple broad frame outlined by double fillets, in the corners of which are tooled a cluster of three small central dots with a long fleck pointing inwards along the diagonals of the inner panel. At the centre of the panel is tooled a rounded, outlined by a tripartite fillet, and containing knotwork, constructed of large hatched bars, arcs and central dots, with four square untooled small panels left on the horizontal and vertical axes.

The inner panel is centrally aligned by a prominent eight-pointed star, or Solomonic seal, developing from an octagram interface based on an eight-pointed centre star. This geometry is constructed with a tripartite fillet. This central motif is outlined by a double fillet from whose points and angles project flecks based in gold dots. The centre star is filled with hatched X-shaped stamps with interstitial gold dots. The eight points of the star immediately enclosing the centre star are left untooled. The arms of the octagram are filled with the same tooling as the centre star. In the compartments between the octagram and the outline of the Solomonic seal are placed two small ovals formed by hatched arcs centred and flanked by gold dots.

The simple triangular corners are demarcated by multiple fillets and contain three impressions of an eight-petalled rosette stamp. The perimeter of the inner panel is delineated by a double fillet with gold dots at its angles from which flecks point inwards.

G. Bosch, (1952); p. 125.
Envelope Flap The borders and frames of the envelope flap at head, tail and fore-edge are tooled in the same way as the corresponding areas of the lower cover. The band of multiple fillets defining the inner panels continue to border the pointed edge of the flap. Filling this point is a large roundel outlined by a double fillet tooled to produce a "radiance." Within is a vessel-shaped motif, aligned along the horizontal axis. Its two component parts are drawn with a double fillet. The body of the vessel form is round (also with a "radiance" outline) and contains a network of hatched X-shaped stamps with interstitial gold dots. The neck has scattered gold dots. The vessel lies against an untooled field.

The adjacent panels flanking the roundel are also defined by a double fillet placed so as to leave a continuous untooled band around both them and the roundel. The corners of the fillets are marked with single gold dots. These panels are filled with rows of impressions of the cordiform border stamp.

The flap has triangular corner areas tooled in the same way as the corresponding areas of the lower cover.

Doubleures (Lower Cover & Envelope Flap): These block-pressed doubleures have a pattern of trilobed scales. The interlocking compartments so formed resemble those found in alabastron-painted masonry found over the doors of mosques in the Mamluk period. Both the Madrasah of Shumayn, dated 1369 A.D., and the Mosque of Murujjad of 1422 A.D. have alabastron patterns similar to that of this doubleure. The compartments are alternately filled with large lotuses with short stems and flanked by leaves, and small lotus-like flowers on a leafy stem.

G. Bosch, (1952): pp. 124, 131-122, 126; Pls. XV & XLVIII.

The upper cover of a bookbinding: exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pastebands; blind and gold tooled; doublure black-pressed leather (sheep).

360mm (approximate original height at head and tail of cover eroded) × 182mm
Oriental Institute A12125
Dr. B. Mottz
Egypt/Syria, 15th century A.D.

Upper Cover A broad tripartite fillet edges a running border of impressions of a rectangular format single-axis stamp depicting cordiform scrolls issuing from, and enfolding, small lotuses. The scrolls pass through a tie at the point of these heart-shaped framing scrolls to form intervening shallow compartments with three-sepaled calices. The inner edge of the frame is defined by multiple fillets which also serve to define the inner panel.

At the centre of the inner panel is an eight-pointed star whose perimeter is defined by single fillets on the outside and by two lines of adjacent tripartite fillets on the inside. From the points and angles of the star, flecks radiate. Those at the points are based in clusters of three gold dots and those at the angles in single gold dots. The innermost defining tripartite fillet is the extension of an octagram which occupies the inner field of the star. Its core has a ring of ten gold dots around a centre one. Single gold dots are placed in each point of the small star centre. The arms of the hexagram are filled with impressions of a six-petaled rosette stamp and are centred by a gold dot. The compartments within the point of the central star, and outside the periphery of the hexagram, are filled with gold dots.

Above and below the central star motif in the vertical axis are two diamond-shaped configurations of hatched X-shaped stamps with interstitial gold dots. Flecks radiate on the horizontal, vertical and diagonal axes.

The triangular corners of the inner panel are demarcated by multiple fillets and each contains a single impression of the six-petaled rosette stamp.

The perimeter of the inner field is delineated by a single fillet from whose angles flecks based on gold dots point inwards.

Doubure The doubure is of block-pressed leather with a bold pattern of large diamonds formed by the intersection of diagonal bands containing undulating vines with three-lobed leaves. Circles enclosing eight-petaled double rosettes mark the intersections. The diamond-shaped panels alternately are occupied by a simple cordiform motif enclosing a three-sepaled calix against a leafy bed, and by a motif of similar outline and background, but filled with seeds or segments suggesting a pineapple, a pine cone, or possibly a pomegranate.

This doubure is similar to those of 9, 50 and 51.

G. Bosch, (1952): pp. 132, 145, 169; Pl. XLVII.

The lower cover of a bookbinding: exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pastebands; blind and gold tooled; doublure light brown leather (sheep).

251mm × 160mm
Oriental Institute A12125
Dr. B. Mottz
South Arabian, 15th century A.D.
Lower Cover This cover has crude leather corner repairs. A broad burned band edges a running frame of impressions of a square format single-axis stamp. At the centre of this tool is a square containing the inscription:

\[ \text{"Na\text{\textregistered}m al-Rahi"} \]

Four overlapping angular arms enclose this square. The frame is defined on its inner edge by multiple fillets. At the centre of the inner panel is an eight-pointed star. It is outlined by a strap of untouled leather defined by thin double fillets, with gold dots placed at the points and angles. Flecks radiate from the points of the star. The inner field of the star is outlined by a broader single fillet and is filled with rows of the square border stamp. At its centre is a group of eight small gold dots in a lozenge-shaped configuration with a large central annular gold dot.

Above and below the central motif on the vertical axis are tooled large knotwork lozenges, centred by a large annular gold dot, using hatched bars, arcs and gold interstitial dots. Flecks radiate on the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal axes.

The corners of the inner panel are demarcated by two rows of trapeziform fillets. The innermost of these continues around the inner field. A thinner double fillet, at a slight distance in from the trapeziform fillet, marks the boundary of the field. Its angles are marked by single impressions of the annular gold dot from which flecks point inward.

G. Booch, (1952); pp. 135, 154-155, Pl. XXXIX.

31 The cover consists of a bookbinding; exterior leather covering brown leather (goy) over paper pastedboards; blind tooled, doublure (envelope flap and fore-edge flap) light brown leather (goat), upper and lower covers yellow-dyed hand-made laid paper (these may have been applied over leather doublures); fragments of linen endband and buckram thrusts.

260mm × 170mm

Oriental Institute A12146
Dr. B. Morris
South Arabia, 16th-15th century A.D.

Upper Cover The upper cover is covered with brown leather (goat) over paper pastedboards; blind tooled; doublure (envelope flap and fore-edge flap) light brown leather (goat), upper and lower covers yellow-dyed hand-made laid paper (these may have been applied over leather doublures); fragments of linen endband and buckram thrusts.

All the elements of the original case survive although damaged and crudely repaired.

Upper and Lower Covers The upper and lower covers are similarly tooled. A broad burned band edges a frame with a running pattern of impressions of a rectangular format single-axis stamp forming alternately inverted cordiform scrolls issuing from, and enclosing, small three-sepaled calices. The inner edge of the frame is defined by a single broad fillet. The inner panel is defined by a similar broad fillet. At its centre is a roundel outlined with a trapeziform fillet. This is filled with knotwork constructed with a striped bar tool, an arc tool and centred dots.

The triangular corners are demarcated by two parallel broad fillets and contain sketchy knots using the tools found in the inner roundel. The perimeter of the inner panel is delineated by a thin double fillet forming an outlining band in whose angles are placed single faint impressions of a circular epigraphical stamp whose wording is not discernible.

Spine The spine is untouled.

Fore-edge Flap At the head and tail of the fore-edge flap are broad bands of multiple rows of broad fillets.

Envelope Flap The borders of the envelope flap at head, tail and fore-edge, and the corners and defining lines of the inner panel, are tooled similarly to the corresponding areas of the upper and lower covers. At the point of the flap along the horizontal axis is placed a small mandorla outlined with a double fillet. It is filled with knotwork using the same tool used in the corresponding areas of the upper and lower covers. Flanking it are two adjacent panels, also outlined with double fillets, whose
corners are placed single impressions of the indecipherable circular epigraphical stamp. These areas are contained within a bordering band of untooled leather.

G. Boeckh, (1952); p. 136,
M. Weinwasser, (1962); Abb. 20, Handschrift 319, Kuth 219 A.D., Klappentyp 24 (envelope flap only).

33 The lower cover of a book binding; exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pasteboards; blind tooling: doublet burnished hand-made laid paper with a straight-cut paper hinge on one side and a curvilinearly cut paper hinge on the other.

259 x 169mm
Oriental Institute A12167
Dr. B. Mortiz
South Arabia, 15th century A.D.

Lower Cover A broad untooled band edges a frame of running pattern of impressions of a rectangular format single-axis stamp forming alternately inverted cordiform scrolls issuing from, and enfolding, small triquetral calces. The frame is defined by fillets with a broad grooved band separating it from, and defining the inner panel.

At the centre of the inner panel is a splendid roundel circumscribed by a single fillet and filled with a scale-like disposition of stamps which suggest the eyes of a peacock’s feather. The central massing of these stamps is rimmed by circular epigraphical stamps reading Σιλήνος.

The simple triangular corners are demarcated by a broad grooved band, defined by fillets, like that outlining the central panel. They contain the impressions of the peacock’s feather. The perimeter of the inner panel is marked by an untooled band delineated by double fillets.

G. Boeckh, (1952); pp. 127, 134; Pf. XXXV.
M. Weinwasser, (1962); epigraphical stamps pp. 72, 73, 76, 77.

A book cover; exterior covering dark brown leather (goat) over paper pasteboards; blind tooling: doublet burnished paper, hand-made laid; original spine lining fabric blue linen tabby and paper; fore-edge flap hinge obscured by leather repairs.

259 x 169mm
Oriental Institute A12109
Dr. B. Mortiz
South Arabia, 15th century A.D.

All the elements of this cover survive, although damaged and crudely repaired with leather which obscures large areas of the original border tooling.

Upper and Lower Covers Upper and lower covers are similarly decorated. A broad burnished band edges a running border of impressions of a rectangular format single-axis stamp forming alternately inverted cordiform scrolls issuing from, and enfolding, small calces. The calces within the hearts along one side of the border are three-sepaled, while those on the other side are slightly larger with projections between their centre and lower sepal. The inner edge of this border is defined by a tripartite fillet. At the centre of the inner panel is a rounded outlined by impressions of a large centred dot. The inner roundel is filled with a cellular honeycomb-like pattern of closely fitting impressions of a hexagonal stamp. This stamp has a wide circle centred by a small dot and enclosed by six lines placed slightly tangential to its circumference. The perimeter of the inner panel is delineated by a double fillet. The corners of the inner panel are marked by a small corner-piece stamp depicting a heart-shaped scroll issuing from, and enfolding, a three-sepaled calyx with a dot placed at its base. This gives the stamp a curved gable outline whose point is emphasized by a fleck based in three dots.

Spine The spine is untooled.

Fore-edge Flap The fore-edge flap is untooled.

Envelope Flap Most of the borders of the envelope flap are obscured by the repair leather but it seems that those at head, tail and fore-edge have similar tooling to the corresponding areas of the upper and lower covers. At the centre of the flap along the horizontal axis is a broad band of the same pattern as used in the inner roundels. This is bordered on either side by smaller bands, defined by tripartite fillets, of impressions of the cordiform scroll border tool. The fillets continue to define the flanking panel whose fields are left

32. book cover
33. lower cover
34. detail
untouched except for central six-petalled flower motifs composed of large centred dots. Their corners are marked by single impressions of these dots flanked by two small ones.

G. Bosch, (1952); pp. 122, 126, 131, 133, 155; Pl. XI.
D. Minar, (1957); p. 23f., No. 48.

35. THE UPPER COVER AND SPINE OF A BOOK-BINDING; EXTERIOR COVERING LIGHT BROWN LEATHER (goat) OVER PAPER PASTEBORDS; BLIND TOOLING; DOUBLE RIBBON-BLACK LEATHER (sheep).

243mm x 168mm
Oriental Institute A12155
Dr. B. Mortiz
South Arabia, 15th century A.D.

Lower Cover A broad burnished strip edges a border of repeated impressions of a bold, square format epigraphical stamp reading:


The border is defined on the outside by a single fillet and on the inside by a double row of tripartite fillets.

The inner panel has a fine central roundel defined by a tripartite fillet and is filled with a large flower whose six petals are compass-constructed using the same radius measurement as that of the encompassing roundel. At the centre of the flower is a single impression of a circular epigraphical stamp. The stamp reads:

Allah hasti

God is sufficient for me

The compartments between the petals are filled with knotted work of triangular outline constructed with a hatched bar, a hatched arc and centred dot tools.

On the vertical axis above and below the roundel are large finely-executed lozenges of knotwork with an untooled square at their centres. Flecks radiate from the points of the lozenges. The outer confines of the inner panel are marked by an untooled band defined by a double fillet, with centred dots and single impressions of the epigraphical stamp found at the centre of the roundel placed in its corners.

The triangular corners are demarcated by two rows of tripartite fillets. Within are placed three impressions of a circular epigraphical stamp with associated centred dots. The stamps read:

Allah hasti

God is sufficient for me

Spine The spine survives in a damaged state but is untouched.

Double The block-pressed leather double of this lower cover has a pattern of interweaving vine scrolls and callices similar to that of 36 and 41. In the case of the latter two, however, each block contains a symmetrical design whereas in this doubhale the symmetry is produced by the juxtaposition of two asymmetrical blocks. The impression at the junction of the two block repeats is disfigured so that some of the details cannot be seen. The only clearly discernible calices appear at the end of a spiral vine shoot and are of the "three sepals with spiral cleft base" type. The leaves are basically two-lobed with one lobe extended with a curling tendril-like tip and the shorter lobe split into a small spiral although there is some variety of form.

G. Bosch, (1952); pp. 122, 126, 133-134, 167; Pl. XXXII & LAV.

35. upper cover and spine

36. THE LOWER COVER, FOLD-EDGE FLAP AND ENVELOPE FLAP OF A BOOK-BINDING; EXTERIOR COVERING BROWN LEATHER (goat) OVER PAPER PASTEBORDS; BLIND TOOLING; DOUBLE RIBBON-BLACK LEATHER (goat).

254mm x 166mm
Oriental Institute A12134
Dr. B. Mortiz
South Arabia, 15th century A.D.
Upper Cover: A broad burnished band edges a border of repeated impressions of a bold, square format epigraphical stamp, the same as, or very similar to that on 35. This border is defined on the outside by a single fillet and on the inside by a double row of tripartite fillets. The epigraphical stamp reads:

\[ \text{hamdul} \]

praise

The central roundel of the inner panel is similar to that of 35 but has a simpler knotwork ground and has no epigraphical stamp at the centre of the roundel. The lozenge-shaped knotwork above and below it on the vertical axis is similar to the corresponding ones on 35 but the centre square is filled with a faint impression of a circular epigraphical stamp with radiating hatching. The stamp reads:

\[ \text{‘amal Amin} \]

the work of Amin

Triangular corners, demarcated by double rows of tripartite fillets, are filled with a simple knot and small centred dots.

The outer confines of the inner panel are marked by an untied band defined by a double fillet. A single impression of the circular epigraphical stamp, associated with the small centred dots, is placed in the corners of this band. Small flecks based on centred dots point inwards from the corners.

Fore-edge Flap: The fore-edge has interesting blind tooling. It is edged with a broad burnished band defined by fillets with multiple bands of fillets at head and tail. The area within is divided by staggered oblique fillets with shorter fillets forming triangles at their bases.
either side. These triangle-based toolings alternate with oblique untooled areas. Sketchy fillets running parallel to the fore-edge/spine create an additional longitudinal central panel which has a single circular epigraphical stamp at each corner associated with centred dots. The triangular compartments on one side are filled with three impressions of the epigraphical stamp and centred dots and on the other side a fourth stamp overlaps this triangular disposition.

Envelope Flap The envelope flap is also edged with a burnished band and has a border of the same large, square format rectangular stamps, defined by an inner double row of tripartite fillets, as the upper cover.

The roundel of the flap and the adjacent fields are demarcated by a broad continuous untooled band defined by fillets. The blind circle of the roundel contains a flask-shaped form with a knothwork roundel at the base of the vessel. Its neck or upper part has three triangularly-disposed circular epigraphical stamps with radiating flecks based on small centred dots. The whole complex suggests a sparkling translucent vessel.

The adjacent fields are filled with a dense braid formed (as is the knotwork elsewhere on this cover) by hatched bars, arcs and centred dots. Each field has a row of three circular epigraphical stamps. A single such stamp, with associated dots, is placed in the corners of the bands outlining these fields. The triangular corners are like those on the upper cover.

Doubtless The doublure leather survives on the upper cover and envelope flap but is missing from the fore-edge flap. It is very similar to that of 35 and 41, with a pattern in intaglio of an ascending sequence of three-sepaled calyces on a single axis and associated dense, interweaving leafy scrolls. The base calyx is of fleur-de-lis form with the lower petals curving down and then curling upwards at their tips. On either side appear other calices with notched base and from the central sepal of the base calyx crossed vines extend to form another simple calyx with a hollow base. The leaves are basically two-lobed with one lobe extended with a curling tendril-like tip and the shorter lobe split into a small spiral.

G. Busch, (1902): pp. 131, 134, 167; Pls. XXXIV & LXXV.
M. Weissweiler, (1962): Abb. 6, Handschriften 181, Damascus 1338 A.D.; Klappentyp 7 (envelope flap only); Abb. 20, Handschriften 319; Karak 1359, Klappentyp 24 (fore-edge flap only).

The upper and lower covers and envelope flap of a bookbinding: exterior covering brown leather (goat); blind toothing, gold toothing.

255mm x 182mm
Cherif Beatty Library Moritz Collection 12
Dr. B. Moritz
Egypt/Syria, 14th-15th century A.D.