The upper and lower covers and envelope flap survive with crude later repairs connecting them at spine and fore-edge flap. The upper and lower covers, although appearing to derive from the same workshop, with similar centre and corner moulds as well as overall workmanship, have very different borders and may be from two separate books. The upper cover (of the present assemblage) has been trimmed down at the head and the lower cover (of the present assemblage) has been trimmed at the head and tail. Their original dimensions were approximately the same.

**Upper Cover**

The upper cover has a burnished border edging a broad frame, defined on the outside by tripartite fillets, and on the inside by a tripartite fillet, the centre line of which is painted gold. It is divided into sixteen compartments, the ornamentation of which is of regular alternating sequence so that those directly opposite one another are different and those diagonally opposite the same. One of the two compartment designs is based on octagon interfaces of infinite extension, formed by tripartite fillets of which the centre line is gold painted. The rectangular panels with these designs in the sides of the frame have two complete octagons with an additional outline of tripartite fillets with half octagons between them on either side. Their centres are filled with quadrilobes formed by hatched arcs centred by, and surrounded by gold dots. The L-shaped corner panels are filled with an extension of this octagon interface pattern.

The alternating compartments are filled with a pattern which is also used for the field of the inner rectangular panel (and might be considered as an extension of it). Arms of simple crosses (with dots at their centre and at the ends of the arms) provide a grid around which plat- or knotwork of striated bars and arcs interweaves.

The rectangular inner panel has a large central roundel with a gold scalloped double outline which extends on the vertical axis into a double tier of three-sepaled calices. The lower of these has a double outline. The central sepals of both calices have a median vein. The base of these extensions has three striated compartments surrounding a central untooled triangle with a double gold outline. Each of the twenty-four looped scallops of the central roundel is centred by a gold dot with blind hatched arcs and dots. The central circle is circumscribed by a tripartite fillet whose outer lines are painted gold. It contains a floral and foliate pattern, symmetrical along its horizontal, vertical and diagonal axes, radiating from the points of a central eight-rayed flower. The points on the horizontal and vertical axes meet the central sepal of a three-sepaled calyx whose base, in turn, touches the straight base of a smaller three-sepaled calyx outlined in gold. The diagonal axes grow in a similar way but with simpler floral elements. The outer zone has an interlacing bed of leaves with pointed blades. The leaves and petals of all these forms are left untooled, their outline only being drawn with a pointed tool. Their background is filled with a dense peckwork.

The corners are demarcated by a looped scalloped outline and quadrate circular fillet similar to that of the central medallion. The inner quarter circle field contains a complex three-sepaled calyx, with an open central sepal through which grows a double stem springing from a bulbous base to become two flanking leaf forms. This foliate design has a pecked background.

**Lower Cover**

The lower cover has an inner rectangular panel tooled similarly to that of the upper cover but its frames differ. The outer frame, defined on the outside by multiple fillets in a thin meander and on the inside by multiple fillets, contains rows of interlinked knotwork squares of striated bars, arcs and dots centre by squares left untooled except for outlining simple fillets with corner dots. A thinner inner frame (similar to that of 71) is formed of impressions of an S-shaped stamp so placed as to leave a central guilloche pattern of untooled leather with interstitial gold dots.

**Envelope Flap**

Not described or photographed.

**Doublures (Upper and Lower Covers)**

In this block-pressed doublure large nature-inspired floral forms are set amongst leaves and vines. Lotusos oppose symmetrically base to base, six-petalled rosettes and other flowers are connected by curling leafy vines.

Related patterns of lotuses and associated smaller flowers found in the doublures of 48 and 12 envelope flap.
THE UPPER AND LOWER COVERS AND ENVELOPE FLAP of a bookbinding: exterior covering (brown leather) (not) over paper pasted boards: blind tooling: gold tooling; gold paint; filigree; green silk textile; doublure green silk textile.

37mm x 27mm
Oriental Institute A1219
Dr. B. Moritz
Egypt/Syria, 14th century A.D.

Only the upper and lower covers and envelope flap of this binding survive.

Upper and Lower Covers The upper and lower overs are similarly ornamented. A burnished outer border, defined by fillets, edges a thin gold painted meander border constructed of fillets. An outer frame is composed of linked knotwork squares built around tiny circular stamps depicting a six-pointed star with a centre dot. The knotwork is formed using thin hatched bars, arcs and gold dots. The inner edge of this frame is separated from the inner frame by three rows of tripartite fillets, the central groove of the inner fillet being painted gold.

The inner frame is stamped with gold S-shaped tools placed so as to create a guilloche pattern of tondoed leather with interstitial gold dots.

Double tripartite fillets, the inner one of which is gold painted, define the inner panel. Its ground is tightly filled with small cross motifs with dots at their centres and at the ends of their arms around which weave hatched bars and arcs. The elaborate central medallions and corner quadrants are formed with gold leaf at their centres cut out in filigree with further small cut-out areas in the finials of the medallion’s extensions. The central medallion has an outer looped scalloped outline and an inner gold one. The scalloping completely encircles the inner roundel and its compartments are filled with arc and dot work. The outline continues along the vertical axis towards three-sepalid calyx finials from which a further extension ends in smaller three-sepalid calyxes with straight bases whose centre sepals are cut out. The pointed bases or stems from which the finials project are strung leaving a central triangular cut-out compartment outlined in gold. The central roundel is ringed by multiple fillets with an inner and outer circle painted gold. The floral field is of cut-out leather underlaid by a green silk, which is also used as the doublures of these covers, and has a symmetrical pattern with dominant horizontal and vertical axes and minor diagonal axes centred on an eight-petalled gold outlined flower. From this centre interweaving scrolls form an outer zone of equiplanet petals or double stems which in the horizontal and vertical axes form the bases of three-sepalid calyxes. A complex interweaving of scrolls continues to the perimeter of the roundel from which single-lobed leaves develop and which, on the diagonal axes pass through bar-shaped ties to become gold outlined three-sepalid calyxes of different form with paired leaves at their bases.

The corner motifs are based on quadrant circles outlined similarly to the central roundel and containing a field with cut out background which combines the decorative elements of both the inner field of the central roundel and the finials of the central medallion. The outer edges of the corner motifs are elaborated by a gold fillet forming an outline related to the scalloping, points and finials of the central medallion, but with simpler calyxes on the upper tier of its finials. The gold fillet outline continues around the perimeter of the inner panel and forms half finials of the corner quadrants against the inner frame (the medallions of which the corners are quadrants are conceived as having finial projections in the diagonal as well as in the horizontal and vertical axes).

Envelope Flap The head, tail and fore-edge borders and frames of the envelope flap are decorated in the same way as the corresponding areas of the upper and lower covers, except that the linked knotwork squares of its outer frame are centred by small squares left untouched except for a centre and corner gold dots. The inner guilloche frame continues to border the pointed edge of the flap. The inner panel has a field of rolling interweaving scrolls with leaves and three-sepalid calyxes issuing from a large central three-sepalid calyx with an open centre sepal. The design is symmetrical along the horizontal axis. The elements of this foliate design are outlined with gold fillets and the background is cut out and underlaid by the same green silk used in the upper and lower covers and for the doublures.

Doublure (Upper and Lower Covers and Envelope Flap) The doublures are of a green silk textile. The textile historian, Mrs. Anns Mathews, has kindly examined photographs of this silk and from this evidence has suggested that it is of the 14th century A.D., probably Near Eastern but possibly Chinese, and has similarities with a red silk strip of the same technique (tubby with wilt floats) in the Church of St. Servantis, Maastricht (m. no. 19 6) (the keepers of this treasury, Father S. Tagage and Mr. Schooten, are gratefully acknowledged). A similar binding with silk of similar weave and design, but blue rather than green in colour, is illustrated by Surte.

P. Adam, (March 1925); p. 180.
A. J. Arberay, (1967); No. 77.
A round manuscript; Arabic; Nusaybiyya
Ibn Idris, signed Jafar al-Baisankih, 829
H.1425 A.D.; textblock Oriental hand-made
laid paper; this volume has undergone a
decort rebacking to the spine and the fore-
edge envelope flap joint from which repair
phase also date green silk-lined endleaves;
link stitch sewn at two sewing stations; end-
hands missing, exterior covering brown
leather (goat) (varnished) over paper paste-
boards; blind toothing; doubleburns brown leather
(goat); blind toothing.
198mm x 119mm
Chester Beatty Library MS 4183
Heracl. c. 829 A.H./1425 A.D.

Upper and Lower Covers The too-
ing of this binding is extremely fine in scale
and meticulously executed with blind
scribed outlines and peckwork. Upper
and lower covers have similar layouts
and central motifs but their corners dif-
er. The border of each cover is formed
by minute closely-placed S-shaped stamps with interstitial and flanking
dots and is defined by fillets.

The central motif of the covers is an
elegantated scalloped mandorla whose
points pass through rings to become elaborated bud-like forms with small
three-septaled calyces as finials. The
scalloped outlines are formed by pari-
allel fillets with loops at their outer
dges from which flecks project. These
flecks have triple cross bars. The field
within the mandorla is filled with a com-
plex bisymmetrical arabesque springing
from its centre. This arabesque is com-
pdlous of sinuous intersecting lines with
single- and bilobed leaves. The
ground is filled with dense peck-
work. The bud-like finials to the man-
dorla are filled with related forms dom-
inated by a three-septaled calyx with
elaborate internal detailing.
The corners of the inner panel of the
lower cover are also related in the too-
ing used for the outline and the ara-
esque filling, but have a more exhau-
ten contour and resemble segments of
cloud collars with bud-like finials.
The corners of the upper panel and of the
envelope flap differ in their outlining
contours from those of the lower cover
having cupped rather than scalloped
edges. The points of the cup become
small three-septaled calyces.

Envelope Flap The toothing of the frames
of the head, tail and spine of the en-
velope flap is so as for the corresponding
areas of the upper and lower covers. At
the point of the flap on its horizontal
axis is tooled a scalloped ovloid with a
single bud-like finial. The toothing of
these motifs uses elements similar to
those on the other parts of the outer
covers as do the corners of the envelope
flap.

Doubleburn The doubleburns have minute
central motifs of a whirling form within
a multiscaled calyx with radiat-
ing crossed flecks. In the vertical axis
extensions form a stem passing through
rings supporting sharp three-septaled
calyces. At their points are four-cupped
sided forms topped by three-septaled
calyces.

Lower Cover A thin frame, defined by
two rows of widely spaced tripartite fil-
lets on either side, has a guilloche pat-
tern of interlocking reverse S-shaped
stamps.
At the centre of the inner panel is a
medallion with a looped scalloped dou-
ble outline. The outer defining fillet
drawn with preliminary fillets to guide
the binder in the placing of the deco-
rating) extends on the vertical axis to
form scribed finials of large three-se-
paled calyces with a pair of small cir-
cular leaf buds half way up their stems.
In the base of each stem is stamped a
single small crescent. The scallops are
filled with multiple impressions of this
tool.
The roundel of the central medallion
has an outer thin ring of untooled
leather defined on the outside by a sin-
gle fillet and on the inside by a tripartite
fillet. Within is a wider ring tooled with
the same guilloche pattern as found in

72. detail upper cover

73. lower cover

195
The lower cover, fore-edge flap and envelope flap

The lower cover is a bookbinding; exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pastedboards; blind tooling and gold paint; double leaves block-pressed leather (sheep) (lower cover), light brown leather (goat) (envelope flap original doublure obscured by applied hand-made laid paper).

260mm × 180mm
Oriental Institute A12111
Dr. B. Morris
Egypt/Syria, 13th century A.D.

The borders and fore-edge flap are partly obscured by crude later leather repairs. The upper cover of this binding may be C.A. Chiera 23.

Lower Cover A broad burnished band edges a running border of impressions of a square format single-axis tool depicting three-sepaled calices or tulips within encircling scrolls and with intervening small double bud forms. The inner edge of this border is defined by multiple fillets which also define the inner panel.

The inner panel is centred by a small roundel with substantial extensions in the vertical axis. Within a gold outlining fillet, the roundel has an outer ring, defined by double fillets, containing impressions of a reverse S-shaped stamp. A thin ring of untooled leather, defined on its inner edge by a single fillet, encloses a centre field of rows of impressions of the square border tool.

The gold painted outline of the roundel has small projecting loops, and in the vertical axis tapers to points from which develop large three-sepaled calices with small circles at the bases of their outer sepals and a pair of circular leaf bud forms on their stems. The tapering bases of these fillets have inner defining double fillets enclosing small gold outlined triangles, each enclosing a single impression of the simple crescent tool used to construct the loops along the periphery of the roundel.

The triangular corners of the inner panel are demarcat by double fillets and contain three gold painted impressions of the small crescent stamp.

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 ruled similarly to the corresponding areas of the lower cover. The perimeter of the inner panel is defined by a single fillet. At the middle of the fore-edge side of the panel this line develops into the undulating base of a vegetal form which is the centre piece of the flap. This is circumscribed by a single fillet with three axially positioned loops (from which project flecks). Within, a double fillet forms a roundel with a pointed base enclosing a small triangle. The roundel represents a flower whose petals are formed by a band of impressions of the reverse S-shaped stamp. This band is defined on the inside by another double fillet which encloses a small inner circle centred by a lozenge-shaped group of four gold painted ovoids possibly indicating pistils or stamens. These are formed by impressions of the small crescent stamp.

At the base of this vegetal motif two small sepals are scribed.

Double (Lower Cover) Only the badly disfigured double of the lower cover survives. Its condition makes it difficult to describe but it has interweaving vine scrolls and associated calices related to those of 5, 11 cover B, and 38. Like 64 it is printed from a block in which the part forming the design has been left in relief.

G. Boeckh, (1952); pp. 130, 126, 144, 162; Pls. XXIV & LIII.
M. Weisweiler, (1962); Abb. 41, Handschrift 33, 14th or 15th century A.D., Deckstepp 38.
Chiera catalogue, No. 23.
The upper cover of a bookbinding; exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pasteboards; blind tooling; gold paint; doublure block-pressed leather (goat).

260mm (approximate original height—cover worn away at tail) × 175mm

Oriental Institute AI2110

Dr. B. Mozirz

Egypt/Syria, 15th century A.D.

Upper Cover. Its border is defined by multiple fillets (the one closest to the border on each edge being gold painted) and has a running pattern of impressions of a very finely-engraved square format single-axis tool forming a delicate symmetrical double-tiered calyx form within a cloud collar frame which alternates with symmetrical upright leafy stems in a field formed by the outlines of the cloud collars. This is a case where the full realisation of the design depends on the placing of the stamps, not immediately adjacent to one another, but rather a short distance apart so that the intervening tiny strip of unstamped leather can become a vegetal stem intervening between the cloud collar frames.

A thin inner frame is defined by multiple fillets and has a gold painted gilboche pattern formed by a twisted 5-shaped tool.

The inner panel is defined by a gold fillet. At its centre is a glowing mandorla with pendants on the vertical axis. The outer edge has a gold painted crocheted outline formed with the tool used for the inner frame and minute rosette stamps. The pendants are attached with gold painted chains made of the twisted stamp. The pendants themselves are filigree-like diamonds formed by small bars and arcs.

The mandorla is defined by an outer gold painted fillet and band of multiple fillets. Within these, a gold chain pattern outlines an inner mandorla with two chains in the horizontal axis near the points which divide it into three compartments. These are defined on the inside by multiple fillets. The small triangular inner compartments at either end are outlined in gold and contain a small gold dot. The dominating central compartment has a gold painted pattern like a textile weave. Intersections of a diagonal grid pass through rings and the spaces in between are filled by horizontal and vertical elements.

The corners of this panel are underemphasized and are occupied by small triangular groups of knotwork.

Doublure. The block-pressed doublure has a flimsy pattern of interlacing curved lines forming floral compartments filled with various flower forms of different sizes. A large part of the doublure is missing so that it is difficult to reconstruct exactly the design module, but it seems that its centre is a large eight-lobed compartment centred by an eight-petalled form (each petal being tri-lobed). Each lobe of the main compartment is occupied by a five-petalled flower on a slender stem. Where the lobes of the outline meet they form inward pointing arrows. The interface continues to form the compartments of the surrounding zones. These are alternately a quadrilobe with three-sepaled or arrow-like forms arranged on the axes of a small central dish-sided cross, and a smaller compartment with six concave sides containing a six-petalled flower.

G. Bosch, (1952) pp. 114–115, 126, 136, 144, 162; Pls. XXIX & LII.

75. upper cover

76. cover

A cover of a bookbinding; exterior covering brown leather (goat) over paper pasteboards; blind tooling; gold paint; doublures light brown leather (goat); blind tooling.

354mm × 254mm (original dimensions c. 350mm × 260mm)

Chester Beatty Library Mozart Collection 38

Dr. B. Mozirz

Egypt/Syria, 14th–15th century A.D.

The pasteboard of this cover has been removed. Multiple gold fillets define its border, one fillet on each side being painted gold. A running pattern is made of impressions of a large, square format two-axis tool depicting linked convex quadrilobes enclosing a cross-shaped formation of four small trilobes issuing from a central diamond. The spaces alternating between the convex quad-
of shallow scallops with flecks radiating from their spandrels. Their points are oval in form and pass through a bar-shaped vestigial ring (omitted from the corner quadrants) to end in very finely made filigree stamps depicting a three-sepalled calyx with hollow base and receptacle and containing plant filling with indentations. These are outlined in gold.

Within the mandorlas two gold fillers and multiple blind fillers enclose a gold painted guilloche pattern of interlocking S-shaped stamps as used in the inner frame. Their inner fields are filled with alternating stamps of linked diagonal loops and gold painted drop or seed shapes formed by two arcs. The latter dominate the design.

Doublet: The doublet is completely blind tooled and has an outer border similar to that of the exterior of the cover. Within the expanse of the inner rectangular panel is a mandorla, similar in most respects to that of the exterior, but without the radiating flecks and with an inner field which is an overall pattern exploiting the two-axis qualities of the border stamp. The corners are underemphasized in size and are demarcated by multiple fillers. They contain three impressions of the small S-shaped stamps tooled so as to appear to revolve around a common centre. The outer confines of the inner panel are marked by a single filler leaving an untooled band.

A cover of a bookbinding: exterior covering brown leather (80%) blind tooled, gold paint.

250mm × 170mm
Chester Beatty Library Moritz Collection 60
Dr. B. Moritz
Egypt/Syria/Persia, 15th century A.D.

Only the exterior leather covering of this cover survives, the pasteboard and doublet having been removed. The border, defined by fillers (one on each side being painted gold), is a running pattern of impressions of a square format two-axis tool, very finely made, depicting eight-pointed strapwork star interlaces of two four-pointed stars with a small eight-pointed star or eight petalled floret at the centre.

The inner panel, defined like the border with fillers, one of which is painted gold, has a central attenuated scalloped mandorla. The shallow scallops have a double gold painted outline. The oval points of the mandorla move through a ring into a voluptuous three-sepalled calyx with downward-curving outer sepals and elaborate plant filling. This calyx is the impression of a single tool which was then inprinted with gold.

From the spandrels of the scallops project short radiating gold painted sprigs.
The envelope flap of a bookbinding: exterior covering brown leather (goat); blind tooling, gold paint.

Height 260mm
Chester Beatty Library Moritz Collection 48A
Dr. B. Moritz
Egypt/Syria, 14th-15th century A.D.

Only the exterior leather of the envelope flap survives. A running border at head, tail and fore-edge, defined by multiple fillets of which one on either side is gold painted, is formed of blind impressions of a rectangular format single-axis stamp depicting a knotwork meander. An inner frame of gold painted interlocking reverse S-shaped stamps is also defined by fillets.

At the point of the flap is tooled a section of a scalloped mandorla with an ogival point. It has a double gold painted outline with radiating flecks. Its inner field is filled with alternating blind stamps depicting linked diagonal loops and gold painted drop or seed shapes developed within a rectangular outline. The adjacent flanking fields are filled with an overall pattern of rows of blind impressions of the border knotwork meander stamp. The corners are simple triangles demarcated by fillets and contain three gold painted impressions of the reverse S-shaped stamp placed as though revolving around a common centre.

The perimeter of the main panel is marked by a gold fillet.