

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland

<http://journals.cambridge.org/JRA>

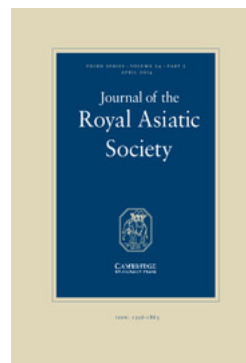
Additional services for *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



The Genealogical Seal of the Mughal Emperors of India

Annabel Teh Gallop

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland / Volume 9 / Issue 01 / April 1999, pp 77 - 140

DOI: 10.1017/S1356186300015935, Published online: 24 September 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1356186300015935

How to cite this article:

Annabel Teh Gallop (1999). The Genealogical Seal of the Mughal Emperors of India. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland, 9, pp 77-140 doi:10.1017/S1356186300015935

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

*The Genealogical Seal of the Mughal Emperors of India*¹

ANNABEL TEH GALLOP

Introduction

The genealogical seal of the Mughal emperors of India was one of the most potent symbols of Mughal imperial authority. The distinctive design of the seal – a central circle containing the name of the ruling emperor, surrounded by a series of smaller circles, like satellites in orbit, containing the names of his ancestors up to Tīmūr (1336–1405) each preceded by the filiative *ibn* – was a self-evident masterpiece of imperial symbolism, in which the authority of the ruling emperor was both legitimised and enhanced by the deliberate reference to his illustrious ancestors. The inscription was designed to be read starting with the ruling emperor's name in the middle, then moving into the outer circle to the name of his immediate predecessor (at 1 o'clock) and, continuing clockwise, finishing up at Tīmūr, who always had pride of place at the top of the seal. In this way, each ruler was expressed as the son of his predecessor, while at the same time, from his central position abutting all the smaller circles, the ruling emperor could be read symbolically as the “son” of each of his ancestors.

The fame of this “orbital” genealogical seal reached far beyond the boundaries of the Mughal empire. It featured prominently in the travel accounts of European visitors to the courts of the Great Moguls in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, attracting a degree of attention accorded to no other eastern seal. And in a seminal article published in 1906, G. P. Rouffaer demonstrated convincingly that the great seal of the Sultans of Aceh in north Sumatra was modelled directly on the genealogical seal of the Mughal emperors, a transference that probably took place in the time of Jahāngir (Fig. 1).

Yet little scholarly attention has actually been paid to the seal itself, though numerous isolated references are found. For example, while he draws exhaustively upon indigenous histories, European travel accounts, coins and other inscriptions in his historical studies of Mughal numismatics, Hodivala hardly ever refers to royal seals even though, in one instance, the seal of Muḥammad Shāh is invoked to settle beyond doubt the question of the official name of this emperor (Hodivala 1923:308–9). In 1899, William Foster compared

¹ In venturing so far from my natural habitat of Southeast Asia, I have benefited greatly from the kind encouragement and support of many friends and colleagues. For invaluable advice and comments on this article I would like to thank Mahmud Haq, Salim Quraishi, Ursula Sims-Williams, Muhammad Isa Waley, Jerry Losty, Venetia Porter, John Seyller, Ulrich Kratz and especially Robert Skelton. I am also most grateful to Colin Baker, Jacob Harskamp, Barry Bloomfield, Michael Spink, Michael Pollock, Sheila Canby and Rosemary Crill for assistance rendered generously in many forms. Any errors remain my sole responsibility. This article is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Marjorie D.C. Gallop (1900–92), who was born in Bhopal, India.



Figure 1 Seal of Sultan Alauddin Muhammad Daud Syah of Aceh, north Sumatra, dated A.H. 1296 (A.D. 1879) (Rouffaer 1906: Plate I)

the variant depictions of Jahāngīr's seal deriving from Sir Thomas Roe's embassy to India (Foster 1899:564–8). Foster's analysis formed the basis of the most detailed study to date of the genealogical Mughal seal, which is in fact that of Rouffaer (1906), who traced the development of the great seal from the time of Akbar up to Muḥammad Shāh, though his arguments were seriously, and at times fatally, flawed through his lack of access to primary sources and hence forced reliance on the often confused accounts of European travellers. Rouffaer's study had been noted in India by 1911 (Durbar 1911:61, fn. 1). and Father Felix's study of Mughal seals (Felix 1916b) owes considerably more to Rouffaer and his sources than is acknowledged explicitly in the article.

Thousands of original Mughal firmans have survived, mainly in India, and in the past few decades many hundreds of these, in both private and public collections, have been documented.² However, the level of description naturally varies from one publication to another, and references to seals are at worst non-existent, and at best sporadic and tantalizing, and only in very rare instances are facsimile reproductions available to answer queries satisfactorily.³ This paper represents an attempt to bring together the scattered published references to the genealogical seal of the Mughals, and presents a catalogue of such seals found on manuscript documents in the British Library.

² See, for example, the list of references in the Preface to Tirmizi 1989, the bibliography in Mohiuddin 1971:353–5, and Goswamy & Grewal 1967:44, fn. 25.

³ For example, the seal on a firman of Akbar dated 1574 is merely described as "Seal (big)" (Ansari 1984:16); luckily, the document in question is reproduced photographically, from which it can be seen that the seal is Akbar's *mīhrābī*-shaped seal as described by Abū al-Faḡl in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*.

The introduction of the orbital seal

One issue which has yet to be satisfactorily resolved is precisely when the orbital genealogical seal was introduced. The primary source of information on royal Mughal seals is the well-known account in Abū al-Faḡl's *Ā'in-i Akbarī*:

The Royal Seals

Seals are used in the three branches of the Government; in fact every man requires them in his transactions. In the beginning of the present reign, Mawḡlānā Maqṣūd, the seal-engraver, cut in a circular form upon a surface of steel, in the *riqā'* character, the name of his Majesty, and those of his illustrious ancestors up to Tīmūrlang; and afterwards he cut another similar seal, in the *nasta'liq* character, only with his Majesty's name. For judicial transactions a second kind of seal was made, *mihrābī* in form, which had the following verse around the name of his Majesty: *Rāstī mūjib-i riḡā-yi khudāst kas nadīdam ki gum shud az riḡ-i rāst*, "Uprightness is the means of pleasing God; I never saw any one lost from the straight road".

Tamkin made a new seal of the second kind; and afterwards Mawḡlānā 'Alī Aḡmad of Dihli improved both. The round small seal goes by the (*chaghatā'i*) name of *Uzruk*, and is used for *farmān-i sabtīs*; and the large one, into which he cut the names of the ancestors of his Majesty, was at first only used for letters to foreign kings, but nowadays for both. For other orders a square seal is used, engraved with the words *Allāhu Akbar jallā jalālahū*, whilst another of a peculiar stamp is used for all matters connected with the seraglio. For the seals attached to *farmāns*, another stamp is used of various forms. (Blochmann 1927:54)

The description of the seal carved by Mawḡlānā Maqṣūd has naturally been taken by some to refer to the orbital genealogical seal (Modi 1904:174, Hodivala 1923:57, Commissariat 1940:6, Goswamy & Grewal 1967:64, fn. 2), and rather more boldly by others as proof that Akbar was the first Mughal emperor to have such a seal (Rouffāer 1906:376), although Abū al-Faḡl nowhere describes the precise design of the seal other than that it was circular. From the evidence of an orbital genealogical seal being used on a firman granted by Akbar to the Jesuit missionaries in 1598, Father Felix cautiously concludes: "We cannot, however, deduce . . . absolutely from Abul Faḡl's statement . . . that Mawḡlānā Maqṣūd was the first to invent and to make this peculiar manifold seal of Akbar; yet it affords a great probability to the hypothesis that, so far as we know, no prototype of this kind exists" (Felix 1916b:111).

Father Felix was both right and wrong. He was right that the evidence of seals on extant firmans of Akbar and his ancestors implies that Akbar was the originator of the orbital genealogical seal. But he was wrong to assume that the orbital seal in use in 1598 was that carved by Mawḡlānā Maqṣūd "in the beginning of the present reign", some 43 years earlier. The seal carved by Mawḡlānā Maqṣūd is probably 3.1 in the present catalogue, dated [9]63 (A.D. 1556), the year of Akbar's accession. As described by his chronicler, this genealogical seal does indeed bear "the name of his Majesty, and those of his illustrious ancestors up to Tīmūrlang", but in a very different form from the orbital seal. In the central circle are the names of Akbar and his father, and in a continuous line of script in the border, the text oriented outwards, are the names of his six other ancestors up to Tīmūr. A new genealogical seal (3.3) was later carved with exactly the same inscription as 3.1 but dated 978 (A.D. 1570/1). Another seal (3.4*), which appears from a photographic reproduction

to be identical to 3.3 but is said to be dated 999 (A.D. 1590/1) (Jhaveri 1928: notes to Plate IV), is found on two firmans of the 38th regnal year, 1593.

There is a clear prototype for these early genealogical seals of Akbar: that of his grandfather Bābur. Found on a firman of 1527, Bābur's seal (1.1) contains his name in the middle, with the names of his five ancestors up to Tīmūr placed in lobed panels in the border, the text oriented outwards. It is not known whether Bābur's seal is itself based on a traditional design, but as his seal is dated 928 (A.D. 1521/2) – predating by some years the defeat of the Sultan of Delhi Ibrāhīm Lodī at Panipat in 1526 – it can be regarded as originating in the pre-Mughal, Timurid, era. According to one unverified source,⁴ Akbar also had a genealogical seal with exactly the same design of five lobed border panels as Bābur's, reproduced here as 3.2*. Though apparently undated, the seal was found on a firman of the 5th regnal year, 1560 (Ahmad 1926:42). Humāyūn is also said to have had "a round lineal seal" (Tirmizi 1982:3) but no information on its precise design is given.

Comparing Akbar's early genealogical seals with that of Bābur and with the later orbital Mughal seals, it is ironic to note that the seal engraved by Mawlānā Maqṣūd, far from establishing the design of the orbital genealogical seal (as has widely been assumed), represents in three ways a break with the tradition found in Bābur's seal which was subsequently re-established by Akbar's orbital genealogical seal, and thence continued in all later Mughal imperial seals. Firstly, the central circle contains not just Akbar's name, but also that of Humāyūn; only a few other (much later) Mughal genealogical seals give two generations in the central circle. Secondly, in Bābur's seal and all later orbital seals, the names of the ruler's ancestors are set in discrete panels or circles; in Akbar's earliest seal, they are given in a continuous inscription. Thirdly, in Bābur's and all subsequent seals, the name of the ruling emperor's direct predecessor is placed in the panel or circle situated at 1 o'clock, while the inscription ends with the name of Tīmūr in the topmost position, at 12 o'clock. In Akbar's seal, the border inscription starts with Bābur's name at 12 o'clock, directly above Akbar's, and ends with Tīmūr's name at about 11 o'clock.

These three differences notwithstanding, it is clear that Akbar's early genealogical seals were modelled directly on that of his grandfather Bābur (and possibly that of his father Humāyūn). These seals were characterised by their round shape, with a central circle containing the name of the ruling emperor, with the names of his ancestors up to Tīmūr in the outer circle, the inscription oriented outwards. In the last decade of Akbar's reign, two crucial innovations were made to the seal design: the names of each of the ruler's ancestors were placed within small circles, and the whole inscription was placed on the same horizontal plane, establishing a pattern which would survive until the end of the Mughal empire.

This new seal was the work of the master engraver, Mawlānā 'Alī Aḥmad, as is apparent

⁴ See Ahmad 1926:41. In this lithographed collection of royal firmans the seal is only depicted in the form of a hand-drawn copy, without an accompanying photographic reproduction to verify the image. It should be noted that there are certainly many (minor) inaccuracies in the inscriptions and dates of the other Mughal genealogical seals depicted in this volume, and in this seal of Akbar's, there are two questionable points: the styling of Bābur as "Zahir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur Shāh / Mubārak Shāh Ghāzi" and the positioning of his title across two separate cartouches are unusual in the context of royal Mughal genealogical seals; and the inscription "bin Sulṭān Muḥammad Mirān Shāh" is an obvious mistake, as two ancestors have been combined into one and placed in a single cartouche. Nonetheless, the design of the seal appears to mirror closely that of Bābur's seal, implying that this is probably an inaccurate depiction of an authentic seal not yet identified in any other published source.

from sources brought together by Brand & Lowry (1985:121). Mawlānā ‘Alī’s talents were praised highly by his contemporaries, and Abū al-Faḍl describes him in the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*:

At this day, Mawlānā ‘Alī Aḥmad of Dilhi, who has not his equal in any country, cuts different kinds of letters in steel, in such a manner as to equal the copyslips of the most skilful calligraphers. He holds the rank of a commander of one hundred men (Blochmann 1870:22)

and further:

Mawlānā ‘Alī Aḥmad of Dilhi who, according to all calligraphers, stands unsurpassed as a steel-engraver, so much so that his engravings are used as copies. His *nasta‘liq* is charming; but he writes also other characters as well. He learned his trade from his father Shaykh Ḥusayn, studied the manner of Mawlānā Maqṣūd, and eventually surpassed all (Blochmann 1870:55)

Mawlānā ‘Alī was a close friend of Badāūnī,⁵ author of the *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, who enumerates his talents (whilst belittling his profession), referring to him by his poetic *nom-de-plume* Nishānī:

He is Maulānā ‘Alī Aḥmad, the son of Maulānā Ḥusain Naqshī of Dilhi, the seal-cutter, who was a learned man, saintly in religion, and was the instructor of the eldest prince [Jahāngīr]. Both father and son attained the greatest proficiency in the art (of seal-cutting), but especially the Maulānā named above (‘Alī Aḥmad) whose own engraved seal is the exemplar of the age. Coins of which the dies have been cut by him are taken as talismans and relics to ‘Irāq, Khurāsān and Transoxiana. He is endowed with the accomplishments of learning and with such perfections as a man can possess, but this lesser accomplishment and mercenary art (of seal-cutting) has obscured all his great natural gifts, and for that reason he has not received that training and that position in military affairs and in the service to the state to which he is entitled . . . He is deeply read in astronomy and natural history, is an ardent seeker after knowledge, and is marvellously proficient in all scripts, and in prose composition and orthography he is unrivalled (Haig 1925:480–1)

And it is in a long letter from Mawlānā ‘Alī to Badāūnī that we find a crucial and unequivocal reference to the making of Akbar’s new orbital seal, which took four full months:

My employment from the 1st of Ṣī-i-Hijjah to the end of Rabī‘u-l-awwal [year unknown] has been the engraving of the seal of the just king, the perfect Khalifah on which are engraved his sublime titles and the names of his exalted ancestors as far as Amīr Tīmūr, the lord of the (fortunate) conjunction. The seal is wide and round and contains eight circles, one in the middle, and the rest clustered around it (Haig 1925:491)

In the *Akbar-nāma*, Abū al-Faḍl reports the formal handing over of the new seal in Akbar’s 40th regnal year:

On the 16th [month not given] the sacred seal was made over the Khān A‘ẓam and his [i.e. Akbar’s] dignity received a fresh increase. Maulānā ‘Alī Aḥmad, at the orders of [Akbar], engraved the name of [Akbar’s] ancestors up the time of Ṣāhib Qirānī and produced a masterpiece. An order was given that all the confirmatory *sanads* [i.e. *firmān-i-sabti*] and some of the secret orders should bear this adornment (Beveridge 1910:3.1033)

⁵ Badāūnī wrote: “Since from the early days of my youth to the time of writing this selection, which is the period of my middle age, or rather of my old age, I have been bound to him, to a greater degree than can be imagined, by the bonds of intimacy, confidence, friendship and companionship” (Haig 1925:481).

Mawlānā ‘Alī does not give the year he engraved the seal, but we have enough circumstantial evidence to narrow down the possibilities. The seal was made over on the 16th day of an unspecified month of the (solar)⁶ regnal year (henceforth RY) 40, which, according to the *Akbar-nāma*, lasted from 7 Rajab 1003 to 19 Rajab 1004 (18 March 1595–19 March 1596) (Beveridge 1910:1023). The old-style seal (3.4*) was still in use on 15 Khurdād RY 38 (5 June 1593), while the earliest evidence we have of the use of the orbital genealogical seal is on a firman dated 10 Isfandārmuz RY 40 (late February 1596) (Modi 1904:170). This implies that Mawlānā ‘Alī completed the new seal either at the end of Rabi‘ I 1002 (late December 1593), Rabi‘ I 1003 (mid-December 1594), or Rabi‘ I 1004 (early December 1595). If the seal had been completed in Rabi‘ I 1002 (December 1593), it seems unlikely that more than a year would have elapsed before it was handed over to the Khān A‘zam in RY 40 (1595/6). Thus the evidence points to either 1 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 1002–Rabi‘ I 1003 (18 August–December 1594) or 1 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 1003–Rabi‘ I 1004 (7 August–December 1595) as the date of engraving of this seal.⁷

Although the innovations heralded by the new seal were purely design features – the inscription barely changed – they were symbolically significant. After all, two simple concentric circles had been the preferred form for the great seal since the start of the Mughal dynasty.⁸ No exact precedent is known for the design of the new Mughal orbital genealogical seal, and a number of similar later seals can be regarded as derivative.⁹ While the arrangement of small circles in a border around a central circle could be described as a pattern with universal appeal, specific sources of inspiration for the new seal may have included manuscripts in the imperial library with initial *shamsas* used as contents pages, where the titles of the works contained in the volume are presented within small circles.¹⁰ Another possible influence may have been the enduring design of a number of distinctive large Shiite seals, with a central cartouche surrounded by numerous small roundels containing the names of the prophet, his daughter Fāṭima and the twelve imams.¹¹ Much has been written on the significance of solar symbolism in Akbar’s reign, and it is also possible to see solar references in the design of the new seal, where the smaller circles

⁶ The regnal years of Akbar and Jahāngīr were solar; those of other Mughal emperors were lunar (Goswami & Grewal 1967:88, fn. 8).

⁷ One possible scenario favouring the latter date is that the seal might have been commissioned to mark the fortieth year of Akbar’s reign, and been engraved and brought into use the same year.

⁸ Presuming that the shape of Humāyūn’s seal was the same as that of Bābur’s and Akbar’s early seals.

⁹ For example, the seal of the Nawab of Savanur (BL MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f.43 i), near Goa, is modelled precisely upon the round genealogical seal of Awrangzīb, from whom “the founder of the [Savanur dynasty], ‘Abdul Rauf Khān, obtained in 1680 ... the grant of a *jagir*” (IGI 1908:22.155). The pedigree seal of the Maharaja of Ajaigarh (BL MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f.66 h & g), containing the names of his ancestors in 33 oval panels, was surely inspired by the Mughal genealogical seal. Aḥmad Shāh Durrāni “had an imperial seal of Jahāngīr’s type, on which a peacock was engraved” (Felix 1916b:118–19).

¹⁰ See, for example, a 1526 Herat manuscript of the collected works of Mir ‘Alī Shīr Nawā‘ī, where the initial *shamsa* contains two concentric rings, the outer ring enclosing 16 smaller circles and the inner with eight circles, containing the titles of all the works in the collection (Blochet 1929: Plate 171), and a literary anthology probably copied in Kabul ca. 1550, where the initial *shamsa* contains a central circle inscribed “For the library of Prince Muḥammad Humāyūn, renowned Shāh” surrounded by five smaller circles containing the titles of the works contained in the manuscript (Soudavar 1992:327).

¹¹ See, for example, the pseudo-seal on a *nishan* dated 1515 from the Shrine of the Eighth Imam at Mashhad (Christie’s 1995:50 lot 82); a seal impression 146 mm high dated A.H. 1105 (A.D. 1693/4), unfortunately cut out from its original document (BL Or.4936, f. 59); and the seal of Muḥammad ‘Alī Shāh of Lucknow, dated 1836 (Soudavar 1992:408).

containing the names of his ancestors surround the central circle containing Akbar's name like heavenly bodies orbiting around a sun in a miniature solar system. A similar view is taken by Father Felix, who sees in Akbar's eightfold seal "the representation of the *Chakravarti*, 'the wheel king' ... Akbar in his eightfold seal is the axle of the wondrous wheel, around which move in a sun's course the *Saptaratnas* or seven jewels, his seven illustrious ancestors" (Felix 1916b:112). We do not know whether the seal engraver, Mawlānā 'Alī, was himself involved in the design process, but in a *qaṣīdah* written by Mawlānā 'Alī and quoted by Badāūnī, the astronomical imagery and imperious tone direct our thoughts towards Akbar's orbital seal, and seem to mirror perfectly its aura of supreme self-confidence:

Under my seal is the face of the whole earth.
 I in this age am like the seal, with my head hidden within the collar of my robe.¹²
 From east to west I am tempered with perfection,
 From pole to pole I am the axis of every country.
 The convex surface of the sky of excellence, even in the eyes of my enemy,
 Will never fit the concave surface which is bounded by my ego.
 Though I dwell on the earth like an imaginary point
 I am still the centre round which the spherical sky revolves.
 The hand of fate has drawn, with the compass of time,
 The circles of the seven heavens around my book.
 (Haig 1925:485)

The evolution of the genealogical seal

On each seal, the number of smaller circles surrounding the central one varied from emperor to emperor. Akbar's seal was "eightfold", namely, a central circle surrounded by seven smaller ones, Jahāngīr's was ninefold, and Shāh Jahān's tenfold; a clear pattern thus being established of each successive emperor adding a further circle to the seal. Thereafter, however, the murky waters of Mughal dynastic intrigue encroach upon the seal itself. During the fratricidal war which broke out following Shāh Jahān's illness in 1657, Murād Bakhsh laid claim to the throne for seven months, and in this short period of time he had engraved an elevenfold genealogical seal. When Awrangzib emerged as the decisive victor of the war in 1658, his imperial seal was, not surprisingly, also elevenfold, with no acknowledgement of Murād Bakhsh's interregnum. The seal of Awrangzib's son Shāh 'Ālam I was twelvefold. Shāh 'Ālam I was succeeded by his son Jahāndār Shāh; no genealogical seals have been traced from his brief, contested, reign of less than a year, but if he had had one it would almost certainly have been thirteenfold – a central circle surrounded by 12 smaller ones. Jahāndār, however, was defeated and succeeded by his nephew Farrukhsiyar, the succession of the Mughal dynasty thus passing to a different branch of the family. According to *Tārikh-i Salāṭīn-i Chaghataiyyah*, "orders were issued on 9 Jumādī II, 1125 for striking out from the records and treating as non-existent the reign of

¹² Haig notes: "i.e. as a seal has its head hidden in the wax when it is pressed on it"; but Mughal seals were stamped in ink, not wax, so this is unlikely to be the correct interpretation.

Jahāndār and dating Farrukhsiyar's own reign from his enthronement at Patna on 29 Šafar 1124 A.H." (Hodivala 1923:281). This re-writing of history was reflected in the imperial seal: Farrukhsiyar's seal was not, as might have been expected, fourteenfold, but thirteenfold, tracing his descent directly from his grandfather Shāh 'Ālam, and obliterating any trace of Jahāndār. Farrukhsiyar was himself deposed in 1719, and the intervening eight months saw the brief reigns of his cousins Rafī' al-Darajāt and Rafī' al-Daula (Shāh Jahān II) before the throne passed into the hands of another cousin, Muḥammad Shāh. Muḥammad Shāh's official date of accession was then "backdated" to tie in with the deposition of Farrukhsiyar, omitting any mention of short-lived interim rulers (Hodivala 1923:285). However, this formal recognition of Farrukhsiyar's reign notwithstanding, Muḥammad Shāh's seal was also thirteenfold, bypassing both Farrukhsiyar and Jahāndār. The seal of Muḥammad Shāh's son Aḥmad Shāh was fourteenfold; but here, rather idiosyncratically, the central circle contains the names of Aḥmad Shāh and his father Muḥammad Shāh, while in the first of the satellite circles is the name of his grandfather, Jahān Shāh, who was never emperor. When the throne passed into the hands of Jahāndār's son 'Ālamgīr II, the seal was still fourteenfold. Here, as by now might be expected, Farrukhsiyar, Muḥammad Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh were all ignored, and Jahāndār was reinstated. The throne subsequently remained in the hands of this branch of the family: Shāh 'Ālam II's seal was fifteenfold, Muḥammad Akbar's sixteenfold, and that of the last Mughal emperor, Bahādur Shāh, seventeenfold. What the above discussion has illustrated is that the imperial genealogical seal of the Mughals was, strictly speaking, lineal rather than dynastic, for no ruler was included who was not a direct forebear of the reigning emperor.

While the basic design of the orbital genealogical seal never changed materially save for the number of small circles, there was great variation in the external shape, and many emperors had more than one genealogical seal. Akbar's seal was round. Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Awrangzīb all had both a round seal, and a square one containing the circles. Some of the genealogical seals of the later Mughal emperors were surmounted by a *miḥrābī*-shaped protruberance or a trefoil representing a parasol (*chhatra*), a common Eastern symbol of royalty. Awrangzīb is said to have been the first to sport such a seal,¹³ but the earliest found in this study is that of Shāh 'Ālam I (7.2). The early seals of Bābur and Akbar bear no surface decoration other than the inscription, but the orbital genealogical seals are all covered to varying degrees with floral motifs. All the seals were carved in intaglio: the inscription was incised into the flat surface of the seal matrix giving, when imprinted on paper, a seal impression with a white inscription against a black (or other ink-coloured) background.

Apart from some seals of Akbar and Jahāngīr, all the seals are dated. The date is usually expressed in terms of both the Hijrah year and regnal year, but sometimes only one is given. The year on a seal can usually – but not always – be assumed to reflect also the date

¹³ "Under the early Mughals, the great imperial seals were round; under the later Emperors, from the time certainly of Awrangzīb, their imperial character was emphasized by the addition of the umbrella over the great seal" (Felix 1916a:3); see also Felix 1916b:119. One writer describes the form of the imperial seal thus: "A large circular seal (the upper portion tapering off a little, and not forming a perfect circle) containing the name of the reigning emperor in the middle and those of his ancestors, up to Timūr, in small circles ringed around his name" (Ahmad 1961:368), but this may be a muddled reference to the *chhatra*; no genealogical seals have been found in the tapered shape he describes, although such a shape was used for the smaller personal seals of some emperors, including Humāyūn, Shāh Jahān and Awrangzīb (see Wilkinson 1931: Plate I).

of engraving. That this was not always the case is apparent from two seals of Shāh 'Ālam II (15.1 & 15.2). At first glance both seals appear identical in shape (round, topped with a trefoil) and inscription (dated 1173, RY 1), but closer inspection shows that 15.1 is smaller, and has a broader, less curved, trefoil in which the word *ghālib* fills the whole stem. Seal 15.1 is found on documents dating from 1765–84, while 15.2 is found on firmans dating from between 1789 and 1802. The obvious implication is that 15.2 was engraved sometime between 1784 and 1789, but retained the accession date of 1173 (A.D. 1759).

Much has been made of the inverse relationship which seemed to exist between the outward appearance of Mughal firmans and seals and the actual power they embodied, as an apt metaphor for the decay of the empire (Durbar 1911:43, Felix 1916b:120, Tirmizi 1960:8). The early small simple round seals and austere plain firmans with business-like checks and annotations registered on the reverse slowly evolved into enormous trefoil-topped seals and gorgeous illuminated firmans devoid of official endorsements, whose increasingly stately appearance belied the decreasing power behind them.¹⁴ In this context, it is not without irony that the great seal of the Mughals could be said to have the seeds of decadence and self-aggrandizement sown in its very design. As the number of peripheral circles grew by one with each successive ruler, so the disparity between their size and that of the central circle was geometrically predestined to increase. Thus, while in Jahāngīr's seal (4.5) the diameter of the circles containing his ancestors' names is 14 mm and that of the central circle containing his name is 23 mm, in Shāh 'Ālam II's comparatively huge seal (15.2), his name rests in a large circle 52 mm in diameter while those of his far more august ancestors are bounded by circles each no greater than 15 mm wide.

Function and use of the genealogical seal

The imperial seal of the Mughals was termed by Abū al-Faḥl in his *Akbar-nāma* the *muhr-i muqaddas-i kalān*, "the great sacred seal" (Ibn Hasan 1936:101). The arrangements for safeguarding the seal varied from reign to reign, but it was usually given either to the most trusted court official or to one of the royal women in the harem.

As Ibn Hasan has pointed out, Abū al-Faḥl is singularly unhelpful on the identities of the various keepers of Akbar's great seal. The matter is not addressed directly; information on the subject can only be gleaned from casual references. In the early part of Akbar's reign, the seal was apparently held by Bairām Khān until his fall from grace, when it passed into the charge of Khvāja Jahān until his dismissal in RY 11 (Ibn Hasan 1936:101). Thereafter the responsibility was transferred to a queen: when Father Monserrate accompanied Akbar on his Kabul expedition in 1581, he reported that firmans were sealed eight days after they were received from the *vazīr*, "by one of the queens, in whose keeping is the royal signet ring and also the great seal of the realm" (Monserrate 1922:209). And, as discussed above, in RY 40 the newly-designed orbital seal was made over to the Khān-i A'zam, who presumably held this responsibility until the end of the reign.

No mention is made of the arrangements for the keeping of the genealogical seal during

¹⁴ Some firmans of Shāh 'Ālam II are particularly sumptuous, and in the case of one sanad the seal was apparently imprinted onto a gold background so that the name and titles of the emperor would shine out in gold (Blochmann 1870:8).

Jahāngīr's reign, but the situation under Shāh Jahān is quite clear. The great seal was first held by Queen Mumtāz Maḥal, but soon after the coronation of the king it was given to her father, Āṣaf Khān, at the request of the queen herself (Ibn Hasan 1936:102). The event is described by 'Ināyāt Khān in the *Shāh Jahān-nāma*: on 8 March 1628, "His Majesty assigned the high office of First Lord of the Realm (*Wakil*) to Yamin al-Daula [Āṣaf Khān] and handed over to him the royal seal, on which the noble name of His Majesty and the honorable names of his imperial ancestors were inscribed, and which is stamped upon all the royal farmans and commands" (Begley & Desai 1990:21). When Āṣaf Khān was sent to the Deccan in RY 2, the seal was handed over to the queen, and he received it back on his return. But when he was sent to the Deccan for a second time to command the expedition against the ruler of Bijapur in RY 4, after the queen's death, the seal was handed over to Shāh Jahān's favourite daughter, in whose custody it henceforth remained (Ibn Hasan 1936:102):¹⁵ "The day before his departure (13 December 1631), Yamin al-Daula laid the great seal which was in his custody before the Emperor, who directed Princess Jahanara Begam to take charge of it; and from that date, the duty of affixing the great seal to the imperial edicts devolved upon her" (Begley & Desai 1990:74).

During the reigns of Akbar and Jahāngīr, at least, the great seal was apparently used on letters to foreign kings as well as on firmans. All the genealogical seals listed in this catalogue are found only on firmans (and one treaty). This is probably due to two factors: firstly, and most obviously, the paucity of available examples of letters sent to foreign rulers compared to the thousands of firmans extant. The other possible factor may be a consequence of the intriguing custom, mentioned in contemporary travellers' accounts, of sometimes not imprinting the seal on the letter itself, but sending it separately. According to these sources, Mughal epistolary etiquette laid down very strict prescriptions for the placing of the seal on letters, its precise position depending on the relative status of sender and recipient. The diplomatic and political pitfalls of a wrongly-placed seal were obvious; to avoid any such misunderstanding, the seal was thus sometimes sent separately, as in the case of the letter from Jahāngīr to King James I which was brought to England by Sir Thomas Roe. According to a note by Purchas:

I have heard that Sir Thomas Roe at his Riturne, desiring the great Mogor or Mogoll his letters of Commendation to His Majestie, easily obtayned that request, but found him very scrupulous where to set his seale; lest, if under, hee should disparage himselfe, if over, it might cause distast to the king. His resolution and prevention therefore was this: to send the letter unsealed, and the great seale itselfe, that so His Majestie might according to his own pleasure affixe it. The seale is silver (Foster 1899:568)

This was also the case with royal letters delivered to the English factors some four years earlier, in March 1615, but in this instance only the ink impression was sent. Kerridge writes that the seal was "putt loose therein, which is the Costome, for if itt were on top itt sheweth superyorytye; in vnderneathe, Inferyorytye; but being loose, equallytye. The seal is set in Inke, hauing therein eight seuerall names in signettes and himselfe the ninth placed

¹⁵ Ibn Hasan (and thence Commissariat 1940:5) assumes that the seal in question was the *uzuk* (small) seal rather than the great seal, but as his source was Lāhawri's *Bādshāh-nāma*, of which 'Ināyāt Khān's *Shāh Jahān-nāma* is an abbreviated version, he was obviously mistaken.

in the midst, deryuing himself from Tamerlayne, the firste of the nine” (Foster 1899:568). The practice was apparently still current in the time of Shāh ‘Ālam I (Felix 1916b:115, fn. 2).

In his study of Persian chancellery practice under the Mughals, Momin Mohiuddin appears to differentiate between the use of the “great” round genealogical seal, and rectangular or square ones. For instance, on the basis of a firman of Shāh Jahān appointing a *qāḍī*, Mohiuddin surmises “it appears that a square seal dynastic in character was reserved for such ecclesiastical matters” (1971:65). From our very brief survey, it is not yet possible to distinguish between round genealogical seals and those of other shapes either in terms of “imperial” character or of function. Whilst a square seal of Awrangzib was indeed used on a firman appointing a *qāḍī*, square seals of Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Awrangzib are also found on numerous land grants. Given the attention paid to detail within the Mughal administration, it does indeed seem likely that some sort of distinction did exist, but to uncover this would require a far deeper investigation into the types of documents on which these seals are found than has been attempted in this paper.¹⁶ An important factor to be taken into consideration would be the period over which particular seals were used, for when two or more genealogical seals of different shapes were used concurrently during an emperor’s reign – as they were in Shāh Jahān’s time – it would stand to reason that they were used for different purposes.

Although royal seals are sometimes found imprinted on manuscripts originating from the imperial library, these are invariably the personal, and not the imperial genealogical, seals of the emperors.¹⁷ The most famous such example is, of course, the flyleaf of the *Shāhnāma* of Muḥammad Jūkī, which bears the personal seals of five of the Great Mughals – Bābur, Humāyūn, Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Awrangzib (Wilkinson 1931:3, Plate I). The same small seals of Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Awrangzib are found on a *Divān-i Anvarī*; Jahāngīr’s seal is positioned in the centre of an illuminated *shamsa*, on either side of which are the seals of Shāh Jahān and Awrangzib (Spink 1980:f.c.). The middle of an otherwise empty *shamsa* – where available – was clearly the favoured place for the subsequent positioning of an emperor’s seal in a manuscript to indicate ownership.¹⁸ Shāh Jahān’s seal is found in this position on another manuscript (Falk & Digby 1979:34–5), and Awrangzib’s seal on two others (Welch 1987:89, Rogers 1931:31–2).

In this connection should be mentioned two instances where the genealogical seal has been found on manuscripts. In the Wantage Album in the Victoria & Albert Museum, a genealogical seal of Jahāngīr (4.5) is imprinted on the illuminated borders of 18 of the 35 paintings (Clarke 1922:4). Furthermore, the seal appears on original paintings of Jahāngīr’s time, as well as on later copies or on the verso of miniatures of Shāh Jahān’s reign (Skelton 1972:150), and even on paintings now categorised by the Museum as fakes.¹⁹ Rosemary

¹⁶ In particular, Abū al-Faḡl’s statement “For the seals attached to *farmāns*, another stamp is used of various forms” (Blochmann 1927:54) needs further investigation.

¹⁷ A number of such examples are documented in Seyller 1997; see also Desai 1993.

¹⁸ An early example of this practice can be seen in the positioning of a seal in a central roundel of an illuminated title-page tentatively identified as 15th-century Andalusian (Robinson 1976:281); a late example – continuing the imperial tradition – is the imprinting of the seal of the Royal Asiatic Society in the centre of a *shamsa* in the A.D. 1314 manuscript of the World History of Rashid al-Dīn (Gray 1978: Plate 36).

¹⁹ The fake paintings bearing the genealogical seal are IM 110A–1921, IM 113A–1921, IM 115–1921 and IM 119A–1921.

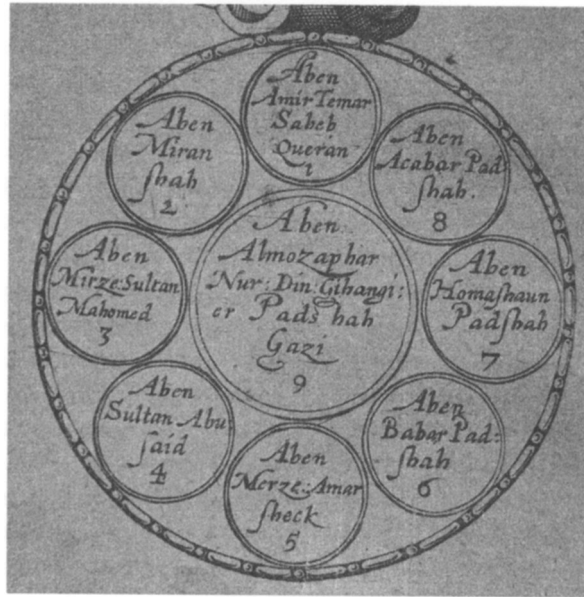


Figure 2 Seal of Jahāngīr, on a map by William Baffin, 1619
British Library, Map Collections, K.115, sheet 22

Crill has suggested that one Nandaram Pandit, whose seal appears on the front of many of the miniatures in the Wantage Album, “managed to get hold of the imperial seal and one at least of the imperial albums. He then concocted a mixture of genuine and fake paintings, the latter presumably commissioned by himself, for sale to the gullible British, who recognized the imperial seal even if they were less discriminating about the standard of the paintings” (Crill 1985:336). This is a plausible explanation for what would otherwise be a highly unorthodox use of the imperial seal.²⁰

A round genealogical seal of Awrangzib (6.3) is found on the frontispiece to an album of miniature paintings and calligraphy in the British Museum.²¹ The page appears to be a collage: the seal impression has been trimmed right to the edge, and stuck onto an oval illuminated panel. This in turn was attached to a rectangular panel, which was inserted into a floral frame when the album was compiled at a later date (Rieu 1895:261). The obvious conclusion is that the seal was culled from some earlier document to impart an air of imperial provenance to the album.

Contemporary European accounts

There was an extraordinary degree of interest in the great seal of the Mughal emperors from contemporary European travellers of the 17th century onwards. A flurry of published

²⁰ The “imperial” album of miniatures and calligraphy in the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur, also has several folios “authenticated” by being stamped with Jahāngīr’s seal (Welch 1987:26); see also Welch (1985:221–3) for another example of a folio bearing the seals of both Jahāngīr and Nandaram Pandit. There is no suggestion that the seal of Jahāngīr itself is not genuine.

²¹ BM-OA 1974.6-17.021(02).

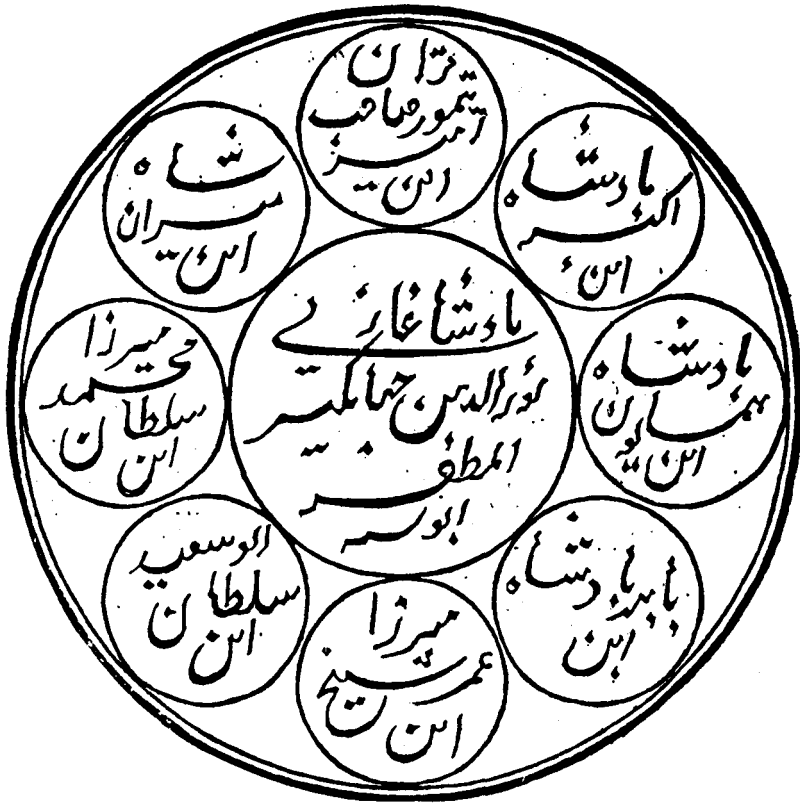


Figure 3 Seal of Jahāngīr, from Purchas (1624:568)

references is linked to the embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India (1615–19), and the seal first makes a published appearance between September 1619 and February 1620 on a map of India by William Baffin. Baffin was a master's mate on the *Anne*, the ship on which Roe returned to England in 1619, and it is likely that the map was compiled on the basis of information supplied by Roe in the course of the voyage (Foster 1899:542–3). A possibly unique copy of this map survives in the British Library; in the top right hand corner there is an engraving of the genealogical seal of Jahāngīr, its Persian inscription given in a romanized transliteration (Fig. 2).²² The inaccuracies in the seal inscription are obvious: the most strident are the addition of “Aben” (i.e. *ibn*) to the name of Jahāngīr in the middle, the misspelling of certain names, and the numbering of the circles 1–9 (implying direction of reading), starting with Tīmūr and ending with Jahāngīr; this last being a mistake made in nearly all contemporary European accounts of the seal (see Figs. 5–11 below).

The first accurate depiction of the seal was published in 1625 by Purchas to accompany his edited account of Sir Thomas Roe's embassy (Fig. 3). Though the calligraphy is not in

²² The map was re-engraved for Purchas (1624) and Terry (1655); each is more inaccurate than the original (see Foster 1899:545–6).

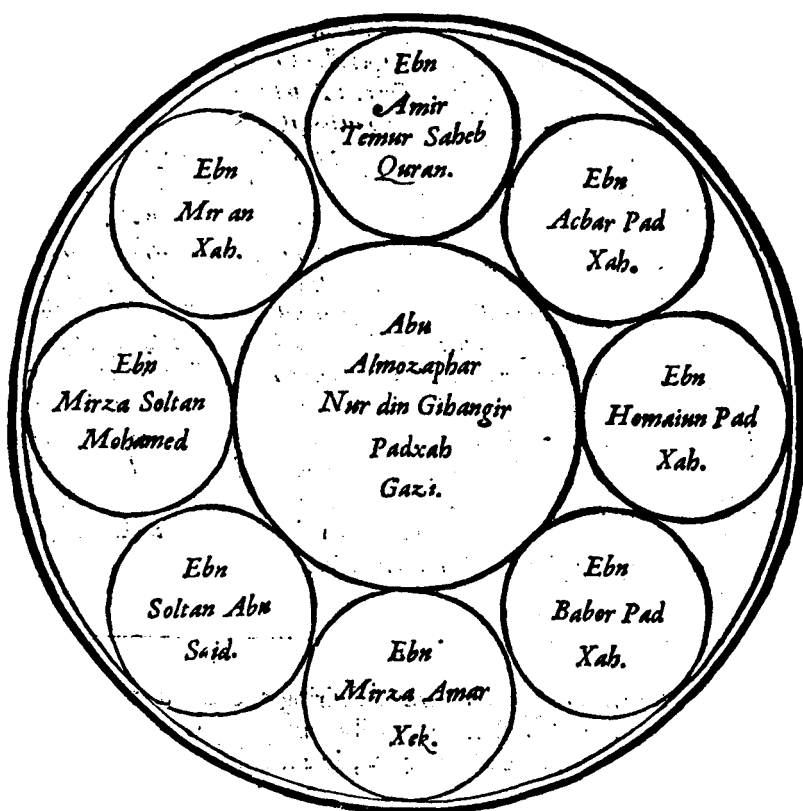


Figure 4 Romanized version of Jahāngīr's seal, from Purchas (1624:569)

an Indian hand, it is clearly a copy from a primary source, perhaps from 4.5; a crucial difference between this and all other contemporary depictions of the seal – including even the romanized transliteration in Purchas itself (Fig. 4) – is the presence of the word *sanah* (though unaccompanied by any number) on the bottom line of the central circle, indicating that the original seal was dated. Purchas does not give the provenance of the drawing, but the most likely explanation is that it was copied from the seal sent along with the letter from Jahāngīr to James I mentioned above.

The seal next makes an appearance in 1655 in *A Voyage to East India* by Rev. Edward Terry, chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe on his embassy to India. Terry illustrates (Fig. 5) and describes the seal:

And after that I have caused his Imperial Signet or great Seal to be laid down before my Readers eyes, where in nine rounds or circles are the Names and Titles of Tamberlaine and his lineal successors in Persian words, which I shall make presently to speak English, and (as I conceive) no more in English than what is fully expressed in those original words.

This Seal, as it is here made in Persian words, the great Mogol, either in a large or lesser figure, causeth to be put unto all *Firmaunes* or Letters Patents, the present Kings Title put in the middle and larger Circle that is surrounded with the rest. The impression whereof is not made in any kinde of

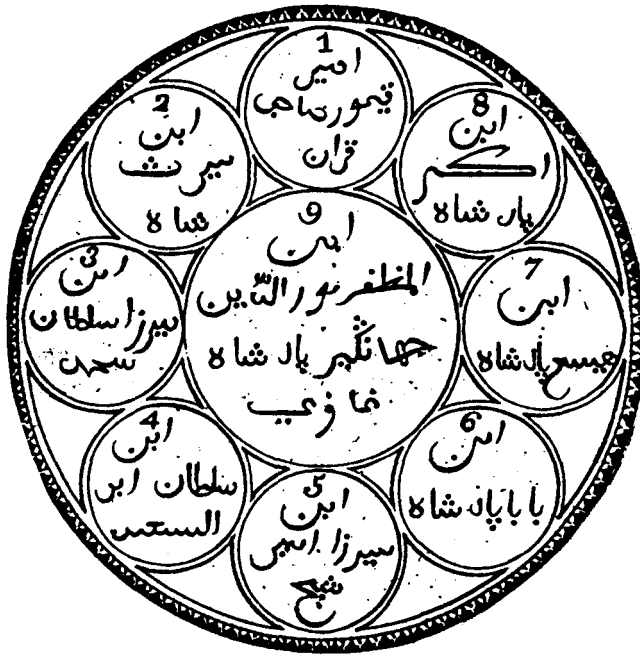


Figure 5 Seal of Jahāngīr, by Terry (Foster 1899: facing p.560)

Wax but Ink;²³ the Seal put in the middle of the Paper and the writing about it; which Paper there is made very large and smooth and good and in divers colours beside white, and all to write on. And the words on the Mogols Seal, being imboss't, are put upon both sides of his Silver and Gold Coin (for there is no image upon any of it).²⁴ And the like little Signets or Seals are used by the great men of that Countrey and so by others of inferiour rank, having their Names at length engraven on them, with which they make impressions or subscriptions, by Ink put on them, to all their acts and deeds, which round Circle is their hand and Seal to.²⁵ (Foster 1899:564–5)

Terry then gives an English rendering and explanation of the names on the seal, starting with Timūr. The manifest errors in Terry's account and drawing – the misspellings and hence misinterpretations (or vice versa) of the names, and the *ibn* in the central circle – led Foster to conclude, no doubt correctly, that the inscription in Terry's drawing was not based on an original seal but was transliterated back into Persian from the romanized inscription given on the Baffin map (Foster 1899:565–8).

²³ The fact that Indian and Persian seals were generally imprinted in ink, rather than wax, was deemed worthy of note by many early travellers. In reproducing three seals from Mocha, John Saris wrote in 1611 "I have yet caused some of the Seales to be cut, and heere added for the raritie, being not in wax but stampes of Inke" (Purchas 1624:343); see also Fryer (1698:384). Blochmann (1927:54) notes "Sealing wax is rarely used on account of the climate; a tenacious black liquid, or the juice of the *Bhelā* nut is preferred".

²⁴ Foster (1899:565) notes: "These statements can only be accepted with limitations. The emperor's name and titles appear on the coinage, but not together with those of his ancestors, as on the seal; and there *were* coins with images on them, though apparently they were not in general circulation."

²⁵ Rouffaer (1906:362, and thence Felix 1916b:116) points out that this statement is misleading, for no other high officials of the Mughal court had "like" seals which could be compared in shape or inscription to the genealogical seal.



Figure 6 Seal of Shāh Jahān, by Tavernier (1678:107)

A contemporary account of Shāh Jahān's seal is given by Sir Thomas Herbert (again, in the "wrong" order):

The pedigree of these *Mogulls* is thus on their owne seals blazoned. 1. *Aben-Emyr-Temir-Saheb-Queran* (i.e. *Tamberlane*, great Prince of the foure quarters of the world:) 2. *Aben-Miran-Sha*: 3. *Aben Mirza Sultan Mohummed*: 4. *Aben Sultan AbuSaid*: 5. *Aben Mirza-Emir-Sha*: 6. *Aben Baber potshaugh*: 7. *Aben Homayon potshaw*: 8. *Aben Echar*, cald also *Abdul fetta ghelaladyn Mahumed Achbar*: 9. *Shaw Selim* or *Aben Almozapher Nordin Iangheer posthaugh Gazi*: 10. *Sultan Curroon* or *Shaw Iehan*, now cald *Sultan potshaugh Bedin Mohumet* (Herbert 1638:55)

Tavernier, who was in India during the reign of Awrangzib, reproduces an image said to be that of a coin distributed at Shāh Jahān's coronation (Fig. 6):

The following Figure shews you what sorts of pieces the Kings cause to be thrown among the people when they come to the Throne. They represent the Arms or Signets of the Kings which I have

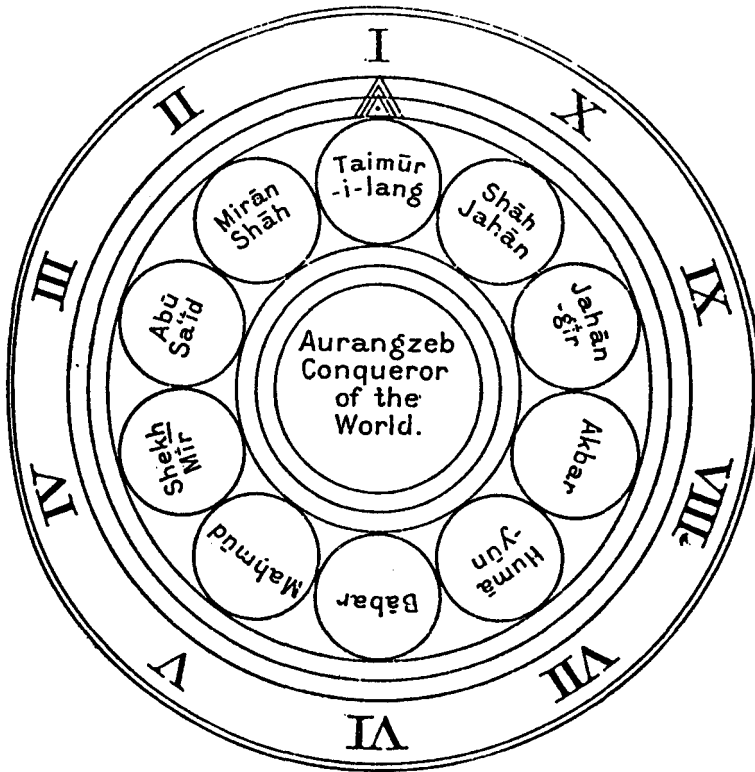


Figure 7 Seal of Awrangzib, by Manucci (1907:2.389)

nam'd. The biggest, in the middle, was *Cha-jehan's*, the tenth King. These pieces are most of them Silver; there being very few of Gold. And as for *Aureang-zeb*, he never coin'd any particular pieces to throw away at his Coronation (Tavernier 1678:107)

Rouffaer (1906:363) accepts this drawing as “an authentic reproduction of the Tenfold Seal of Shāh Jahān” and finds in Tavernier’s account of a glimmer of truth – which he assumes escaped the notice of Foster – in Terry’s otherwise confused description of the seal. He sees Terry’s reference to “the words on the Mogols Seal . . . are put upon both sides of his Silver and Gold Coin” finding an echo in Tavernier’s reference to coronation coins, and assumes therefore that Terry’s description must refer to coins struck to commemorate Jahāngīr’s ascension to the throne (Rouffaer 1906:364). Father Felix reproduces Rouffaer’s argument up to this point, and then takes it one stage further: he surmises that Jahāngīr’s inauguration coins of silver and gold “may have had impressions of the ninefold seal of that emperor, and it is perhaps one of these inauguration coins which was sent along with the letter to the King of England to serve as the unaffixed seal” (Felix 1916b:117). Hodivala, however, rejects Tavernier’s report – and thus Rouffaer’s and Father Felix’s conjectures – out of hand:

There is a characteristically blundering reference to these “Gigantic Coins” in the Indian Section of J. B. Tavernier’s Travels . . . This figure, however, bears no resemblance to any known coin. It is

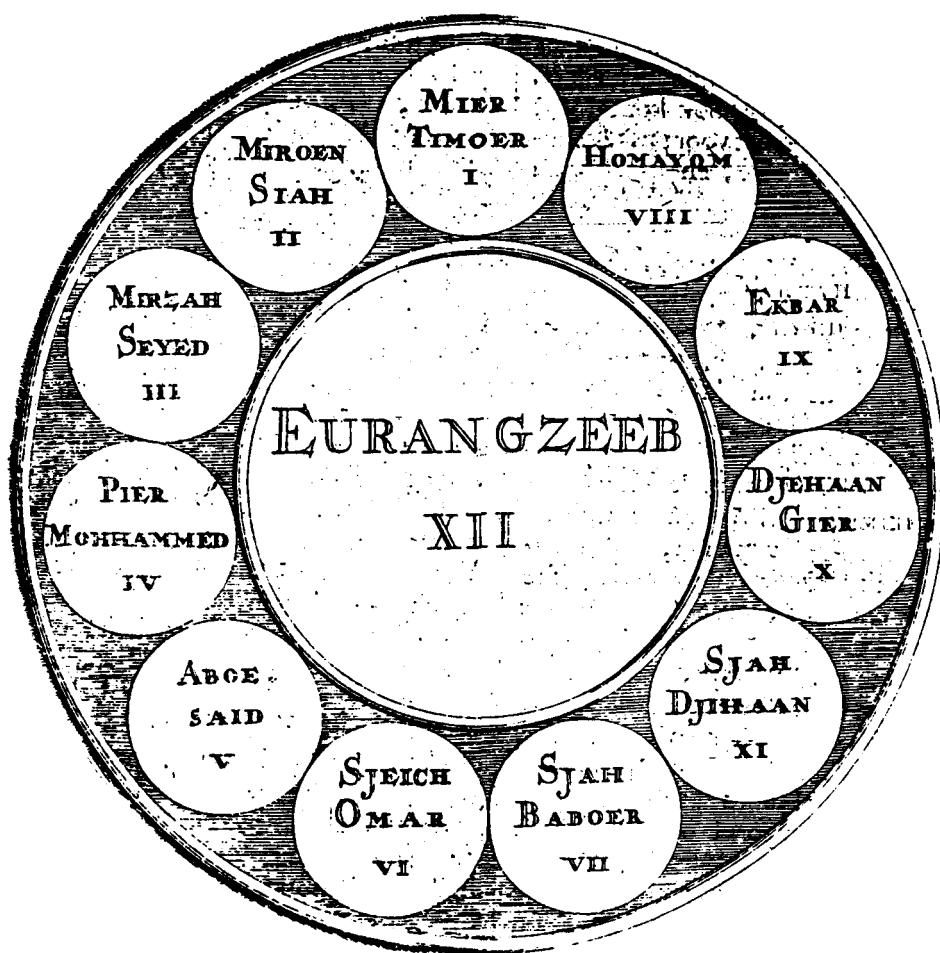


Figure 8 Seal of Awrangzib, by Valentijn (1726:4.2.165)

really nothing but a representation of the Seal of Shāh Jahān! . . . No coins corresponding in any way to Tavernier's description or exhibiting on either face the names of the Emperor and all his ancestors up to Timūr have been discovered,²⁶ and it may be confidently said that the jeweller is confounding, in his usually inaccurate and slipshod manner, things which had not the smallest connection with each other.

It was not the "gigantic medals" but the tiny *Niṣārs* which were "thrown among the people" when the kings "came to the throne", and neither *Niṣārs* nor medals had the arms of signet of the king engraved upon them (Hodivala 1923:56–7)

Manucci (1907:2.388–9) described Awrangzib's elevenfold seal: "[t]he figure opposite is a representation of the seal with which the Mogul attests all the *farmans* and the grants that he accords"; three of Bābur's ancestors are wrongly ordered in the diagram (Fig. 7). A diagram of Awrangzib's seal is also given by Valentijn (1726:4.2.165), supposedly based on

²⁶ The recent appearance on the market of two giant Mughal one thousand mohur coins (Habsburg 1987) does not settle this matter, as neither bear inscriptions such as described by Tavernier.

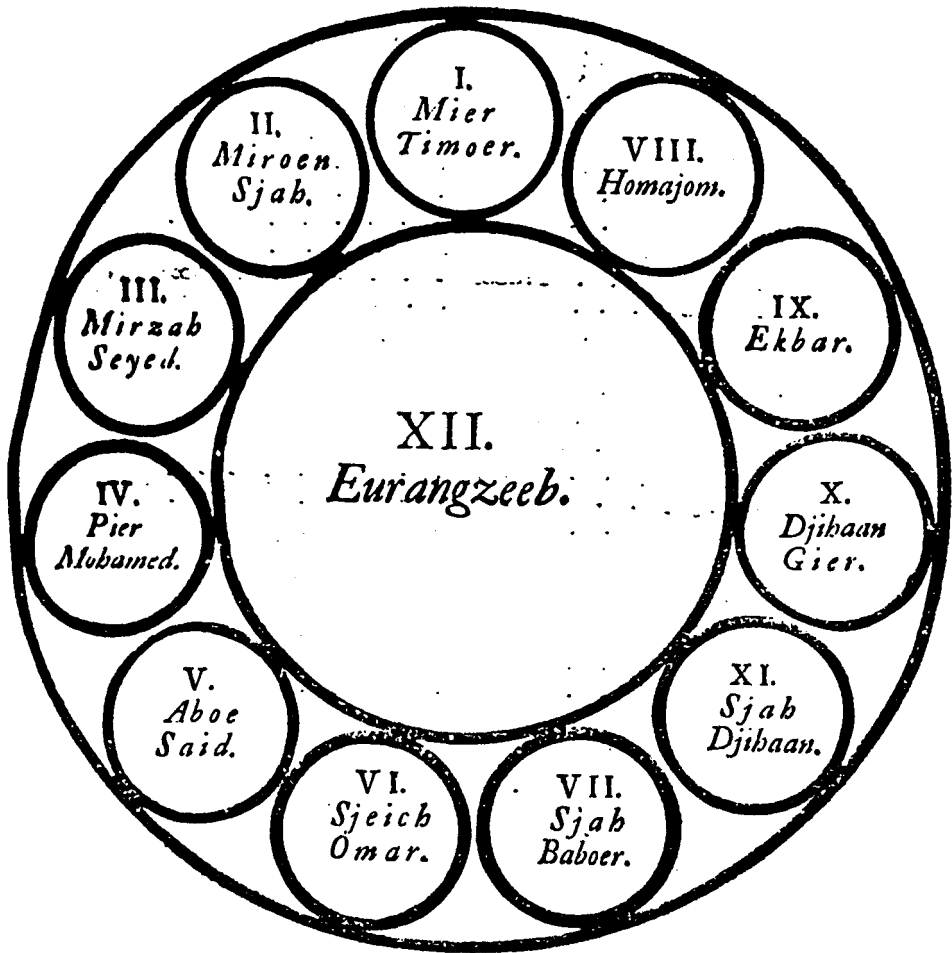


Figure 9 Seal of Awrangzib, from *Historie* (1758:33)

the seal on an original firman of 15 Rabi' I 1073 (28 October 1662) granted to Dirk van Adrichem, director of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) factory in Surat. Valentijn's diagram is quite bizarre, depicting a twelfefold seal which includes the name of Pir Muhammad (a grandson of Tīmūr, but not a direct lineal ancestor of the Mughal emperors), and with the order and form of many of the names completely wrong (Fig. 8). No such authentic twelfefold seals of Awrangzib have been traced or even mentioned; the only possible conclusion is that Valentijn's depiction is completely wrong. This same diagram, warts and all, of Awrangzib's seal (Fig. 9) – obviously taken directly from Valentijn – is one of three genealogical Mughal seals depicted in a rare 1758 imprint from the Castle Press in Batavia (*Historie* 1758).²⁷ Of the other two, one is a fairly accurate

²⁷ Rouffaer (1906:372–6) discusses these two Dutch sources in painstaking detail, despite the fatal handicap of lack of access to authentic impressions of the seals in question. Rouffaer's only sources for Mughal seals were Foster 1899, Tavernier 1678, Valentijn 1726 and *Historie* 1758, and a miniature genealogical painting of Awrangzib comprising an oval portrait of the emperor surrounded by ten roundels containing portraits of his

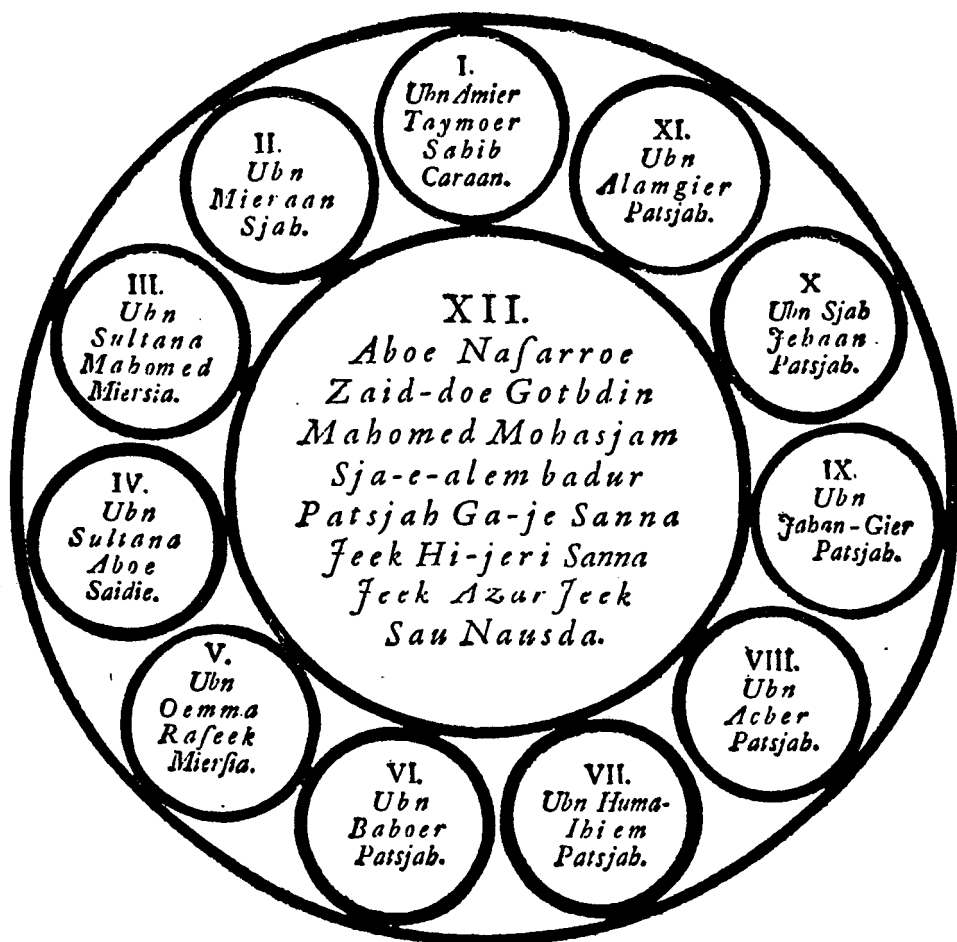


Figure 10 Seal of Shāh 'Ālam I, from *Historie* (1758:36)

drawing of the twelvefold round seal of Shāh 'Ālam I (Fig. 10); the other is a wholly inauthentic representation of the seal of Muḥammad Shāh (Fig. 11). As explained above, Muḥammad Shāh's seal is thirteenfold; however, the Batavian seal is fourteenfold owing to

ancestors up to Timūr, which Rouffaer accepts as an authentic visual representation of *ca.* 1700 of Awrangzib's genealogical seal (Rouffaer 1906:350–1, Plates II & III), but which can in fact be attributed stylistically to the 19th century. Thus while Rouffaer rightly questions Valentijn's depiction of Awrangzib's seal as twelvefold, Valentijn's description seems "so categorical, and so official" (Rouffaer 1906:373), that he is forced to accept, albeit unwillingly, that it is an authentic portrayal of the seal on van Adrichem's firman. Rouffaer thus concludes that in the first part of his reign, owing to some whim, Awrangzib most unconventionally used a twelvefold seal which included the name of Pir Muḥammad, but that at a certain date this was replaced by the elevenfold seal, as indicated by the miniature. Rouffaer tried hard to obtain authentic reproductions of Awrangzib's seal in order to settle this matter, but in response to his enquiries at the Rijks-Archief, he was informed that there were no known imperial seals of any of the Great Moguls in their collections. He then approached Foster, who had referred to an authentic seal of Awrangzib (Foster 1899:568), but Foster replied on 20 March 1905: "The farman bearing Aurangzib's seal, mentioned in my book, was one which in 1899 was in the possession of Gen. G.G. Pearse, C.B. He died last December, and I fear it would be difficult to trace the farman, as at the time I saw it he was endeavouring to sell it" (Rouffaer 1906:373, fn. 1).

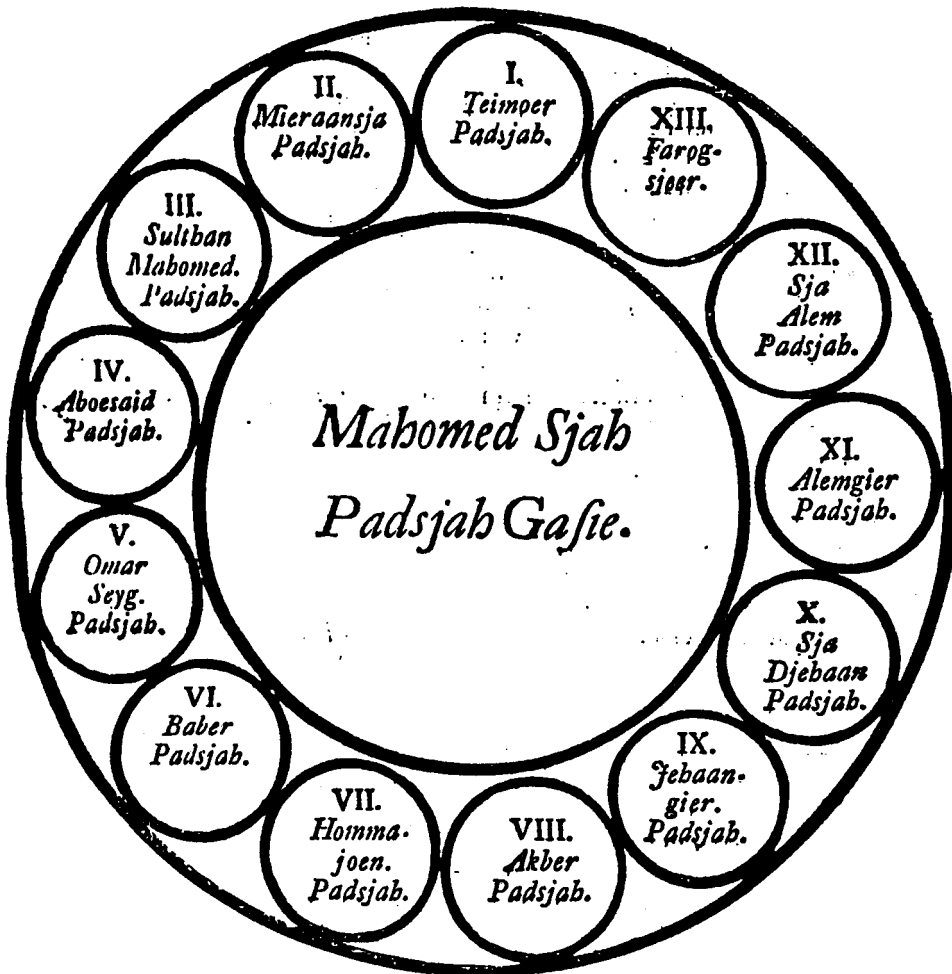


Figure 11 Seal of Muḥammad Shāh, from *Historie* (1758:39)

the mistaken inclusion of Farrukhsiyar, and was evidently drawn without reference to an authentic seal impression.²⁸

Seal matrices

Although numerous impressions of the great seal of the Mughals can be found today, very few of the actual seal matrices survive (cf. Ahmad 1961:369), but such information as is available indicates that a wide variety of media was used. Only two genealogical seal

²⁸ Rouffier (1906:374–6) accepts as authentic the diagrams of the seals of Shāh 'Ālam I (correctly) and Muḥammad Shāh (incorrectly), despite having expected the last to be fifteenfold, as indeed it would have been if the name of Jahāndār had been included as well as that of Farrukhsiyar; an understandable conjecture.

matrices have been traced:²⁹ one is a round emerald seal of Jahāngīr dated 1016 (A.D. 1607/8), which was captured by Nādir Shāh when he took Delhi in 1739 and brought back to Iran, where it became part of the Iranian Crown Jewels (4.4*); the other is a jade seal of Farrukhsiyar (9.1*), now in the Salar Jung Museum. From Abū al-Faḥl, we know that Akbar's earliest genealogical seal was made of steel; as Mawlānā 'Alī Aḥmad is lauded by Abū al-Faḥl specifically as a "steel-engraver", it is likely that Akbar's orbital seal was also of steel.

In Persia, it was apparently the custom for seals to be defaced or destroyed on the death of the monarch to avoid any improper use (Chardin, quoted in Rabino di Borgomale 1945:24). If such a tradition was practised amongst the Mughals, which we do not know, it might help to account for the dearth of extant royal seal matrices.

Seals in Mughal paintings

It is perhaps worth mentioning briefly a few depictions of seals in Mughal paintings. In each case, the inclusion of seals in imperial portraits confirms their important status as symbols of sovereignty; at the same time, a close inspection of the seal can contribute to an assessment of the painting as a whole. All the paintings traced relate to Jahāngīr or Shāh Jahān.

In only one painting is the complete genealogical seal accurately depicted; this is the supremely allegorical painting of Jahāngīr by Abū al-Ḥasan of ca. 1616 in the Chester Beatty collection, which has been discussed in detail by Skelton (1988). In the painting, Jahāngīr is portrayed shooting an arrow at the severed head of Malik 'Ambar; to the right, depicted as a royal standard, is the genealogical seal, mounted on a pillar and surmounted by a plumed crown, above which a bird of paradise hovers (Leach 1995:1.398–405). The inscription reads: (centre) *Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī* (border) *ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qīrān*. This is an exact copy of seal 4.1, not just word-perfect, but even calligraphic-stroke-perfect (Fig. 12). A poor-quality late copy of this painting is in the Kevorkian Album (Welch 1987:246).

The genealogical seal appears again in a painting in the Freer Gallery's Kevorkian Album: Jahāngīr stands on a hill surveying his victory after quelling the rebellion of his son Prince Shāh Jahān, holding in one hand "a globe surmounted by the royal seal, which in turn sports a plumed crown, a symbolic creation of utmost artifice, as though it were weightless" (Welch 1987:104). The portrait is inscribed to Abū al-Ḥasan with the date 1623; this is questioned by Beach (1981:179, 182), who places it instead at about 1650. The seal is portrayed quite differently from that in Abū al-Ḥasan's drawing of ca. 1616; here the inscription reads *Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī / Akbar Bādshāh / Humāyūn Bādshāh / Bābur*

²⁹ Two other royal Mughal seal matrices are known: a round seal of Shāh Jahān inscribed *Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh Jahān Bādshāh Ghāzī 1062* (A.D. 1651/2); the seal matrix itself is made of brass, while the ebony handle is modern (Heritage 1982:153, Pal 1989:154). A round brass seal of Akbar from the last year of his reign, 34 mm in diameter and inscribed *Muḥammad Akbar Bādshāh Ghāzī 101* (A.D. 1604/5) with the stylised ṣ abbreviation for *ṣ.a.w.*, is held in the British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals, 1903.11-25-5.3



Figure 12 Representation of Jahāngīr's seal: from a painting of Jahāngīr shooting at the head of Malik 'Ambar
Chester Beatty Library, 7A.15 (detail)

Bādshāh / 'Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd / Sulṭān Muḥammad / Mīrān Shāh / Ṣāhib Qīrān (Fig. 13). In three major respects this depiction represents a departure from the standard format of all imperial Mughal genealogical seals. Firstly, the inscription in each of the peripheral circles is oriented outwards from the centre of the seal; secondly, the word *ibn* is missing from each of the small circles; and thirdly, the border inscription starts with Akbar's name positioned at 6 o'clock at the bottom of the seal and ends with that of Tīmūr (*Ṣāhib Qīrān*) at 3 o'clock, while in authentic seals, Tīmūr's name is always at the top, at 12 o'clock. A ca. 1800 copy of this painting is held in the Art Institute of Chicago (Pal 1989:20).

Although presented in a stylized form, there is an unequivocal reference to Jahāngīr's imperial seal in a painting in the Freer Gallery of Jahāngīr entertaining Shāh 'Abbās, ca. 1618 (Beach 1981:78, 170–1). The eight circles containing the names of Jahāngīr's ancestors



Figure 13 Representation of Jahāngīr's seal: from a painting of Jahāngīr contemplating victory
Freer Gallery of Art, 48.28 (detail)



Figure 14 Jahāngīr's lineage: from a painting of Jahāngīr entertaining Shāh 'Abbās
Freer Gallery of Art, 42.16 (detail)

have been unfurled from his seal, and are held up by two cupids above his head to stress his exalted lineage (Fig. 14). His own name retains its position in the centre of a much larger circle, positioned high in the heavens, from which there issue forth rays of light like those from the halos of the two rulers. The inscription reads: (centre) [Likeness of his Majesty] *Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Bādshāh* (on the banner, left to right) *ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Mīrzā Shāh / ibn Amīr Šāhib Qirān*. As the circles on Jahāngīr's seal were meant to be read clockwise starting with Akbar, one might have expected to find Akbar's name on the far right of the banner and Tīmūr's on the far left, rather than the other way round.

It is possibly this treatment of the seal that influenced a portrait in the Kevorkian Album



Figure 15 Shāh Jahān's lineage: from a painting of Shāh Jahān holding a carnelian
Freer Gallery of Art, 39.49 (detail)

of Shāh Jahān, inscribed to Hāshim and dated 1629,³⁰ where the emperor's genealogy is depicted on a parasol held above his head by a cupid (Welch 1987:206–9) (Fig. 15). Here, too, the derivation from Shāh Jahān's seal is unmistakably evident in the nine small genealogical circles along the border of the parasol with Jahāngīr on the right and Tīmūr on the left, and the larger circle containing the emperor's own name placed in the middle.

³⁰ Described by Beach as "Mid-17th century with later additions" (Beach 1981:186).

The inscription reads: (centre) *Abū al-Muẓaffar Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṣāhib Qirān Thānī Shāh Jahān Bādshāh Ghāzī* (border, right to left) *ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qirān*; calligraphically, there has not been any attempt made to match the arrangement of the inscription in any of Shāh Jahān’s actual seals. A copy of this painting in the Chester Beatty collection lacks the words *Bādshāh Ghāzī* in the central roundel, while the names of Bābur and ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā have been transposed in the border. This mistake might be seen to support Beach’s attribution of this copy to the nineteenth century (Beach 1981:188; cf. Leach 1995:1.455–7).

In only one significant Mughal painting is a royal seal – though not a genealogical one – depicted realistically as a seal matrix. In this painting by Abū al-Ḥasan, Shāh Jahān holds a round pendant seal, with a small ring attached to the tip of the handle, by which it could have been attached to a chain. The seal is inscribed *Abū al-Muẓaffar Muḥammad Shihāb al-Dīn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh Ghāzī Ṣāhib Qirān Thānī sanah aḥad*, dated the first year of his accession, 1628 (Welch & Welch 1982:215–17).³¹

Like many Mughal masterpieces, the paintings discussed above have spawned a number of other versions. Some of these may be contemporary copies from the imperial studios, while others are probably nineteenth-century copies made for the burgeoning art market.³² All the copies mentioned above are relatively faithful to the originals in terms of composition.

Not so, however, an extraordinary pair of paintings (on the recto and verso of a single folio) of undoubtedly late manufacturer (cf. Welch 1987:246, fn. 3), in essence a complete amalgamation of two paintings of Jahāngīr (Fig. 12) and Shāh Jahān (Fig. 15) discussed above, which was exhibited at the “Loan Exhibition of Antiquities” held at the Delhi Museum of Archaeology on the occasion of the Coronation Durbar in 1911 (Durbar 1911:94, Plate 39, no. C 115) (Fig. 16). Found in this pair of painting is a veritable circus of imperial imagery, but one in which the orbit genealogical seal is elevated from the rank of sideshow to that of main attraction. The painting on the recto is an over-crowded hotchpotch of images and ideas: in the middle is a poor copy of Abū al-Ḥasan’s painting of Jahāngīr shooting at the head of Malik ‘Ambar complete with the seal-standard to the right; around this are ranged eight round portraits of Jahāngīr’s ancestors up to Timūr and eight lobed circular medallions containing their names, the whole forming a pictorial representation of Jahāngīr’s genealogical seal. This is set off, top and bottom, with images borrowed directly from Hāshim’s portrait of Shāh Jahān: below, a globe with a lion lying down with a sheep, and above, three putti in the clouds, one holding a parasol with the seal-circles arranged in a row.

The verso, though no less an amalgamation of Jahāngīrī and Shāh Jahānī references, is rather more interesting. The most striking feature of this painting, which includes practically every single commonly-used imperial symbol of the time, is that it is composed

³¹ One copy of this painting is in the British Museum (Rogers 1993:101); another copy was recently sold at auction (Christie’s 1997:14, lot 25).

³² See Crill (1985) for a discussion of this practice.

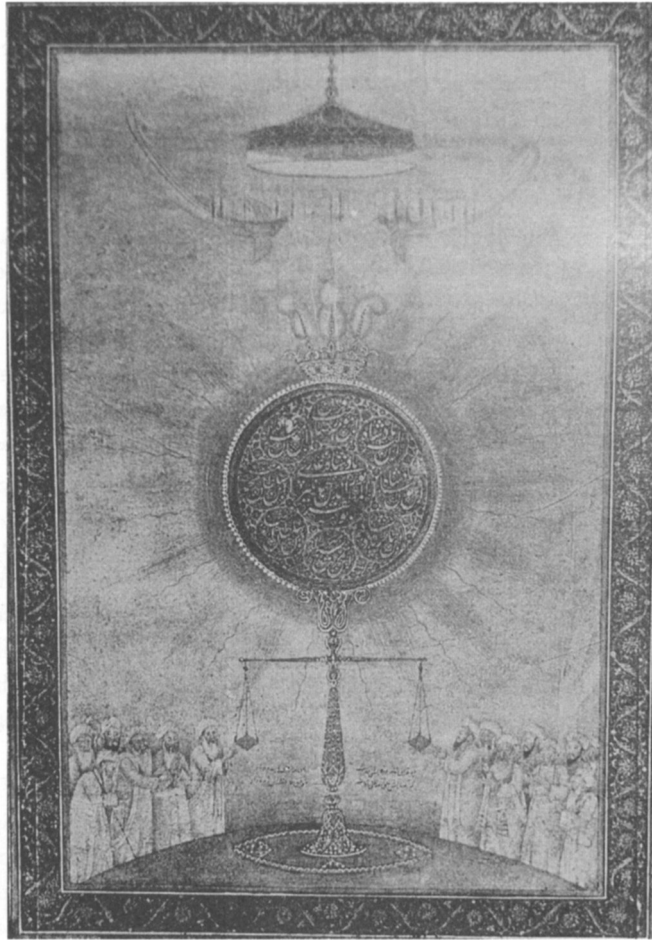


Figure 16 A painting composed around an impression of Jahāngīr's seal
Durbar 1911: Plate 39(b)

around what appears to be an actual impression of Jahāngīr's genealogical seal. This is mounted on the carved column and surmounted by the plumed crown of Timūr from the Jahāngīr and Malik 'Ambar painting, whence also come the scales of justice (also found in the Shāh Jahān picture) – now incorporated into the column – and the bird of paradise, of which there are now two. From the painting of Shāh Jahān come – yet again – the parasol bearing the genealogical seal discs, the crowds of mullahs and the globe on which the column rests. In this painting, the object of all these imperial symbols is the seal itself, which has been endowed with the radiant halo of kingship found around the heads of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān in their portraits; the seal is thus portrayed here as a personification of the emperor himself. Though breathtaking in its lack of subtlety, the composition probably makes no more claims for the genealogical seal as a symbol of imperial power and splendour than it was accorded in its time.

This seal impression in the painting is exactly the same as that found on the Wantage leaves (4.5), and the conclusion is therefore that this pair of paintings may derive from the same Delhi art dealer responsible for the late copies in the Wantage Album.³³

The catalogue

In the course of compiling this catalogue of Mughal genealogical seals (both seal impressions and seal matrices), it became apparent that the only reliable readings of inscriptions are those made directly from personal inspection of primary sources: original seal impressions on manuscripts. All other sources of information – even good-quality reproductions – have to be treated with circumspection.³⁴ Nonetheless, many of these secondary sources yield valuable information about seals which might otherwise remain wholly undocumented. Hence the decision was taken to include in the catalogue seals only identified from published sources, but to ensure that these seals were clearly identifiable as such. For both classes of seals, all known examples are listed.

The catalogue lists 31 distinct Mughal genealogical seals, 16 of which are known from direct readings from seal impressions on manuscript documents, the remaining 15 having been identified from secondary sources. Of the 16 verifiable seals, 14 are found on manuscripts in the British Library (i.e. 14 distinct seals from a total of 35 impressions of Mughal genealogical seals), one is in the British Museum and one is in the Victoria & Albert Museum. Fourteen Mughal emperors are represented in this catalogue; the only major ruler whose genealogical seal has not been traced is Humāyūn.

The catalogue is arranged in chronological order, with the numbering of the emperors based on the table from the *Cambridge History of India*, reproduced here as Fig. 17. Regnal dates are taken from “Chronology of the reigns of the Mughal emperors” (Hodivala 1923:253–89). In each case, the date of accession is the actual date, rather than any subsequently announced “official” date of accession; the conversion of Ilahi and/or Hijrah regnal dates to Julian dates follows Hodivala where given.³⁵ In each catalogue entry, information is given in the following order:

³³ Visible (but illegible) in the illuminated border of the verso is a round seal, which could assist in establishing the provenance of these paintings.

³⁴ The problems posed by secondary sources are manifold. The most common problems are inaccuracies due to misreadings, usually identifiable as such by comparison with other sources; for example, Father Felix consistently misreads *Amir* in Timūr’s name as *Mirzā* (3.4* & 4.3*), while in Ahmad 1926:3 the seal of ‘Ālamgīr II is dated A.H. 1067, a clear (and self-evident) mistake for A.H. 1167 (cf. 14.1*). Even when the names and titles are read accurately, the date on the seal is often not mentioned in secondary literature, e.g. Mohiuddin 1971:76. Other errors are not so easily provable in the absence of corroborative material, but Irvine’s reading of Timur’s name as *Sulṭān Amīr Timūr Sāhib Qirān* on Farrukhsiyar’s seal (9.2*) is unlikely given the standard formula *ibn Amīr Timūr Sāhib Qirān* in every other seal, and the placing of Timūr’s name at 2 o’clock in the plan of Muhammad Akbar II’s seal (16.1*), rather than the usual 12 o’clock, is also improbable. The inscription of 3.2* also raises some doubts, as discussed above.

³⁵ In many cases, Hodivala has taken the weekday given in contemporary accounts as the final arbiter; when this does not accord with that found in the standard conversion tables, the date is adjusted to fit the day.

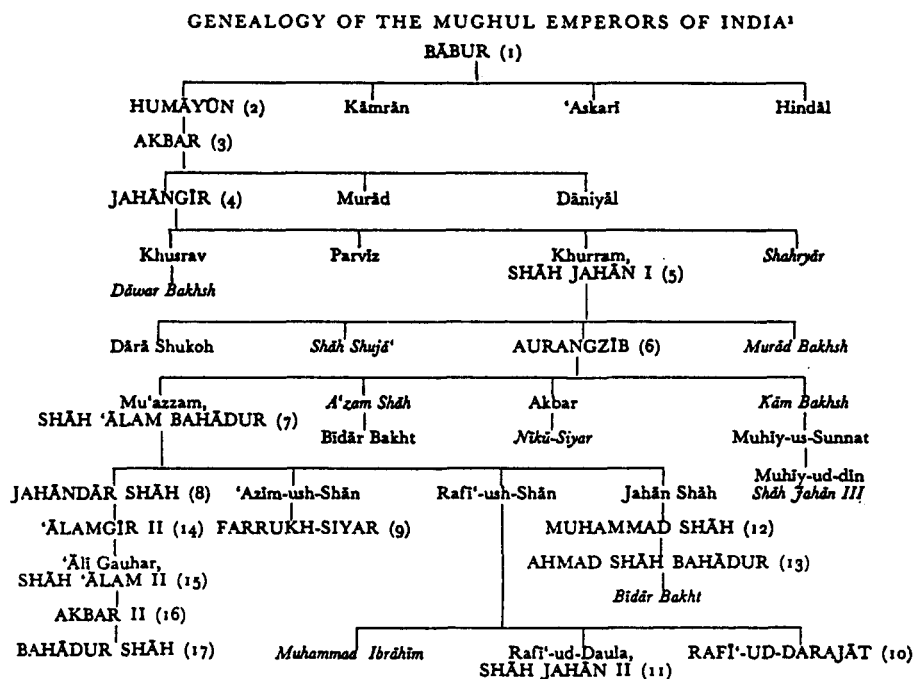


Figure 17 Genealogy of the Mughal rulers of India

CHI 1971:615

Catalogue number

This is assigned in chronological order, by ruler and date of seal (where known). Seals documented only from secondary sources are marked with an asterisk (*).

Medium:

This is only specified if it is other than the default medium of a black ink seal impression.

Ext:

The external shape of the seal.

Int:

The internal shape and design of the seal.

Dim:

Dimensions in mm.

Date:

The date stated on the seal, and the A.D. equivalent.

Centre/Border/Corners, etc.

The inscription in the various compartments of the seal, with oblique strokes (/) demarcating each sub-compartment. When the seal is documented from a primary source, the inscription is italicized; when the seal is identified from a secondary source, the inscription is given in roman letters. In general, the inscription within each of the circles on the seal is read from the bottom up, as is the case in most Mughal seals. Within the border of small circles, the inscriptions are given clockwise commencing with the direct

predecessor of the ruling emperor (at 1 o'clock) and ending with *Timūr* (at 12 o'clock). When the seal is square, with additional inscriptions set in lobed cartouches in each of the four corners, they are given in clockwise order starting from the top right.

Source:

The source of the inscription, if not obtained by a direct reading from the original seal.

Ill:

The source of the catalogue illustration (if any).

Doc:

The shelfmark and description of the manuscript document(s) on which the seal is found, together with published references, arranged in chronological order. Unless stated otherwise, all the manuscripts are held in the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections. The dates of published firmans follow the sources, where available; other dates have been converted using the Freeman-Grenville tables. I am grateful to Ursula Sims-Williams for dating the firmans in BL Or. 14892.

Publ:

Description of and reference to other published examples of the seal, arranged in chronological order.

Illustration acknowledgements

Figs. 9, 10, 11: courtesy of Leiden University Library. Fig. 12: reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. Figs. 13, 14, 15 and Seal 17.1*: courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Fig. 17: courtesy of the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Seal 4.5: courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Seal 6.3: courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. Seal 9.1*: courtesy of Robert Skelton. All other illustrations are reproduced by permission of the British Library Board.

Note

As this article went to press, a possible Safavid model for the design of the Mughal genealogical seal was identified. The seal in question belonged to *Qāḍī Jahān Saifī Qazvīnī* (1483–1553), chief minister (*Iʿtimād al-daula*) of *Shāh Ṭahmāsp I* (r.1524–76). *Qāḍī Jahān* became a strong supporter of Akbar's father *Humāyūn* during the latter's sojourn in Iran in 1544, and remained a life-long friend (Islam 1979:1.83). His seal is a circle containing a central circle surrounded by eight smaller circles (as in *Jahāngīr's* seal), but with the inscription in each of the sub-circles facing inwards. The inscription in the central circle reads *Qāḍī Jahān*; those in the sub-circles are too indistinct to read. The seal is found on a letter of 1539 to the Doge of Venice now held in the State Archives in Venice, and is reproduced in Scarcia (1968) and in Fekete-Hazai (1977:389, nr.67, Tafel 154).

1. BĀBUR

15 Rajab 932–5 Jumādā I 937

(27 April 1526–25 December 1530)

I.1 Bābur

Ext: Round³⁶

Int: 2 concentric circles, the border containing 5 lobed panels

Dim: 36 mm (diameter)

Date: [9]28 = A.D. 1521/2

Centre: *Zahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur* [9]28³⁷ ḥ

Border: *ibn 'Umar Shaykh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr*

Ill: I.O.4720(1)

Doc: I.O.4720(1); Firman, dated 30 Dhū al-Qa'dah 933 (28 August 1527), Shakeb 1900:1; Mohiuddin 1961; Mohiuddin 1971:76–8; Tirmizi 1960: Plate II, no. 3



2. HUMĀYŪN

9 Jumādā I 937–10 Muḥarram 947,

4 Ramaḍān 962–13 Rabī' I 963

(30 December 1530–17 May 1540,

23 July 1555–26 January 1556)

No images of genealogical seals traced.

³⁶ On this document, the seal has been imprinted over a fold in the paper, so, when flattened out, the impression is split into two.

³⁷ The stem of the number "9" is just visible beside the wormhole.

3. AKBAR

28 Rabi' II 963–11 Jumādā II 1014

(11 March 1556–26 October 1605)

3.1 Akbar

Ext: Round

Int: 2 concentric circles

Dim: 44 mm (diameter)

Date: [9]63 = A.D. 1556

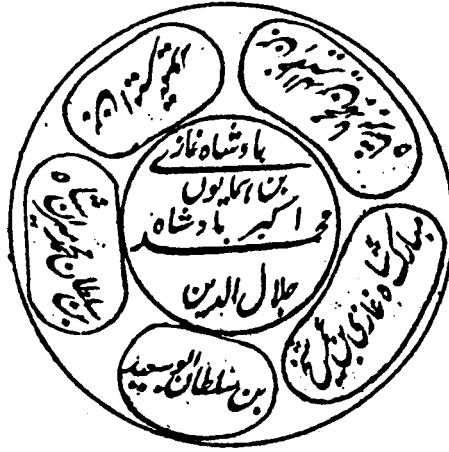
Centre: *Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar Bādshāh ibn Muḥammad Humāyūn Bādshāh Ghāzī 63*Border: *ibn Zāhir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur Bādshāh Ghāzī ibn 'Umar Shaykh ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd
ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad ibn Mirān Shāh ibn Amīr Timūr*

Ill: MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f. iv g

Doc: MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f. iv g; Firman, [964 (1556/7)]³⁸

³⁸ This document is part of the collection of material relating to the rulers and ruling houses of India formed by Lewin Bentham Bowring (1824–1910), and is described by Bowring as “Firman of Jalal-ud-din Muḥammad Akbar dated 964 H, or 1556 A.D. granting 240 bigahs of land to” (sic). However, the firman itself is very badly damaged, and has recently been heavily repaired, and no date can be discerned.

- 3.2* Akbar
 Ext: Round
 Int: 2 concentric circles, the border containing 5 lobed panels
 Dim: unknown
 Date: apparently undated
 Centre: Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar Bādshāh bin Humāyūn Bādshāh Ghāzī
 Border: bin Ṣāḥir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur Shāh / Mubārak Shāh Ghāzī ibn ‘Umar Shaykh /
 bin Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / bin Sulṭān Muḥammad Mirān Shāh / bin Amīr Tīmūr
 Source: Transliterated from the illustration³⁹
 Ill: Ahmad 1926:41
 Publ: Firman, 5 Isfandār RY 5 (1560), Ahmad 1926:41-2



³⁹ See fn. 4 for comments on the reliability of this reproduction.

- 3.3** Akbar
 Ext: Round
 Int: 2 concentric circles
 Dim: 48 mm (diameter)
 Date: 978 = A.D. 1570/1
 Centre: *Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar Bādshāh Ghāzi ibn Naṣīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Humāyūn Bādshāh Ghāzi*
 Border: *ibn Zahir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur Bādshāh Ghāzi ibn ‘Umar Shaykh ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad ibn Mīrān Shāh ibn Amīr Tīmūr 978*
 Ill: Or.14982(1)
 Doc: Or.14982(1); Firman, dated 16 Muḥarram 982 (8 May 1574)
 Or.14982(8); Firman, dated 29 Rabi‘ I 974



- 3.4*** Akbar
 Ext: Round
 Int: 2 concentric circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 999 = A.D. 1590/1
 Centre: Jalaluddin Mohammad Akbar Badshah Ghazi son of Nasiruddin Mohammad Humayun Badshah Ghazi
 Border: son of Zahiruddin Mohammad Babar Badshah Ghazi, son of Umar Shaykh Shah, son of Abu Sa‘eed Sultan, son of Mohammad Miran Shah, son of Amir Timur 999
 Source: Quoted from Jhaveri 1928: notes on Plate IV
 Ill: No illustration
 Publ: Firman, dated 9 Khurdād RY 38 (31 May 1593), Jhaveri 1928: Plate IV.
 Firman, dated 15 Khurdād RY 38 (5 June 1593), Jhaveri 1928: Plate V.

- 3.5* Akbar
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 7 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: apparently undated
 Centre: Jalāl al-Dīn wa-al-dunyā⁴⁰ Akbar Bādshāh
 Border: ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Shāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the printed transcription in Goswamy & Grewal 1967:58.
 Ill: Goswamy & Grewal 1967: Doc. II
 Publ: Firman, dated 10 Isfandār RY 40 (late February 1596), Modi 1904:161–86.
 Firman, [RY 41] (A.D. 1596/7), Goswamy & Grewal 1967:57–75.
 Firman, dated 7 Farwardīn RY 42 (1598), Felix 1916a:7–11, Plate I, Fig. 2; Brand & Lowry 1985:120–1, 156.
 Firman, dated 2 Mihr RY 48 (1603), Modi 1904:187–200.



⁴⁰ Goswamy & Grewal (1967:64, fn. 2) explicitly stress the correctness of their reading of Akbar's name, and deny Modi's reading of *Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar Bādshāh* (Modi 1904:161). There are no published reproductions of this seal clear enough to confirm the inscription.

4. JAHĀNGĪR

10 Jumādā II 1014–28 Šafar 1037

(3 November 1605–7 November 1627)

4.1 Jahāngīr

Ext: Round

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles

Dim: 54 mm (diameter)

Date: undated

Centre: *Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Pādshāh Ghāzī*Border: *ibn Akbar Pādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Pādshāh / ibn Bābur Pādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā /
ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr
Šāhib Qirān*

Ill: Or. 14982(10)

Doc: Or. 14982(10); Firman, dated 14 Amurdād RY 4 (summer 1609)



- 4.2** Jahāngīr
 Ext: Rectangular
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles
 Dim: 43 mm (height) × 47 mm (width)
 Date: undated
 Centre: *Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī*
 Border: *ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qīrān*
 Corners: *Yā Nāṣir / Yā Fattāḥ / Yā Ḥāfīz / Yā Mu‘īn*
 Ill: Or.14982(16)
 Doc: I.O.4720(2); Firman, dated 17? Isfandār RY 7 = 16? Muḥarram 1022 (8 March 1613), Shakeb 1990:1–2.
 I.O.4720(3); Firman, dated 20 Mihr RY 8 = 27 Sha‘bān 1022 (12 October 1613), Shakeb 1990:2–3.
 MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f.iv q; Firman, 1022 (1613/4)
 Or.14982(15); Firman, dated 5? Khurdād RY 11 (summer 1616).
 Or.14982(16); Firman, dated 26 Urdibihisht RY 14 (spring 1619).
 Or.14982(17); Firman, dated RY 15 (1619/20).
 Or.14982(18); Firman, dated 15 Urdibihisht RY 17 (spring 1621).
 Publ: Firman, dated RY 13 (1618), Modi 1920–1:419–90.
 Firman, dated 2 Amurdād RY 11 (July 1616), Commissariat 1940:26–9, Plate I.



- 4.3*** Jahāngīr
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 1014 = A.D. 1605/6
 Centre: Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī 1014
 Border: ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh
 Mirzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mirzā / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn
 Amīr Tīmūr Shāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the printed transcription in Goswamy & Grewal 1967:78
 Ill: Goswamy & Grewal 1967: Doc. III
 Publ: Firman, dated 30 Tīr RY 1, 14 Rabi' I 1015 (10 July 1606), Goswamy & Grewal
 1967:76–93.
 Firman, dated 8 Sha'bān 1015 (29 November 1606), Goswamy & Grewal 1967:94–101.



4.4* Jahāngīr

Medium: Deep blue-green emerald seal matrix, unset, 189.22 carats; drilled.

Ext: Round

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles

Dim: 49 mm (diameter) × 8.62 mm (depth)

Date: 1016 = A.D. 1607/8

Centre: Abu'l-Muzaffar Nur ud-Din Jahangir Padshah Ghazi 1016

Border: ibn Akbar Padshah / ibn Humayun Padshah / ibn Babur Padshah / ibn Shaykh Mirza / ibn Sultan Abu Sa'īd / ibn Sultan Muhammad Mirza / ibn Miran Shah / ibn Amir Timur Sahib Qiran

Source: Quoted from Meen & Tushingham 1968:47

Ill: No illustration

4.5 Jahāngīr

Ext: Round

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles

Dim: 56 mm (diameter)

Date: [RY] 6 = A.D. 1610/1

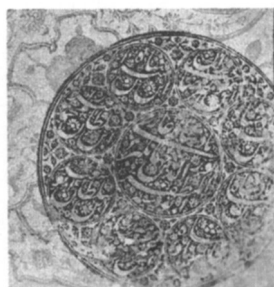
Centre: *Abū al-Muzaffar Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah 6*

Border: *ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Mirzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mirzā / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Sāhib Qirān*

Ill: IM 124A-1921

Doc: V&A, 18 leaves from the Wantage Album: IM 110A-1921, IM 111A-1921, IM 122A-1921 (Clarke 1922: Plate 23), IM 113A-1921, IM 115-1921, IM 117-1921, IM 119A-1921, IM 120A-1921 (Skelton 1972: Plate 84; Guy & Swallow 1990:80), IM 121A-1921, IM 123-1921, IM 124A-1921, IM 135A-1921 (Clarke 1922: Plate 24), IM 136A-1921, IM 137A-1921, IM 138A-1921, IM 139A-1921 [& 2 others not yet identified], Clarke 1922:4

Publ: Durbar 1911: Plate XXXIX.



- 4.6*** Jahāngīr
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 8 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: apparently undated
 Centre: Abū al-Muẓaffār Nūr al-Dīn Jahāngīr Bādshāh Ghāzī
 Border: ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh
 Mīrzā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn
 Tīmūr Mīrzā Ṣāhib Qīrān
 Source: Transliterated from the printed transcription in Felix 1916a:17
 Ill: No illustration
 Publ: Firman, dated 20 Mīhr RY 7 (1612), Felix 1916a:17, Plate II, Fig. 4a.
 Firman, dated 19 Mīhr RY 10 (1615), Felix 1916a:18, Plate III, Fig. 5a.
 Firman, Commissariat 1940:30, Plate II.

5. SHĀH JAHĀN

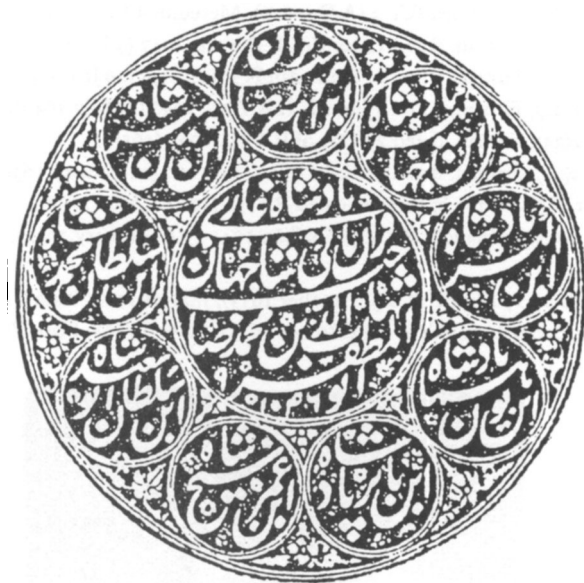
22 Jumādā I 1037–17 Ramaḍān 1068

(29 January 1628–1 February 1666)

- 5.1** Shāh Jahān
Ext: Square
Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 9 smaller circles
Dim: 58 mm × 58 mm
Date: [RY] 1 = A.D. 1628
Centre: *Abū al-Muẓaffar Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṣāhib Qirān [Thā]nī Shāh Jahān Pādshāh Ghāzī sanah aḥad*
Border: *ibn Jahāngīr Pādshāh / ibn Akbar Pādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Pādshāh / ibn Bābur Pādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shayekh Mīrzā / ibn Sultān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sultān Muḥammad Mīrzā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qirān*
Corners: *Yā Fattāḥ / Yā Razzāq / Yā Ḥāfiẓ / Yā Nāṣir*
Ill: Or. 14982(20)
Doc: Or. 11697; Firman, dated RY 2 (A.D. 1629), Meredith-Owens 1969:79.
 Or. 14982(20); Firman, dated 14 Jumādā II RY 11, 1047 (3 November 1637).
 Or. 14982(21); Firman, dated 21 Ramaḍān RY 12, 1048 (26 January 1639).
 Or. 14982(22); Firman, dated 3 Jumādā II RY 20, 1056 (17 July 1646).
 Or. 14982(23); Firman, dated 27 Day of RY 29, 1065 (1655).
 Or. 14982(24); Firman, dated 27 Rabī‘ I RY 29, 1066 (24 January 1656).
 MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f. iv e; Firman, dated RY 31 (1067 / A.D. 1658).
Publ: Firman, dated 10 Isfandār RY 4 (7 Sha‘bān 1041 / 18 February 1632), Shakeb 1977:2, 4, Plate 1.
 Firman, dated 17 Mihr RY 6 (9 October 1633), Jhaveri 1928: Plate VI.
 Firman, dated 6 Ābān RY 6 (28 October 1633), Jhaveri 1928: Plate VII.



- 5.2* Shāh Jahān
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 9 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 1046, [RY] 9 = A.D. 1636
 Centre: Abū al-Muẓaffar Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad Šāhib Qirān Thānī Shāh Jahān Bādshāh Ghāzī 9 1046
 Border: ibn Jahāngīr Pādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābūr Pādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Šāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the illustration
 Ill: Commissariat 1940: Plate XXII(2)
 Publ: Firman, dated 9 Tīr RY 10, Šafār 1047 (30 June 1637), Begley & Desai 1989:172–3.
 Firman, 11 Jumādā II 1052 (27 August 1642), Commissariat 1940:32–3, Plate IV.
 Firman, 27 Rajab RY 18, 1054 (19 September 1644), Commissariat 1940:36–7, Plate VII.



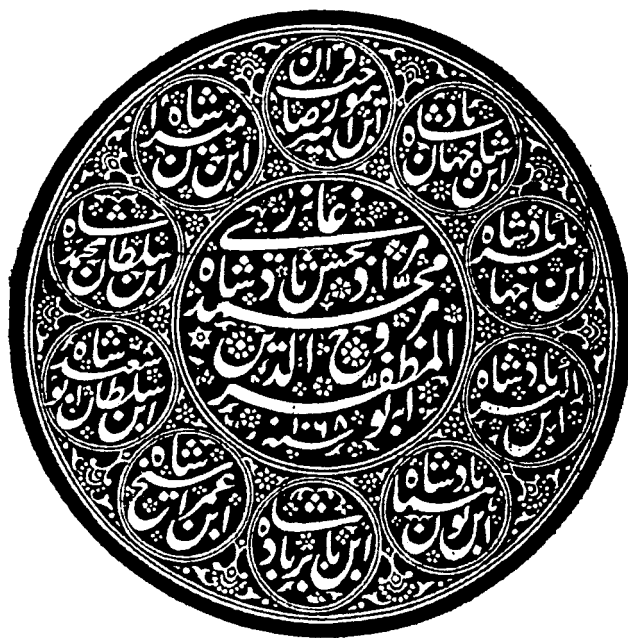
- 5.3*** Shāh Jahān
Ext: Round
Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 9 smaller circles
Dim: unknown
Date: apparently undated
Centre: Abu'l Muzaffar Shihab al-Din Muhammad Sahib-i-Qiran-Sani Shah Jahan Padshah Ghazi
Border: son of Nur al-Din Jahangir Padshah, son of Akbar Padshah, son of Humayun Padshah, son of Babur Padshah, son of 'Umar Shaykh Mirza, son of Sultan Abu Sa'id, son of Sultan Muhammad Mirza, son of Miran Shah, son of Amir Timur Sahib-i-Qiran
Source: Quoted from Begley & Desai 1989:163
Ill: No illustration
Publ: Firman, dated 28 Shahriwar RY 5 (5 Rabi' I 1042 / 20 September 1632), Begley & Desai 1989:162-3.
Firman, dated 15 Bahman RY 5 (23 Rajab 1042 / 3 February 1633), Begley & Desai 1989:164-5.
Firman, dated 2 Shahriwar RY 8 (1054 / A.D. 1635/6), Commissariat 1940:31, Plate III.

6a. MURĀD BAKHSH

9 Rabi' I-4 Shawwāl 1068

(5 December 1657-5 July 1658)

- 6a.1*** Murād Bakhsh
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 10 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 1068 = A.D. 1658
 Centre: Abū al-Muẓaffar Murawwij al-Dīn Muḥammad Murād Bakhsh Pādshāh Ghāzī sanah 1068
 Border: ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Ṣāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the illustration
 Ill: Commissariat 1940: Plate XXIV
 Publ: Firman, 1 Shawwāl RY 1 (2 July 1658), Commissariat 1940:47-8, Plate XV.
 Firman, 1 Shawwāl RY 1 (2 July 1658), Commissariat 1940:49, Plate XVI.



6. AWRANGZĪB

1 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1068–28 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1118

(31 July 1658–4 March 1707)

6.1 Awrangzib

Ext: Square

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 10 smaller circles

Dim: 67 mm × 67 mm

Date: 1069, [RY] 1 = A.D. 1659/60

Centre: *Abū al-Zafar Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad Awrangzib Bahādur 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh Ghāzi sanah aḥad 1069*

Border: *ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'id Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Ṣāhib Qirān*

Corners: *Yā Fattāḥ / Yā Rāfi' / Yā Nāfi' / Yā Wāsi'*

Ill: MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f. iv i

Doc: MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f. iv i; Firman, dated 1079 A.H. (1663/4).

Publ⁴¹: Firman, 10 Rajab 1070 (12 March 1660), Commissariat 1940:54–5, Plate XX.

Firman, 9 Dhū al-Hijjah RY 3 (1070 / 16 August 1660), Durbar 1911:55, Plate XXII(b).



⁴¹ These two citations are tentative, as the reproductions are too poor to identify positively.

- 6.2*** Awrangzib
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 10 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 1069, [R.Y.] 1 = A.D. 1658/9
 Centre: Abū al-Zafar Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad Awrangzib Bahādur ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh Ghāzī
 sanah aḥad 1069
 Border: ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn
 Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh /
 ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Shāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the illustration
 Ill: Commissariat 1940: Plate XXIII(4)
 Publ: Firman, 16 Jumādā I R.Y. 1 (30 January 1659), Commissariat 1940:53, Plate XIX.
 Firman, 22 Rajab R.Y. 31 (24 May 1688), Bahura & Singh 1988:4, no. 31, Fig. 13.
 Firman, 22 Sha‘bān R.Y. 36 (8 April 1694), Bahura & Singh 1988:4, no. 33, Fig. 14.



- 6.3** Awrangzib
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 10 smaller circles
 Dim: 60 mm (diameter)
 Date: 1079, [RY] 12 = 1669⁴²
 Centre: *Abū al-Zafar Muhyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh Ghāzī 12 1079*
 Border: *ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Šāhib Qirān*
 Ill: BM-OA 1974.6-17.021(02)
 Doc: BM-OA, 1974.6-17.021(02); Frontispiece to an album of miniature paintings and calligraphy (Stowe Or. 16), Rieu (1895:260-1).



⁴² As the official date of Awrangzib's accession was retroactively set at 1 Ramaḍān 1068, the only months of 1079 which fell in RY 12 were Ramaḍān-Dhū al-Hijjah = Feb-May 1669.

6.4 Awrangzib

Ext: Square

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 10 smaller circles

Dim: 65 mm × 65 mm

Date: 1080, [R Y] 12 = 1669/70⁴³Centre: *Abū al-Zafar Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah 1080 sanah 12*Border: *ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Ṣāhib Qirān*Corners: *Yā Fattāḥ / Yā Rāfi‘ / Yā Nāfi‘ / Yā Wāsi‘*

Ill: I.O.4370

Doc: MSS.Eur.G.38/II, f.iv l; land grant, dated RY 13 (1670/1).

I.O.4370; Firman, dated 4 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 1088 (19 December 1677), Shakeb 1982:5–7, Bayly 1991:42, Heritage 1982:?.
I.O.4435; Firman, dated 21 Jumādā II 1093 (17 June 1682), Shakeb 1982:7–8.Or.11698; Firman, dated RY 35 (A.D. 1692/3), Meredith-Owens 1969:79.
I.O.4720(19); Firman, dated 29 Shawwāl RY 40 (1107/1 June 1696), Shakeb 1990:16.

Or.14982(26); Firman, dated 5 Rajab RY 51 (13 October 1706).



⁴³ The only months of 1080 which fell in RY 12 were Muḥarram-Sha‘bān = June 1669–January 1670.

7. SHĀH 'ĀLAM I

24 Muḥarram 1119–20 Muḥarram 1124

(27 April 1707–28 February 1712)

7.1 Shāh 'Ālam I

Ext: Round

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 11 smaller circles

Dim: 74 mm (diameter)

Date: 1119 (i.e. 1119), [RY] 1 = A.D. 1707

Centre: *Muḥammad [Mu'a]zzam Abū al-Naṣr Quṭb al-Dīn Shāh 'Ālam Bahādur Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah aḥad 119*

Border: *ibn 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Mīrā / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'id / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Mīrā / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qīrān*

Ill: Or.14982(27)

Doc: Or.14982(27); Firman, dated 19 Sha'bān RY 2 (1120 / 13 December 1708).

Publ: Firman, dated 29 Shawwāl RY 5 (1 November 1713), Bahura & Singh 1988:5, no. 34, Fig. 15.



7.2 Shāh ‘Ālam I

Medium: Red ink seal impression

Ext: Square surmounted by *mihrāb*

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 11 smaller circles

Dim: 77 mm (height) × 68 mm (width)

Date: 1121, [R Y] 4 = 1710⁴⁴Centre: *Muḥammad Mu‘azzam Abū al-Mahfūz Quṭb al-Dīn Shāh ‘Ālam Bahādur Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah 1121 sanah 4*Border: *ibn ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Ṣāhib Qirān*Top: *Inna Allāh / huwa / al-razzāq*Bottom: *dhū al-qūwah / al-mafīn*

Ill: Or.2285A

Doc: Or.2285A; Firman, dated 4 RY 4 (1710), Rieu 1883:1073.



⁴⁴ As Shah ‘Ālam I’s official date of accession was retroactively fixed at 18 Dhū al-Hijjah 1118 (Hodivala 1923:278), this seal must have been struck in the last 12 days of A.H. 1121 (February 1710). See Hodivala 1923:279–80 for a similar discussion concerning the dates on this ruler’s coins.

8. JAHĀNDĀR SHĀH

21 Šafar–13 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 1124
(30 March 1712–11 January 1713)

No genealogical seals traced.

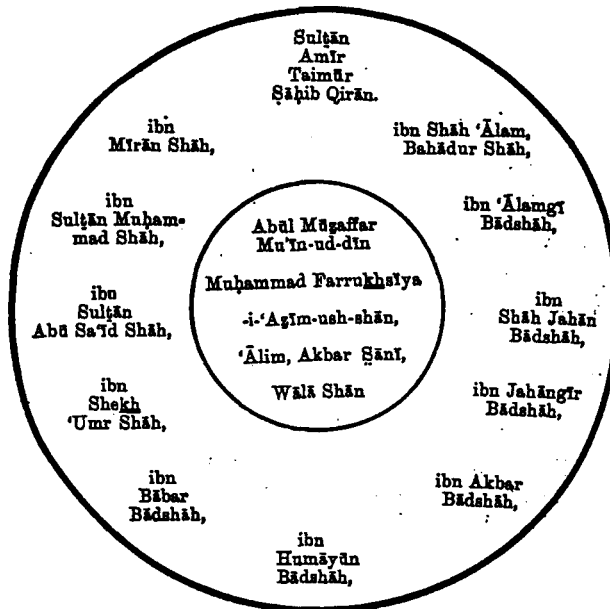
9. FARRUKHSIYAR

21 Šafar 1124–9 Rabīʿ II 1131
(7 April 1712–1 March 1719)

- 9.1*** Farrukhsiyar
Medium: Jade seal matrix
Ext: Round surmounted by *mihrāb*
Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 12 smaller circles
Dim: unknown
Date: 1125, [RY] 1 = 1713
Top: Huwa al- ghālib
Centre: Abū al-Zafar Muʿīn al-Dīn ʿĀlamgīr Thānī Muḥammad Farrukhsiyar ibn ʿAzīm al-Shān Bādshāh Ghāzī 1125 sanah aḥad
Border: ibn Shāh ʿĀlam Bādshāh / ibn ʿĀlamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ʿUmar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Saʿīd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Šāhib Qirān
Source: Read from the illustration
Ill: Reproduced from a colour slide
Doc: Salar Jung Museum, 1525/XLIX



- 9.2*** Farrukhsiyar
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 12 smaller circles
 Dim: 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (diameter)
 Date: apparently undated
 Centre: Abūl Mūzaffar Mu‘īn-ud-dīn Muḥammad Farrukhsiyā-i-‘Azīm-ush-shān ‘Alim Akbar Sānī Wālā Shān
 Border: ibn Shāh ‘Ālam Bāhadur Shāh / ibn ‘Ālamgī Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn Shekh ‘Umr Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / Sulṭān Amīr Taimūr Šāhib Qirān
 Source: Quoted from the illustration
 Ill: Irvine 1904:358
 Doc: Firman (date unknown), Sarawak 1992:50.



10. RAFĪ‘ AL-DARAJĀT

9 Rabī‘ II–17 Rajab 1131
 (1 March–6 June 1719)

No images of genealogical seals traced.

11. RAFĪ‘ AL-DAULA

20 Rajab–4/5 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 1131
 (8 June–19/20 September 1719)

No images of genealogical seals traced.

12. MUḤAMMAD SHĀH

15 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1131–27 Rabī' II 1161

(1 October 1719–26 April 1748)

12.1 Muḥammad Shāh

Ext: Round

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 12 smaller circles

Dim: 93 mm (diameter)

Date: [RY] 2 = 1720/1

Centre: *Abū al-Faṭḥ Nāṣir al-Dīn [Shāh Ṣāhib Qirān Thānī] Bādshāh Ghāzī ibn Muḥammad Jahān Shāh Bahādūr sanah 2*

Border: *ibn Shah 'Ālam Bādshāh / ibn 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qirān*

Ill: Or.14982(32)

Doc: Or.14982(32); Firman, dated RY 3 (1721/2).



- 12.2** Muḥammad Shāh
 Ext: Round
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 12 smaller circles
 Dim: 90 mm (diameter)
 Date: 1133, [RY] 3 = September–October 1721
 Centre: *Abū al-Faṭḥ Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Ṣāhib Qirān Thānī Bādshāh Ghāzī ibn Muḥammad Jahān Shāh Bahādur 1133 sanah 3*
 Border: *ibn Shah ‘Ālam Bādshāh / ibn ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qirān*
 Ill: Or.14982(35)
 Doc: Or.14982(35); Firman, dated 2 Ṣafār RY 15 (15 July 1733).
 Or.2285B; Firman, dated RY 21 (1739/40), Rieu 1883:1084.
 Publ: Firman, dated 6 Jumādā I 1132, RY 2 (12 December 1720), Bahura & Singh 1988:5, no. 39, Fig. 17.
 Firman, dated RY 4 (1722/3), Bahura & Singh 1988:5, no. 37, Fig. 16.
 Firman, dated 15 Ṣafār RY 15 (28 July 1733), Bahura & Singh 1988:4, no. 29, Fig. 12.



13. AHMAD SHĀH BAHĀDUR

1 Jumādā I 1161–10 Shaʿbān 1167

(29 April 1748–2 June 1754)

- 13.1*** Aḥmad Shāh Bahādur
 Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 13 smaller circles
 Dim: unknown
 Date: 1161, [RY] 1 = 1748
 Top: Huwa al- ghālib
 Centre: Abū al-Naṣr Mujāhid al-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh Bahādur ibn Muḥammad Shāh Bādshāh Ghāzi 1161 aḥad
 Border: ibn Jahān Shāh Bādshāh / ibn Shāh ʿĀlam Bādshāh / ibn ʿĀlamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ʿUmar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Saʿīd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Ṣāhib Qirān
 Source: Transliterated from the illustration
 Ill: Bahura & Singh 1988: Fig. 10
 Publ: Firman, dated 5 Rabiʿ I RY 6 (19 December 1754), Bahura & Singh 1988:4, no. 26, Fig. 10.



14. 'ĀLAMGĪR II

10 Sha'bān 1167–20 Rabi' II 1173

(2 June 1754–29 November 1759)

14.1* 'Ālamgīr II

Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 13 smaller circles

Dim: unknown

Date: 1167, [RY] 1 = A.D. 1754

Top: *Huwa al-ghālib*

Centre: Abū al-'Adil 'Aziz al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh Ghāzi aḥad sanah 1167

Border: ibn Jahāndār Shāh / ibn Shāh 'Ālam Bādshāh / ibn 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Šāhib Qirān

Source: Transliterated from the printed transcription in *Durbar* 1911:48

Ill: No illustration

Publ: Firman, dated 27 Shawwāl RY 6 (23 June 1759), *Durbar* 1911:48, Plate XXI.**15. SHĀH 'ĀLAM II**

4 Jumādā I 1173–7 Ramaḍān 1221

(24 December 1759–18 November 1806)

15.1 Shāh 'Ālam II

Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 14 smaller circles

Dim: 85 mm (diameter) × 115 mm (height)

Date: 1173, [RY] 1 = A.D. 1759/60

Top: *Huwa al-ghālib*Centre: *Abū al-Muẓaffar Jalāl al-Dīn Shāh 'Ālam Bādshāh Ghāzi sanah aḥad 1173*

Border: ibn 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Jahāndār Shāh / ibn Shāh 'Ālam Bādshāh / ibn 'Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn 'Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Šāhib Qirān

Source: Top & centre inscription read from MSS.Eur.G.49, which is only partially legible; border inscription transliterated from the printed transcription in *Durbar* 1911:57

Ill: MSS.Eur.G.49

Doc: MSS.Eur.G.49; Treaty of Allahabad, 16 August 1765

Publ: Firman, dated 15 Jumādā II RY 10 (1182 / 7 October 1768), Jhaveri 1928: Plate XIV.
Firman, dated 15 Jumādā II RY 13 (1185 / 25 September 1771), Jhaveri 1928: Plate XV.
Firman, dated 1 Ramaḍān RY 15 (1187 / 16 November 1773), *Durbar* 1911:57, Plate XXII.

Firman, dated 21 Jumādā II RY 24 (1196 / 3 June 1782), Sotheby's 1987: lot 162.

Firman, dated RY 25 1198 (1783/4), Sotheby's 1993: lot 54.



15.1

- 15.2** Shāh ‘Ālam II
 Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil (thinner & more curved than 15.1)
 Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 14 smaller circles
 Dim: 89 mm (diameter) × 120 mm (height)
 Date: 1173, [R Y] 1 = A.D. 1759/60
 Top: *Huwa al-ghālib*
 Centre: *Abū al-Muzaffar Jalāl al-Dīn Shāh ‘Ālam Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah aḥad 1173*
 Border: *ibn ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Jahāndār Shāh / ibn Shāh ‘Ālam Bādshāh / ibn ‘Ālamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ‘Umar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mīrān Shāh / ibn Amīr Timūr Ṣāhib Qīrān*
 Ill: I.O.4676(a)
 Doc: I.O.4439; Firman, dated 27 Shawwāl 1203 (21 July 1789), Shakeb 1982:10; Bayly 191:42–3; Quraishi 1991:10–13.
 I.O.4440; Firman dated 25 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 1205 (26 July 1791), Shakeb 1982:11.
 I.O.4676(a); Firman dated 2 Jumādā II 1218 (19 September 1803), Shakeb 1982:14–15.
 Publ: Firman, dated 15 Rajab RY 44 (1216 / 21 November 1801), Felix 1916a:36–7; Plate IX fig. 13a; detail of seal on Plate I fig. 1.



16. MUHAMMAD AKBAR II

7 Ramaḍān 1221–28 Jumādā II 1253

(19 November 1806–28 September 1837)

16.1* Muḥammad Akbar II

Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 15 smaller circles

Dim: unknown

Date: 1221, [RY] 1 = A.D. 1806/7

Top: ?

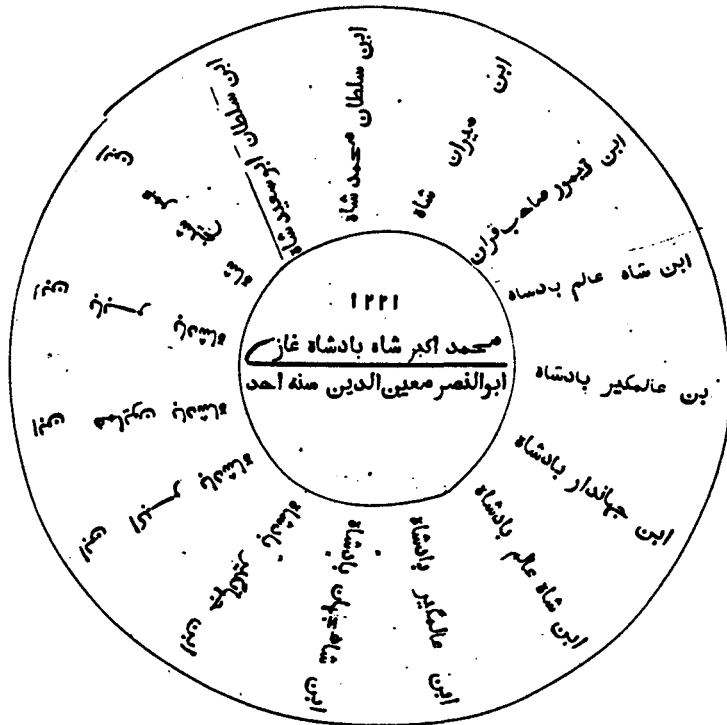
Centre: Abū al-Naṣr Muʿīn al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar Shāh Bādshāh Ghāzī sanah aḥad 1221

Border: ibn Shāh ʿĀlam Bādshāh / ibn ʿĀlamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Jahāndār Shāh / ibn Shāh ʿĀlam Bādshāh / ibn ʿĀlamgīr Bādshāh / ibn Shāh Jahān Bādshāh / ibn Jahāngīr Bādshāh / ibn Akbar Bādshāh / ibn Humāyūn Bādshāh / ibn Bābur Bādshāh / ibn ʿUmar Shaykh Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Abū Saʿīd Shāh / ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh / ibn Mirān Shāh / ibn Amīr Tīmūr Šāhib Qirān

Source: Transliterated from the illustration

Ill: Durbar 1911:60

Publ: Firman, granted to Col. James Skinner (date unknown), Durbar 1911:60–1, Plate XXIII.



17. BAHĀDUR SHĀH

28 Jumādā II 1253–13 Shaʿbān 1274

(28 September 1837–29 March 1857)

17.1* Bahādur Shāh

Ext: Round surmounted by trefoil

Int: 1 large circle surrounded by 16 smaller circles

Dim: unknown

Date: RY 1 = A.D. 1837/8

Top: ?

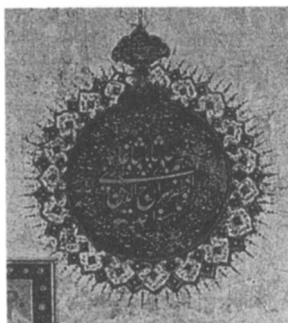
Centre: Abu-Zafar Serājoddin Moḥammad Bahādor Shāh Pādshāh-e Ghāzi

Border: son of Moḥammad Akbar Pādshāh / son of Shāh ʿĀlam Pādshāh / son of ʿĀlamgīr Pādshāh / son of Jahāndar Pādshāh / son of Shāh ʿĀlam Pādshāh / son of ʿĀlamgīr Pādshāh / son of Shāh Jahān Pādshāh / son of Jahāngīr Pādshāh / son of Akbar Pādshāh / son of Homāyūn Pādshāh / son of Bābor Pādshāh / son of ʿOmar Shaykh Shāh / son of Solṭān Abū-Saʿīd Shāh / son of Solṭān Moḥammad Shāh / son of Mirān Shāh / son of Amīr Teymūr Šāheb Qerān

Source: Quoted from Soudavar 1992:360

Ill: Art & History Trust, LTS 1995.2.106

Publ: Firman, dated 1842/3, Soudavar 1992:360.



Bibliography

- Ahmad, Bashiruddin
 1926 *Farmāni-i Sulṭānī. A rare collection of the royal firmans.* Delhi.
- Ahmad, Qeyamuddin
 1961 Some seals and signets of the later Mughal period. *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, 23:367–74.
- Ansari, M.A.
 1984 *Administrative Documents of Mughal India.* Delhi.
- Arnold, T.W. & Wilkinson, J.V.S.
 1936 *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: a Catalogue of Indian Miniatures.* 3 vols. London.
- Bahura, Gopal Narayan & Singh, Chandramani
 1988 *Catalogue of Historical Documents in Kapad Dwara, Jaipur.* Amber, Jaipur.
- Beach, Milo Cleveland
 1981 *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court.* Washington, D.C.
- Begley, W.E. & Desai, Z.A.
 1989 *Taj Mahal: the Illumined Tomb.* Seattle.
- 1990 (ed. & completed) *The Shah Jahan Nama of 'Inayat Khan.* Delhi.
- Beveridge, H. (transl.)
 1910 *The Akbar-nāma of Abu-l-Fazl.* Vol. III. Calcutta.
- Bloch, E.
 1929 *Muslim Painting XIIIth-XXVIIth century.* London.
- Blochmann, H.
 1870 "Observations on a Sanad, granted by Shāh 'Ālam to Rajah Pityāmbar Mitra Bahādūr". *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, pp. 6–9.
- 1927 *The Ā'in-i Akbarī of Abū 'l-Fazl 'Allāmī*, tr. H. Blochmann, ed. D.C. Phillott. Calcutta.
- Brand, Michael & Lowry, Glenn
 1985 *Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory.* New York.
- CHI
 1971 *The Cambridge History of India. Vol. IV. The Mughul Period*, planned by Wolseley Haig, ed. by Richard Burn. Delhi.
- Christie's
 1995 *Islamic Art and Indian Miniatures* (catalogue of a sale on 17 October 1995). London.
- 1997 *Islamic Art and Indian Miniatures* (catalogue of a sale on 14 October 1997). London.
- Clarke, C. Stanley
 1922 *Indian Drawings: thirty Mogul Paintings of the school of Jahāngīr.* London.
- Commissariat, Khan Bahadur M.S.
 1940 "Imperial Mughal farmans in Gujarat". *Journal of the University of Bombay*, 1 pp. 1–56.
- Crill, Rosemary
 1985 "A lost Mughal miniature rediscovered". *The V&A Album*, London.
- Desai, Z.A.
 1993 "Some rare seal-bearing Persian manuscripts in the Hazrat P.M. Dargah Library, Ahmadabad." *Indo-Iranica*, 46, 1–4 pp. 52–73.
- Descriptive
 1962 *A Descriptive List of Farmans, Manshurs and Nishans addressed by the Imperial Mughals to the Princes of Rajasthan.* Bikaner.

Durbar

- 1911 *Loan Exhibition of Antiquities: Coronation Durbar, 1911*, Delhi Museum of Archaeology. [Delhi].

Ettinghausen, Richard

- 1961 *Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India in American Collections*. India: Lalit Kala Akademi.

Falk, Toby & Digby, Simon

- 1979 *Paintings from Mughal India*. London.

Fekete-Hazai

- 1977 *Einführung in die persische Paläographie*. L. Fekete, ed. G. Hazai. Budapest.

Felix, The Rev. Father, O.C.

- 1916a "Mughal Farmāns, Parwānahs and Sanads issued in favour of the Jesuit Missionaries". *Journal of the Panjab Historical Society*, 1 pp. 1–53.

- 1916b "The Mughal seals." *Journal of the Panjab Historical Society*, 2 pp. 100–25.

Foster, William (ed.)

- 1899 *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615–1619*. London (reprinted 1991).

Fryer, John

- 1698 *A New Account of East-India and Persia*. London.

Goswamy, B.N. & Grewal, J.S.

- 1967 *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar: some Madad-i-Ma'āsh and other documents*. Simla.

Gray, Basil

- 1978 *The World History of Rashid al-Din: a study of the Royal Asiatic Society manuscript*. London.

Guy, John & Swallow, Deborah (eds.)

- 1990 *Arts of India: 1550–1900*. London.

Habsburg

- 1987 *Sale of Two Giant Gold Mohur Coins. At the Hotel Noga Hilton, Geneva, Monday, November 9, 1987*. [Geneva]: Habsburg, Feldman S.A.

Haig, W. (ed. & transl.)

- 1925 *Muntakhabu't-Tawārikh*, by 'Abdul-'l-Qādir ibn-i-Mulūkshāh, known as al-Badāoni. Vol. III. Calcutta.

Herbert, Tho. [Sir Thomas]

- 1638 *Some Yeares Travels into Africa & Asia the Great, especially describing the Famous Empires of Persia and Industani, as also divers other Kingdoms in the Orientall Indies, and P'les Adjacent*. London.

Heritage

- 1982 *The Indian Heritage*, ed. Robert Skelton et al. [London].

Historie

- 1758 *Beknopte historie van het Mogolsche keyzerryk en de zuydelyke aangrenzende ryken*. Batavia.

Hodivala, Shahpurshah Hormasji

- 1923 *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics*. (Occasional memoirs of the Numismatic Society of India; II). Calcutta.

Ibn Hasan

- 1936 *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*. London.

IGI

- 1908 *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*. 24 vols. Oxford.

Irvine, H.

- 1904 "The later Mughals". *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, LXXII.1.

Islam, Riazul

1979 *A Calendar of Indo-Persian Relations (1500–1750)*. Tehran and Karachi.

Jhaveri, Krishnlal Mohanlal (ed. & transl.)

1928 *Imperial Farmans granted to the Ancestors of His Holiness the Tikāyat Mahārāj, A.D. 1577–1805*, ed. & transl. into Hindi, Gujarati and English. Bombay.

Leach, Linda York

1995 *Mughal and other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library*. Vol. 1. London.

Manucci, Niccolao

1907 *Storio do Mogor, or Mogul India 1653–1708*. Tr. William Irvine. London.

Meredith-Owens, G.M.

1969 *Handlist of Persian manuscripts 1895–1966*. London.

Meen, V.B. & Tushingham, A.D.

1968 *Crown Jewels of Iran*. Toronto.

Modi, Jivanji Jamshedji

1904 “The Parsees at the court of Akbar, and Dastur Meherji Rānā”. *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, pp. 69–246.

1920–1 “A farmān of Emperor Jehangir in favour of two Parsees”. *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, pp. 419–90.

Mohiuddin, Momin

1961 “A soyurghal of Babur”. *Indian Historical Records Commission*, XXXVI, pp. 49–54.

1971 *The Chancellery and Persian Epistolography under the Mughals*. Calcutta.

Monseratte, Father

1922 *The Commentary of Father Monseratte, S.J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*. London.

Pal, Pratapaditya (ed.)

1989 *Romance of the Taj Mahal*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal et al. London and Los Angeles.

Purchas, Samuel

1624 *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*. Vol. 1. London.

Quraishi, Salim

1991 “Mughal patronage and English nabobs”. *Arts & the Islamic world*, XX, pp. 10–13.

Rabino, H.L.

1945 *Coins, Medals and Seals of the Shāhs of Iran, 1500–1941*. [S.I.: s.n.]

Rieu, Charles

1883 *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*. London.

1895 *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the British Museum*. London.

Robinson, B.W. (ed.)

1976 *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the book*. London.

Rogers, Michael

1983 *Islamic Art and Design*. London.

1993 *Mughal Miniatures*. London.

Rouffaer, G.P.

1906 “De Hindostansche oorsprong van het ‘negenvoudig’ sultans-zegel van Atjeh”. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche Indie*, LIX, pp. 349–83.

Sarawak

1992 *The Sarawak Islamic Museum / Muzium Islam Sarawak*, ed. Taha Ariffin et al. [Kuching].

Scarcia, Gianroberto

1968 “Un documento persiano del 946/1539 nell’ Archivio di Stato di Venezia”. *Annali*, XVIII, pp. 338–43.

Seyller, John

- 1997 The inspection and valuation of manuscripts in the imperial Mughal library. *Artibus Asiae* LVII 3/4, pp. 243–349.

Shakeb, M.Z.A.

- 1977 (ed.) *Mughal Archives: a Descriptive Catalogue of the Documents pertaining to the Reign of Shah Jahan (1628–1658). Vol. I. Durbar Papers and a Miscellany of Singular Documents*. Hyderabad.
- 1982 *A Descriptive Catalogue of Miscellaneous Persian Mughal Documents from Akbar to Bahadur Shah II*. London.
- 1990 *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Batala Collection of Mughal Documents, 1527–1757 A.D.*. London.

Skelton, Robert

- 1972 “A decorative motif in Mughal art”. *Aspects of Indian Art*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal, pp. 147–52. Leiden.
- 1988 “Imperial symbolism in Mughal painting”. *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World*, ed. Priscilla P. Soucek, pp. 177–87. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Sotheby's

- 1987 *Fine Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures* (catalogue of a sale on 14 December 1987). London.
- 1993 *Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures* (catalogue of a sale on 28 April 1993). London.

Soudavar, Abolala

- 1992 *Art of the Persian Courts: Selections from the Art and History Trust Collection*, with a contribution by Milo Cleveland Beach. New York.

Spink

- 1980 *Islamic Art from India*. London.

Tavernier, Jean Baptiste

- 1678 *The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier . . . made English by J.P.* London.

Tirmizi, S.A.I.

- 1960 *Indian Seals (Problems and Prospects)*, ed. K.D. Bhargava. [S.1.]: National Archives of India.
- 1982 *Calendar of Acquired Documents (1402–1719)*. New Delhi.
- 1989 *Mughal Documents (1526–1627)*. New Delhi.

Valentijn, Francois

- 1726 *Oud en Nieuw Ooost-Indien*. 5 vols. Dordrecht and Amsterdam, 1724–6.

Welch, Anthony & Welch, Stuart Cary

- 1982 *Arts of the Islamic Book: the Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*. Ithaca and London.

Welch, Stuart Cary

- 1985 *India: Art and Culture 1300–1900*. New York.
- 1987 *The Emperors' Album: Images of Mughal India*, ed. Stuart Cary Welch et al. New York.

Wilkinson, J.V.S.

- 1931 *The Shāh-Nāmāh of Firdausi*. London.