

Persian Miniatures

If seven lines converge, a single point at last falls on the target of the affair. The painter who has ten subservient parts holds to the end of every single thread, for if one thread should stray from the main chord all subservient threads would be faulty.

From the *Haft Paikar* of Nizami

The McGill Collection of Islamic Painting contains fifty-two miniature paintings and five illustrated manuscripts. The majority of these are Persian and date from the thirteenth century through the nineteenth century. There are as well some excellent examples of Sultanate and Mughal painting from India. Notably, the collection contains numerous fine examples of miniatures from Shiraz, an important provincial centre.

The oldest painting in the collection, **MS Persian 1** miniature of the Ibex comes from a manuscript of the *Manafi' al-Hayawan* by Ibn Bakhtishu. It dates from the Mongol conquest of Persia. Under Hulagu, a grandson of Genghis Khan, the Mongols founded the Il-Khanid dynasty following their conquest of Baghdad in 1258. The earliest extant manuscript produced specifically for a Mongol patron is the *Manafi' al-Hayawan* (dated between 1297-1299) in the Pierpont Morgan Library. This manuscript was presented to Ghazan Khan, one of the first Il-Khanids to embrace Islam.

The style of illustrations found on the page in the McGill collection is closely related to that of the Pierport Morgan manuscript and was probably painted only a few years later, circa 1300. In **MS Persian 1**, the miniature of the two ibex, we can see the beginning of a new approach to painting that was distinctly different from earlier Arab or Mesopotamian works. Wherein the Arab paintings there would have been almost no attempt to locate the figures in space or to accurately describe their environment, here there is a definite though simplistic attempt to indicate spatial relationships by letting the animals overlap one another. Other pages from this and the Pierpont Morgan *Manafi' al-Hayawan* show an effort which is not entirely successful to integrate various foreign elements brought to Persia by the Mongols, such as the Tai cloud convention and the rocky landscapes and gnarled trees typical of Chinese painting.

The most important manuscript prepared for the Il-Khanids was the Demotte *Shahnama*, named after the book dealer responsible for its dispersion in the West. One leaf of this manuscript, painted at Tabriz around the year 1350, is found in the McGill collection. The miniatures from this manuscript show the complete assimilation of the Chinese conventions present but not fully realised in the copies of the *Manafi' al-Hawayan*. The compositions of this *Shahnama* are also more complicated and accomplished than those of the previous manuscripts and there is now an attempt to capture the most dramatic aspects of the episodes described. This can be seen even in such domestic scenes as the **MS Persian 6** miniature of Bahram Gur in the peasant's house. Instead of simply focusing our attention on the upper left hand corner of the painting where Bahram Gur is seated, the artist has let the peasant and his wife who is milking an enormous cow become the centre of the composition.

Contemporary with the illustrations from the Demotte *Shahnama* are two other groups of paintings from manuscripts of the same text. The first are from manuscripts of much smaller size and are consequently known as the "small" *Shahnamas*; a typical example of which is the miniature of Bahram Chubineh wearing women's clothing in **MS Persian 2**. The figures in these manuscripts are invariably placed against gold backgrounds and arranged in bands or rows that reflect earlier pre-Mongol traditions.

The second group of *Shahnamas* were produced for the Inju deputies of the Il-Khanids at Shiraz in south-western Persia. These manuscripts are represented in the McGill collection by **MS Persian 4** miniature of Siyawush swearing by the fire and **MS Persian 5** miniature of mourning over Iskandar's bier, both from a now dispersed copy of

the *Shahnama* dated 1341. The miniatures from this manuscript are much larger than those of the small *Shahnamas* and they are painted in a looser, less sophisticated style.

The difference between these two groups can be easily distinguished if we compare **MS Persian 2** and **MS Persian 4**. In the latter, yellow paint rather than gold leaf is used for the background, the human figures are for the most part less precisely drawn, even though at times they convey a heightened sense of drama, and the colours are applied in thinner tones.

The Il-Khanid dynasty began to lose control over its territories during the second half of the fourteenth century. It was a time of political turmoil and uncertainty that did not end until 1395 when Timur, or Tamerlane, as he is known in the West, established an empire that stretched from central Anatolia to India. The arts flourished under Timur and his descendants. His son, Shah Rukh, who ruled Persia from 1404 to 1447, made his capital Herat into one of the most cultivated cities in the world of the fifteenth century. He carried out massive building projects and he, his sons and nephews commissioned numerous manuscripts.

During this time most of the conventions basic to all subsequent Persian painting gained acceptance. We can see many of these conventions in the miniature of Rostam catching the Emperor of China in **MS Persian 9** from a now dispersed copy of the *Shahnama*. The high rising plane behind which several people can be seen, the multiple vantage points, either from above or of the same plane, used to describe the action, and the brightly coloured costumes and details are typical of what is now often referred to as the Classical style in Persian painting.

The finest Timurid illustrations, though there are none in this collection, were painted by Bizhad and his pupils. Bizhad, who is considered the greatest of all Persian painters, worked at Herat during the last two decades of the fifteenth century. He was responsible for many of the innovations that characterize the work of his contemporaries. For instance, the slightly elongated and more individualized human figures, the relatively more naturalistic landscapes and the more varied palette that permeate late fifteenth and sixteenth century Persian paintings can all be attributed to Bizhad compositions.

The Timurids were unable to rule the south-western parts of Persia after the death of Shah Rukh in 1447. They were eventually expelled from there by Turkmen warriors who took Shiraz, the provincial centre, in 1450. Painting continued under the Turkmen but the Timurid style was greatly altered. We need only compare **MS Persian 9** to **MS Persian 14** (miniature of an enthroned ruler) in order to see that in the latter the figures are squatter, their faces are rounder, the composition is simpler and the colours gaudier. One can nevertheless distinguish between different levels of Turkmen painting. The miniature of Bahram Gur in the black pavilion from **MS Persian 13**, for example, with its delicate details and extremely fine lines, was most likely painted at a large court for a discerning patron. On the other hand **MS Persian 14** is clearly a less sophisticated work probably executed at a minor court; the colours are harsher, the figures less precisely drawn and the details are less exciting.

In 1501 Shah Ismail, a Safavid, took Shiraz from the Turkmen. Within fifteen years he had not only taken Herat from the last Timurids, but had firmly established the supremacy of the Safavid dynasty throughout most of the old Timurid empire. The Safavids continued to rule Persia until 1722, first from Tabriz, then from Qazwin in 1548

and eventually from Isfahan in the seventeenth century. Though essentially a warrior, Shah Ismail also was a patron of the arts. When Heart fell, he made Bizhad the director of the new royal ateliers, thus ensuring the continuation of the latter's achievements. In fact the only different between the latest Timurid works and the earliest Safavid ones is the appearance of the characteristic Safavid turban bound in twelve folds around a cap and surmounted by a slender baton usually coloured red.

Shah Ismail died in 1524 and was succeeded by his son, Shah Tahmasp. Some of the most sumptuous of all Persian manuscripts were produced for the new Shah by Bizhad and his students, many of whom came from the conquered Turkmen studios. These manuscripts include the *Shahnama* dated between 1525 and 1530, the main part of which is now in the collection of Arthur Houghton, and the *Khamseh* of Nizami, circa 1537-1540 now in the British Museum.

In the south, Shiraz remained a major provincial centre. The Shirazi style of the sixteenth century was basically a continuation of the late fifteenth century style of Herat, save for a few minor alterations. The most notable of these is the addition of the Safavid turban, the more elongated human figures and the larger, rather more complicated compositions. There are also certain peculiarities of this style that make it easily recognisable. These can be seen in the miniature of Bahram Gur hunting, circa 1540 (**MS Persian 20**) and include the leopard whose spots are made up of triangular groupings of dots, the heavily outlined rocks surrounded by large tufts of grass and orange flowers, and the cypress trees that are bent by an otherwise unrecorded wind.

Unlike the royal studios that worked exclusively for the king and his court, the Shirazi ateliers were extremely prolific, creating illustrated manuscripts for local nobles

as well wealthy merchants. The various qualitative standards that ensued from this diverse patronage are well represented in the McGill collection. Miniatures such as those featuring Shirin bathing (**MS Persian 18**), the story of a drowning man (**MS Persian 22**) and Bijen meeting Karkin (**MS Persian 26**) were undoubtedly commissioned by local nobles. The figures in these paintings are all well drawn, there is an abundance of gold leaf and the relatively large compositions are carefully laid out. Compare, however, one of these paintings to **MS Persian 27**, depicting a gathering of poets, or **MS Persian 28** featuring Sultan Walid going riding in Rum, and it becomes immediately apparent that **MS Persian 27** and **MS Persian 28** are much less grand. The commercial quality of these paintings is indicated by the simple and straight-forward compositions, the stockier and less attractive figures, the bolder colours, and, most importantly, the hesitant use of gold leaf.

Royal patronage began to dwindle during the last quarter of the sixteenth century when the Safawid court was at Qazwin. Shah Tahmasp was no longer interested in the arts and his successors, Ismail II (1576-1577) and Muhammad Khudabanda (1577-1582), were too preoccupied with their own survival to support the arts. As artists became increasingly dependent on small commissions from private citizens, single paintings such as that of a woman combing her hair, **MS Persian 31**, began to appear in large numbers. These works would be collected one by one and eventually assembled into albums.

The capital of the Safavid dynasty was moved to Isfahan in 1596 by Shah Abbas the Great, who has become the ruler of the Safavids in 1582. Isfahan remained the capital until the end of the dynasty. Here developed a new style commonly referred to as calligraphic because of the sinuous lines that are used to suggest volume and drapery.

The drawing of Cassiopea (**MS Persian 36**), circa 1690-1700, is a late example of this style.

The eighteenth century in Persia was a time of extraordinary political confusion. The Safavids were no longer able to effectively rule the country. In 1722 Isfahan fell to the Ghilzai Afghans who then murdered the last of the Safavids. For the next seventy years, until the 1796 founding of the Qajar dynasty by Fath Ali Shah, there was incessant fighting between the various claimants to the remnants of the Safavid Empire. This put an end to the lavish artistic patronage of the previous two centuries.

Under the Qajars there was a renewed interest in the arts. Water colours and oil paints became popular, replacing the opaque colours of the previous centuries. Illustrated manuscripts appeared once again, though in general these were not of particularly good quality. A brief glance at the paintings in the manuscript of Layla and Majnun by Nizami, **MS Persian 43**, illustrates that the miniatures are now composed of poorly drawn, stereotyped figures placed within simple and roughly executed landscapes. Portraiture also became extremely popular. Indeed, the primary concern of the numerous artists employed in Fath Ali Shah's studios was the depiction of the royal family and court.

While the McGill collection does not have any of these portraits, it does possess two paintings, one of Siyawush wearing by the fire (**MS Persian 39**) and the other of the temptation of Siyawush (**MS Persian 40**) by Muhammad Sadiq, one of the Shah's foremost artists. The basic elements of the Qajar style are clearly visible in these miniatures with their thin washes of colour, pronounced modelling and essentially European perspective.

Islamic painting in India probably dates back to the years just after the first Muslim conquests on the Asian subcontinent at the end of the twelfth century. Unfortunately very few pre-sixteenth century paintings have survived. Of those that have however, the miniature of two men in conversation in **MS Persian 47**, from a now dispersed manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi, is one of the most interesting examples. The paintings from this manuscript show in their simple forms a striking similarity to the paintings from the fourteenth century Inju school of Shiraz. But the deep reds, oranges, yellows and greens of the Indian work are much stronger than the colours from the miniatures of the Inju school. Compare, for instance, **MS Persian 4** to **MS Persian 47**, and it becomes obvious that in the former, the colours are applied in washes whereas in the latter they are applied in thick layers. There is also a natural exuberance in the Indian paintings that is very different from the more refined works of the Inju court. Again, this is illustrated in the comparison of the rather tame, decorative flames in **MS Persian 4** to the wild tree in **MS Persian 47**. Where the details of **MS Persian 4** seem controlled by the artist, those of **MS Persian 47** are bursting with an inner strength that marks all of the miniatures from this manuscript.

Several articles have recently been written on the artistic traditions of the fifteenth and sixteenth century Muslim Sultans of northern India, but there is still a general lack of information and material on this period. This situation changes with the advent of the Mughal Empire in the second quarter of the sixteenth century because the formation of Mughal ateliers is relatively well-documented.

The Mughals arrived in India in 1526 when Babur, a descendent of Genghis Khan and Timur, led his small army through the vulnerable north-west mountain passes and

defeated the last rulers of the Lodi dynasty. Babur died shortly thereafter and his son Humayun was eventually forced to flee to Persia. There he was warmly greeted by Shah Tahmasp, who provided him with enough military support to enable him to reconquer his kingdom in 1556. While Humayun was in Persia, he acquired from the Shah two of his foremost artists, Mir Sayyid Ali and Abd as Samad. Under Humayun's and later his son and successor Akbar's patronage, they founded the Mughal school of painting. The style that developed was a remarkable synthesis of Persian, Indian and even European elements brought to Akbar's court by Jesuit missionaries invited by the Emperor himself.

Though the paintings of the *Tuti Nama* and the *Hamza Nama*, the two earliest extant Mughal manuscripts, are not represented in this collection, the vitality of this fusion of influences can be seen in the paintings of Saint Kasra in the lion's pit (**MS Persian 29**), circa 1570, and two mullahs greeting each other (**MS Persian 50**), circa 1595. The former is actually contemporary with the *Hamza Nama* and shows the strong bold lines and colours that distinguish these early paintings. There is as well as greater sense of naturalism and a more heightened sense of modelling than was typical of such pre-Mughal works as the *Khamseh* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi. In **MS Persian 50** the lines and colours have become more refined and evocative, and the interest in nature is increased.

The sensitive and delicate painting of the flowers (**MS Persian 52**), circa 1640, and the princess (**MS Persian 53**), circa 1650, indicate the later achievements of the Mughal style which continued into the eighteenth century.

[This catalogue was prepared by Glen Lowry in 1977. It is not for publication.]

1. **Two miniature paintings**, recto features two ibex; verso, one ibex, from a manuscript of the *Manafi' al-Hayawan (Advantages Derived from Animals)* by Ibn Bakhtishu. Persia, late 13th century. (Recto written surface 26.3 cm x 21.5 cm; miniature 13.7 cm x 16.0 cm; verso written surface 26.3 cm x 21.5 cm; miniature 12.0 cm by 15.8 cm) Exhibited London, Burlington House, 1931, Catalogue, #1 and San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum, 1937, Catalogue, #26.

For a detailed discussion and list of other pages from this manuscript see E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Paintings*, pp.4-6.

2. **Leaf with miniature of Bahram Chubineh wearing women's clothes sent to him as a punishment by Hormuzd**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi, known as the second small *Shahnama*. Probably from Shiraz, early 14th century. (Written surface 16.5 cm x 12.9 cm; miniature 5.4 cm x 12.2 cm)

This page is from one of the “small” *Shahnamas*. They are called such because of the small size of their pages. Until recently it had been assumed that these manuscripts were painted at Shiraz during the early years of the fourteenth century, but B.W. Robinson in *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book* (London, 1976), pp. 131-134, has noted that stylistically these manuscripts do not seem very closely related either to the court painting of Tabriz or the provincial work of Shiraz. On the basis of these observations, Robinson argues for a Western Indian origin during the first half of the 14th century. This controversy is unlikely to be resolved until a colophon stating the date and place of origin is found. However, the manuscripts are still generally attributed to Shiraz.

For more information of the small *Shahnamas* see B. Gray, *Persian Painting*, p. 62 and E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Paintings*, pp. 21-31.

3. **Leaf with miniature of Rustam catching his horse Raksh**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi known as the second small *Shahnama*. Probably from Shiraz, early 14th century. (Written surface 16.3 cm x 13.0 cm; miniature 4.3 cm x 12.0 cm) Exhibited San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum, 1937, Catalogue, #36 and Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 1959, Catalogue, #122.

From the same manuscript as MS Persian 2

4. **Leaf with miniature of Siyawush swearing by the fire**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Shiraz, 1341 C.E. (dated 741 Hejira) dedicated to Wazir al-hasan Qiwam al-Daula wa'l-Din. (Written surface 28.5 cm x 24.3 cm; miniature 10.5 cm by 24.3 cm) Exhibited Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 1959, Catalogue, #129.

The manuscript's dedication to Wazir al-hasan Qiwam al-Daula wa'l-Din has helped establish the identification of a school of painting at the Inju court in Shiraz. The page colophon of this manuscript including the date and dedication is in the collection of H. Vever, Paris.

For more information and a list of other pages from this manuscript see E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Paintings*, pp. 31-35.

5. **Leaf with miniature of mourning over Iskandar's bier**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Shiraz, 1341 C.E. (dated 741 Hejira) dedicated to Wazir al-Hasan Qiwam al-Daula wa'l-Din. (Written surface 28.7 cm x 24.0 cm; miniature 14.2 cm x 24.0 cm) Exhibited London, Burlington House, 1931, Catalogue, #425, San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum, 1937, Catalogue, #46 and Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 1959, Catalogue, #131. Acquired as "Death of Alexander," 24 March 1921 from Dikram G. Kelekcan of New York. Order no. 33775, price \$1,500.00.

From the same manuscript as MS Persian 4.

6. **Leaf with miniature of Bahram Gur in a peasant's house**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi known as the "Demotte" *Shahnama*. Tabriz, mid-14th century. (Written surface 40.0 cm x 28.6 cm; miniature 19.7 cm. x 20.4 cm) Formerly known as P.68. Exhibited London, Burlington House, 1931, Catalogue, #444, San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum, 1937, Catalogue, #37a, Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 1959, Catalogue, #149, Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 1962, Catalogue, #12 and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, 1968, Catalogue, #7.

Bibliography: L. Binyon et al., *Persian Miniature Painting*, London, 1933, pl. 47, #29e

Despite several extensive studies, the exact dating and interpretation of this *Shahnama*, called "Demotte" after the dealer responsible for its dispersal, is still a matter of controversy. The major arguments concerning this manuscript can be found in E. Blotchet, *Musulman Painting* (Paris, 1929), D. Bryan, "A Reconstruction of the Miniature Cycle in the 'Demotte' *Shahnama*," *Ars Islamica* vol. VI (1939); O. Grabar, "The Iconography of the 'Demotte' *Shahnama*," *Oriental Studies* #4 (1961); B. Gray, *Persian Painting* (1961); E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Paintings* (1962); I. Stchoukine, "Les peintures du Shah Nameh Demotte," *Ars Asiatiques* vol. V (1958).

7. **Leaf with miniature of Rostam fighting Iskander**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Possibly from Shiraz, early 15th century. (Written surface 18.0 cm x 13.9 cm; miniature 10.1 cm by 13.9 cm)

- 8 **Leaf with miniature of Khusrau and Shirin**, from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami. Possibly from Shiraz, second quarter of the 15th century. (Written surface 17.6 cm x 10.8 cm; miniature 7.2 cm x 10.8 cm)

The high horizon, oval shaped faces and the essentially vertical rather than horizontal axis of this painting is typical of the early Timurid style. For more information on the development of the Timurid style see I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits Timurides*, pp. 40-47.

9. **Leaf with miniature of Rustam catching the emperor of China**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Possibly from Shiraz, circa 1430. (Written surface 21.4 cm x 15.1 cm; miniature 12.5 cm x 15.1 cm)

For a very similar series of manuscript pages see I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits Timurides*, pp. 43-44, pl. XXXI.

10. **Miniature of Zal, the father of Rustam, calling upon Saam**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Probably from Isfahan, circa 1435. (Written surface 23.2 cm x 17.8 cm; miniature 10 cm x 11.6 cm)

The simplified forms, subdued colours, use of red colouring on the cheeks and the white line marking a highlight along the nose differentiate this painting from other work of the period. The style closely resembles that of the *Anthology* of 1435-1436 C.E. (838-840 Hejira), now in the Chester Beatty Library, copied by Ali Pakir of Ashtrajan (near Isfahan) and Zain of Isfahan.

Because of the *Anthology's* peculiar style and the fact that both of its scribes were from Isfahan, the manuscript has been attributed to that city. Very close stylistic similarities with the Chester Beatty MS support the same assumption for MS Persian 10.

For a discussion of the *Anthology* in the Chester Beatty Library see The Chester Beatty Library, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, #124.

11. **Leaf with miniature of Rostam and the White Demon**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Possibly from Shiraz, mid-15th century. (Written surface 18.7 cm x 12.2 cm; miniature 10.2 cm x 12.2 cm)
12. **Leaf with miniature of Rostam and the White Demon**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. In the provincial style of the late 15th century. (Written surface 23.0 cm x 15.2 cm; miniature 15.4 cm x 15.2 cm)
13. **Leaf with miniature of Bahram Gur in the black palace**, from a manuscript of the *Haft Paikar* of Nizami. Turkmen, 1491 C.E. (dated 896 Hejira). (Written surface 20.2 cm x 10.6 cm; miniature 9.6 cm x 10.3 cm)

For a similar manuscript see *Sotheby Sales Catalogue*, 7 July 1975, lot 35.

14. **Leaf with miniature of the beheading of Iraj**, from a manuscript of *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. In the provincial style of the late 15th to early 16th century. (Written surface 22.7 cm x 16.0 cm; miniature 13.0 cm x 16.0 cm)
15. **Leaf with miniature of an enthroned ruler**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Turkmen, 1520 C.E (dated 929 Hejira) dedicated to Amir Shah Jalal. (Written surface 24.9 cm x 16.1 cm; miniature 12.0 cm x 11.6 cm.)

Although this painting was done during the Safawid dynasty, it shows the continuation of the Turkmen style which flourished during the last quarter of the fifteenth century into the early years of the sixteenth century. The short, stocky figures are typical of Turkmen painting. While it is impossible to be sure where this manuscript was produced, the simplified and rough quality of the drawing suggests that it is from a rather minor provincial centre where the Turkmen style

lingered on into the sixteenth century. The location of the colophon of this manuscript, which was originally in the possession of Orientalia, is no longer known.

For a similar manuscript page and a discussion of Turkmen painting see E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature Paintings*, #63; B.W. Robinson, "On the Origin and Date of Three Famous Shah-nameh Illustrations," *Ars Orientalis* vol I, pp. 105-112.

16. **Leaf with miniature of an enthroned ruler**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Turkmen, 1520 C.E. (dated 929 Hejira) dedicated to Amir Shah Jalal. (Written surface 24.7 cm x 16.1 cm; miniature 12.6 cm x 11.8 cm.)

From the same manuscript as MS Persian 15.

17. **Leaf with miniature** from manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Turkmen, 1520 C.E. (dated 929 Hejira) dedicated to Amir Shah Jalal. (Written surface 24.8 cm x 16.1 cm; miniature 9.1 cm x 11.6 cm)

From the same manuscript as MS Persian 16.

18. **Leaf with miniature of Shirin bathing**, from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami. Shiraz, circa 1525. (Written surface 19.8 cm x 10.5 cm; miniature 14.2 cm x 10.5 cm)

For a very similar miniature from a MS dated 934 H (1527-1528 C.E.) see *Sotheby Sales Catalogue*, 1 July 1969, lot 398.

19. **Miniature of Layla and Majnun in the wilderness**, from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami. Shiraz, circa 1530-1540. (12.5 cm x 8.4 cm)

This painting has been cut out and remounted onto a page from a later manuscript.

20. **Miniature of Bahram Gur hunting**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Shiraz, circa 1545-1555. (19.2 cm x 20.5 cm)

For a similar series of manuscript pages see G. Guest, *Shiraz Painting in the Sixteenth Century*, pls. 2, 23.

21. **Miniature of a guilty man who pleads before a king and is forgiven**, from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami. Shiraz, circa 1550-1555. (Written surface 30.0 cm x 19.3 cm; miniature 20.4 cm x 16.3 cm.

Other pages from the same manuscript or a very similar one are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art #M.73.5.454, illustrated in *Islamic Art: The Nasli M. Heeramanek Collection*, by P. Pal, p. 118, #205.

- 22 **The story of the drowning man miniature**, from a manuscript of the *Gulistan* of Sa'di. Shiraz, circa 1550-1560. (19.1 cm x 13.2 cm)

“I was sitting in a vessel with the company of great men when a boat which contained two brothers happened to sink near us. One of the great men promised a hundred dinars to a sailor if he could save them both. Whilst however the sailor was pulling out one, the other perished. I said, ‘He had no longer to live and therefore delay took place in rescuing him.’ The sailor smiled and replied, ‘What thou hast said is certain. Moreover, I preferred to save this one because, when I once happened to lag behind in the desert, he seated me on his camel, whereas I had received a whipping by the hands of the other. When I was a boy, I recited: He who doth right, doth it to his own soul and he who doth evil, doth it against the same.’

As long as thou canst, scratch the interior of no one
because there are thorns on this road.

Be helpful in the affairs of a dervish
because thou also hast affairs.

From the *Gulistan or Rose Garden of Sa'di*, trans. E. Rehatsek

23. **Miniature of a man holding a sickle depicting a constellation**, from an unidentified album. Possibly from Bukhara, second half of the 16th century. (12.9 cm x 7.3 cm)

The Bukharan style of the sixteenth century is essentially a continuation of the work of the late fifteenth century school of Bizhad. This was largely due to the fact that many of the artists working at Herat were carried off to Bukhara by the Uzbek warriors who took over the city in 1507 and again in 1535.

While it is impossible to be sure that this drawing is from Bukhara, its long and slightly stilted lines are characteristic of many of the drawings produced at Bukhara during the second half of the sixteenth century.

24. **Manuscript of Yusuf and Zulaykha** (Joseph and Potiphar's Wife) by Jami. Provincial, 1562 C.E. (dated 8 Shawwal 980 Hejira), scribe Abdul Latif bun Nu'Man. (Leaf 19.4 cm x 12.5 cm; written surface 13.2 cm x 7.5 cm; miniatures 8.8 x 7.2 cm). Manuscript contains 9 miniatures.

Although this manuscript is dated 1562, the style of the miniatures is that of the early seventeenth century. This discrepancy in date can be explained by the not uncommon practice during the sixteenth century in Persia of planning the text of a manuscript while leaving blank spaces for the illustrations which would be inserted at a later date.

25. **Manuscript of The Khamseh of Nizami.** Provincial, 1573 C.E. (980 Hejira). (Leaf 23.6 x 15.5 cm; written surface 16.9 cm x 11.2; miniatures 10.5 cm x 10.8 cm).

- 26 **Miniature of Bijen meeting Karkin,** from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Shiraz, circa 1580-1590. (29.5 cm x 20.9 cm)

The artist of this page, though his name remains unknown, was one of the finest Shirazi painters of the late sixteenth century. While his elongated courtly figures and sharply crenulated rocks are drawn in a distinctly Shirazi style, they nonetheless show an awareness of the more metropolitan style of Tabriz and Qazwin, the capital cities of the time.

Other pages by this artist can be found in a manuscript of the *Shahnama* now in the Springfield Museum of Art. This manuscript, published by W. Denny in *The Image and the Word*, #9a-h, may also be the manuscript from which the McGill page was taken as the page sizes and marginal rulings in both are identical.

27. **Leaf with miniature of a gathering of poets,** from an unidentified manuscript. Shiraz, circa 150-1590. (Written surface 15.8 cm x 11.5 cm; miniature 8.6 cm x 11.0 cm)

For a similar manuscript see *Sotheby Sales Catalogue*, 3 May 1977, lot 179, folio 152b.

28. **Two miniature paintings** mounted on the same page; left half featuring unidentified subject, right half depicts Sultan Walid going riding in rum. Left half from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami; right half from an unidentified

- manuscript. Shiraz, late 16th century. (Left half miniature 16.1 cm x 10.6 cm; right half miniature 16.2 cm x 10.1 cm)
29. **Leaf with miniature of the courtship of Layla**, from a manuscript of the *Khamseh* of Nizami. Shiraz, late 16th century. (Written surface 22.0 cm x 13.3 cm; miniature 16.1 cm x 10.6 cm)
 30. **Leaf with miniature** from an unidentified manuscript. In the provincial style of the late 16th century. (Written surface 16.8 cm x 10.8 cm; miniature 13.7 cm x 10.8 cm)
 31. **Miniature of a princess and a beggar**, from an unidentified manuscript. Shiraz, circa 1600. (15.0 x 11.2)
 32. **Leaf with miniature of seated woman combing her hair**, from an unidentified album page, signed Sadiq. Isfahan, early 17th century. (Written surface 26.5 cm x 17 cm; miniature 18.5 by 10.2 cm)

Sadiq or Sadiqi Beg was one of the foremost Persian artists of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Born in 1533 he died around 1611. He worked for several patrons, most notably Ismail Mirza (1576-1577) and Shah Abbas I (1587-1629). Under the Shah he became the director of the imperial libraries.

Unfortunately this painting has been greatly retouched, particularly around the hands, feet and the lower edge of the robe so much that the fine lines and subtle colouration that normally characterises Sadiq's work have been obscured.

A very similar painting of the same subject is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, #I.S. 133-164, folio 64a and is illustrated in B.W. Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, pl. 64. For a detailed discussion of Sadiq's career see I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures de Shah Abbas*, pls. 28-31 and A. Welch, *Artists for the Shah*, pp. 41-99.

33. **Leaf with miniature of Iskandar defeating Zeberah**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Probably from Shiraz, circa 1625-1630. (Written surface 41 cm x 26.2 cm; miniature 27.8 cm x 19.8 cm)

For a very closely related manuscript from Shiraz dated 1624 see B.W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library*, #514-531.

34. **Leaf with miniature of Kasra advising his son on good statesmanship**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Isfahan, mid-17th century. (Written surface 27.4 cm x 15 cm; miniature 18.2 cm x 14 cm)

35. **Miniature of Rustam lifting up Afrasih**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Isfahan, 3rd quarter of the 17th century. (11 cm x 17.8 cm)

During the seventeenth century in Isfahan there was a revival of the fifteenth century Timurid style. Whole manuscripts, such as the famous *Shahnama* prepared for Shah Abbas I in 1614 now in the New York Public Library, were faithfully copied from earlier models. Numerous paintings such as this one were inspired by and emulated Timurid works. One might mistake this page for a fifteenth century miniature were it not for the figures' long thin moustaches and overly large heads, both traits typical of seventeenth century Isfahani painting.

Other pages from the same manuscript or a similar one are found in the *Sotheby Sales Catalogue*, 7 April 1975, lot 51 and 2 May 1977, lot 65.

36. **Miniature of Cassiopea**, from a *Kitab al-Kawakib al-Thabitah (Book of Fixed Stars)* by Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi. Isfahan, late 17th century. (20.7 cm x 14.6 cm)

Cassiopea, one of the constellations of the northern hemisphere, is traditionally depicted as a woman seated on a chair. Here, as is frequently the case, the chair has become a throne that rests on feet shaped like the paws of a lion.

Despite the late seventeenth century date of this drawing, its strong flowing lines are typical of the “calligraphic” style that was popular at Isfahan during the first part of the century. The gently undulating serpentine lines of the earlier works have, however, been replaced in this drawing by lines that are more angular and less rhythmic.

37. **Miniature of a seated Ruler**, from an unidentified album. Provincial, 18th century. (10.5 cm x 5.7)
38. **Miniature of Mi’Raj Muhammad** (The ascent of the Prophet), from an unidentified manuscript. Probably from Isfahan, circa 1750. (22.3 cm x 14.5 cm; right hand marginal addition of 22.3 cm x 5.5 cm.

For a similar manuscript page see T. Arnold, *Painting in Islam*, p. 99, pl. LVd.

39. **Miniature of Siyawush swearing by the fire**, from an album by Muhammad Sadiq, signed Raqam-i-kamtarin Muhammad Sadiq. Qajar, late 18th or early 19th century.
(Leaf 22.2 cm x 32.4 cm; miniature 14.1 cm x 21.6 cm)

Muhammad Sadiq was, according to Benjamin in *Persia and the Persians* (London, 1887), pp. 316-319, “one of the most noted artists of modern Persia.” He seems to have enjoyed an exceptionally long career, from his earlier work, a signed fresco in the Chehel Situn at Isfahan dated 1737 to his latest paintings dated 1796 and 1797.

This painting, MS Persian 40 and a third now in the India Office Library add. or 2790 all appear to have come from an album prepared by Muhammad Sadiq, provided that the signature on this miniature is authentic. All three works are

painted in the same style with a curious mixture of well-painted figures next to less accomplished ones. They are all same size and mounted in the same fashion.

For more information on Muhammad Sadiq see T. Falk, *Qajar Paintings*, pp. 32-34 and B.W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library*, #1235.

40. **Leaf with miniature of the temptation of Siyawush**, from an album by Muhammad Sadiq. Qajar, late 18th or early 19th century. (Leaf 22.2 cm x 32.5 cm; miniature 14 cm by 21.6 cm)

From the same album as MS Persian 39

41. **Miniature of a partridge**, from an unidentified album. Qajar, late 18th to early 19th century. (14 cm x 11.6 cm)

42. **9 Playing Cards**, probably from two different sets of *As Nas*. Qajar, late 19th century. (Large cards 6 cm x 4.2 cm; small cards 5.8 cm by 4 cm)

As Nas appears to be a game, according to R. Merlin, *Origine des cartes à jouer* (Paris, 1869) p. 124, pl. 74, composed of five suits or five cards for a total of twenty-five cards played somewhat like the European game of “31”.

43. **Manuscript of Layla and Majnun** by Nizami. Qajar, 1st half of the 19th century (Leaf size 18.6 cm x 10.7 cm; written surface 13.3 cm by 7.3 cm; miniatures 7.8 cm x 7.0 cm).

The manuscript contains fifteen miniatures.

44. **Two miniature paintings**, recto depicts a man baking, verso depicts five men cooking, from a lacquered book cover. Qajar, 1st half of the 19th century. (Recto miniature 9.3 cm x 15.7 cm; verso miniature 9.3 cm by 15.8 cm)

45. **Manuscript of the Diwan, or poetical works of Hafiz.** Qajar, late 19th or early 20th century. (Leaf 19.7 cm x 11.7 cm; written surface 13.8 cm by 7.1 cm; miniature 7.3 cm by 6.6 cm) Manuscript contains eleven miniatures.

46. **Miniature painting of king being entertained.** Persia, circa 1930. (29.5 cm x 21 cm)

For a similar miniature painting see *Sotheby Sales Catalogue*, 20 July 1977, lot 187.

Indian Miniatures

47. **Leaf with miniature of two men in conversation**, from a manuscript of the *Diwan* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi. Sultanate, mid- or 2nd half 15th century. (Written surface 30.3 cm x 22.8 cm; miniature 11.3 cm by 21.1 cm) Exhibited London, Burlington House, 1931 and San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum, 1937, catalogue #71.

The paintings from this now dispersed copy of the *Diwan* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi have only recently been attributed to India. Previously these paintings were assigned to the mid-fourteenth century Inju school of Shiraz. But R. Ettinghausen, *The Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India*, (India, 1961) pl. I, recognized that “the handleless ewers, cooking pots, thrones, head veils,” and various other details were “different or non-existent in Near Eastern manuscripts.” He also noted that “the colour scheme is richer and more dramatic than in anything further west.”

The date of these paintings according to Ettinghausen is indicated “by the rather crude nast’liq writings. Little is known of the early history of this script in India, but in Iran, the country of its birth, similar forms could not be before circa 1450. As there is no trace of this style in later Muslim painting... we cannot place it too close to the rise of Mughal painting, especially as there exists a later still pre-Mughal manuscript which reflects this style.” Consequently these paintings have been attributed to the second half of the fifteenth century.

For more information on the paintings from this manuscript see E. Binney, *Islamic Art from the Collection of Edwin Binney III*, pl. 64.

48. **Figure of a seated man**, from a manuscript of the *Diwan* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi. Sultanate, mid- or 2nd half of the 15th century. (9.5 cm x 2.8 cm)

This figure has been cut out and remounted on an album page.

49. **Miniature of two mullahs greeting each other**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, circa 1570-1580. (24.8 cm x 15.7 cm) Exhibited Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1977.
50. **Miniature of Saint Kasra in a lion's pit**, possibly from a manuscript of the *Diwan* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi, attributable to Mahesh. Mughal, circa 1595 (28.5 cm x 18.9 cm) Exhibited Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1977.

The attribution of this painting to Mahesh is based on the close stylistic relationship of this miniature to Mahesh's signed paintings in a manuscript of the Babur Nama, circa 1585 now in the British Museum of Art and in a manuscript of the *Diwan* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi, circa 1595 now in the Walters Art Gallery. Common to all of Mahesh's works is the same idiosyncratic treatment of the foliage with touches of red around some of the leaves, the same bent and knotted trees and the same thinly bearded oval faced figures. The light tonal washes of green and blue built up in small areas to give a heightened sense of texture that can be seen in the upper left of this miniature are also characteristic of all Mahesh's paintings.

51. **Leaf with miniature of Iskandar fighting the Indians**, from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi. Mughal, circa 1590-1600. (Written surface 20.2 cm x 11.2; miniature 13.2 cm x 10.8 cm)

Other pages from this manuscript are in the collection of E. Binney III, *The Mughal and Deccani Schools: Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney III*, p. 46, #22; The Chester Beatty Library, MS 17 published in vol. I of *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures* by T. Arnold and J.V.S. Wilkinson.

52. **Page of flowers (lilies and tulips) and Shekastah script**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, circa 1640. (Written surface 9.6 cm x 10 cm)
53. **Miniature of a princess**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, ca. 1650 (11.5 cm x 10 cm) Exhibited Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1977.
54. **Miniature of a prince**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, 1st half of the 18th century. (24.3 x 15.1 cm)
55. **Miniature of a princess smoking a hookah on terrace**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, 2nd half of the 18th century. (22 cm x 14.2 cm)
56. **Miniature of a princess**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, 2nd half of the 18th century. (17 cm x 12 cm)
57. **Miniature of a prince**, from an unidentified album. Mughal, late 18th to early 19th century. (21.7 cm x 13 cm)

[End of the Glen Lowry Catalogue]

Additional Manuscripts

58. **Leaf of the *Khamseh Namah* by Nizami**, last chapter of which relates the romance of Layla and Majnun. 17th century (dated 1010 A.H.) (26.3 cm x 16.5 cm) From the collection of Khan Monif. Friends of the Library, 1928.
59. **Leaf from *Khamseh* by Nizami**, illuminated borders. 16th century. (27.7 cm x 16.8 cm).
Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan, 1938.
60. **Leaf of calligraphy** by Mir Ali, written in double columns, mounted in a tinted border with a floral pattern in colours. 16th century. (25.5 cm x 15.6 cm).
61. **One leaf from the *Biographies of Sufis*** by Abd-al-Rahman, son of Achmad-al-Jami. 1478 C.E. (dated A.H. 883). First owner was Kandahar [?].
62. **Leaf from the *Shahnama* of Firdausi**, in calligraphic style called "Shekasteh Nastaliq." Early 17th century. (32.5 cm x 20.6 cm) Possibly from the same manuscript as 63.
Presented by Lady Roddick through the P.W. & J.C. Redpath Fund.
63. **One leaf from the *Shahnama* of Firdaws**i, in calligraphic style called "Shekasteh Nastaliq." Early 17th century. (32.5 cm x 20.6 cm) Possibly from the same MS as 62.\
64. **Illustration of man fighting with a dog-like animal**, verso contains glued leaf from a beautifully written Koran with ornamental designs. Late 16th century. (22 cm x 16.2 cm)
From the Von Scherling Collection. Friends of the Library, 1939.

65. **Two leaves of a manuscript relating to the history of Joseph**, composed by Firdawsi and calligraphy written by Baba Shah Isphahni, Master of Mir Ali. (22 cm x 14 cm) Purchased 1925.

See MS 70 for what may be two leaves from the same manuscript. The paper colour, size and style of decoration are very similar. The spacing of the holes made by the binding thread also agrees (Michael Brown, April 1996).

66. **Leaf with calligraphy**, written on both sides; fine calligraphy over a decorated background and coloured border with gold tracery. 17th century. (36.1 x 24.1 cm) Museum Fund, 1928.

67. **Leaf from manuscript copy of The Bustan of Sa'adi**, with unwan and decorated border. 1st half of the 16th century (Safawid Period). (33 cm x 42 cm).

68. **Illustration** probably from Qazwini's work on the wonders of creation, with text in Persian. Possibly from 16th century. (21.6 cm x 16.3 cm)

Glen Lowry believes this and number 69 to be a twentieth century copies (August 1977).

69. **Leaf with illumination of a prince consoling his brother**. 16th century. (29.1 cm x 18.3 cm) Presented by Khan Monif, 1938. See note on MS 68.

70. **Two leaves** with calligraphy and gold borders. (22 cm x 13.9 cm and 22.1 cm x 14 cm).

See MS 65 for what may be two leaves from the same manuscript. The paper colour, size and style of decoration are very similar. The spacing of the holes made by the binding thread also agrees (Michael Brown, April 1996).

71. **Leaf from a *Shahnama***, illuminated miniature with a border of leaves and animals in delicate gold tracery. 15th century. (41 cm x 26.3 cm). McGill University, 1925.
72. **Page from an Indo-Persian manuscript**, features three compartments: unwan with floral decoration on gold background, two lines of Sanskrit and a line of Arabic, a prince paying homage to the Blue God and another seated on a bird and holding a musical instrument. Late 17th century (29.4 cm x 21.5 cm). Friends of the Library, 1938.
73. **Two calligraphic leaves**, written by Mulla Mir Ali of Herat (d. 1518). 16th century.
(28.2 cm x 18.2 cm and 27.9 cm x 17.5 cm)
- This scribe, Mulla Mir Ali of Herat (d. 1518) known as “The Illustrious,” served his apprenticeship as a pupil of Mulla Zainuddin of Nishapur. He subsequently imitated and developed the style of another famous calligrapher, Mulla Ali of Mished (d. 1504)
74. **Page from *Shahnama*** illustrating the coronation of Kiewmars as the first king on earth. Early 17th century (32.4 cm x 19.9 cm). Friends of the Library 1938.
75. **Two leaves** from a *Shahnama* manuscript, gold marginal decorations and panels. 15th century. (41.2 cm x 25.6 cm and 41.1 cm x 26.3 cm). McGill University Library, 1925.
76. **Two manuscript pages** in the style of school of Herat; calligraphy by Ali-el-Muhedi. Borders with flora and animal decoration in gold. Early 16th century (29 cm x 36 cm).
77. **Line drawing**, attributed to Riza-I Abbasi (circa 1565-1635). (34 x 21.5 cm).