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### Front cover:

“Khusraw watching Shīrīn combing her hair after bathing”, miniature from the manuscript *Farhād wa Shīrīn* by Kamāl al-Dīn Bāfiqī Waḥshī and Muḥammad Shafīʿ al-Shīrāzī Wiṣāl in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number A 910. Copied by Muḥammad Ismāʿīl al-Anjawī al-Shīrāzī in Rabīʿ I 1284 / July 1867, fol. 51b, 6.4×4.2 cm.

### Back cover:

- Plate 1.** ‘*Unwān* and page decoration, a Qājār style, the same manuscript, fols. 1b – 2a, 14.3×8.8 cm.  
**Plate 2.** “Farhād in the castle of Shīrīn”, miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 48b, 4.9×3.2 cm.  
**Plate 3.** “Shīrīn sees Farhād while coming to see the works at Mount Bīsūtūn”, miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 65b, 4.8×5.1 cm.

THESA PUBLISHERS  
IN CO-OPERATION WITH  
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH  
OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES  
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



# **Manuscripta Orientalia**

*International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research*

Vol. 8 No. 2 June 2002



**THESA**  
**St. Petersburg**

## ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS OF KARL FABERGÉ. IV: POETRY AND MINIATURES (PART 1)

World literature has chapters that can vie in popularity with the legend of Khusraw and Shīrīn. The prototypes for the tale were provided by one of the last Sassanid emperors, Khusraw II Parwīz (Pehlavi *Abharvēr* — the Victorious) (590—628) and his Christian wife, Shīrīn (Pehlavi *Shīrēn* — the Sweet). It soon became a legend and spread throughout the folklore of the Near and Middle East, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, and India. It is possible that one of the initial reasons for the tale's popularity was that it combined the eternal charm of romance, loyalty and betrayal with memories of a vast and wealthy empire, its traditions and culture, all virtually eliminated by the expansion of Arabic-speaking Muslim civilization.

The story appears in Byzantine (Th. Simocatta), Armenian (Sebeos) and Syriac historical chronicles of the seventh century; a century later it finds its way into a work by al-Jāhīz (773—869), the famed chronicle of al-Ṭabarī (838—923), and later a number of other historical and geographic works. The eighth and early ninth century witnessed the rapid growth of folkloric variants of the legend, as well as literary versions, which reached their heights in the works of Firdawsī, Nizāmī, Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī and 'Alī Shīr Nawā'ī. The legend of the beautiful Shīrīn, her beloved Khusraw, the architect Farhād — Persian Hercules and craftsman whose image first appears in works of the late tenth century but goes back to a cycle of stories rooted in the most ancient Babylonian strata [1] — becomes an integral part of international culture.

This poetic tradition continued without interruption for nearly eight centuries up through the twentieth century, when the Iranian author Zabih Behruz published the screenplay "The Iranian Shah and the Armenian Queen". In 1942 the Azerbaijani poet Samed Vurgun created the romantic drama "Farhād and Shīrīn" using a number of motifs from the poem by Nizāmī. Six years later, Nazim Hikmet wrote the play "Legend of Love", based on a Turkish folkloric version of the legend. In 1961 Leningrad Kirov's Ballet hosted the lovely premiere of an eponymous ballet created in a collaboration between the composer Arif Melikov, choreographer Yuri Grigorovich, and artist Simon Virsaladze. In late April 2002, the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow presented a new choreographic treatment of the ballet.

Numerous issues related to the legend itself and its historical, folkloric, literary and artistic incarnations have given rise to a vast scholarly literature [2].

Among the Eastern manuscripts in the Fabergé collection, a lovely codex of the Qājār era in an adorned lacquer binding is especially elegant. The codex (call number A 910) [3] contains a romantic poem *Farhād wa Shīrīn* by Kamāl al-Dīn Bāfiqī Waḥshī (born in Bāfiq, Kirmān, spent nearly the whole of his life in Yazd, died in 1582) and Muḥammad Shaftī' al-Shīrāzī Wiṣāl (1783—1846), a great cultural figure in Iran during the nineteenth century. The former began the work, a *mathnawī* in the metre of Nizāmī's *Khusraw wa Shīrīn* with the details taken from Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī [4], and left us 1,000 *bayts*. In general, it "is lyrical rather than narrative: the sentimental incidents are in some respects reminiscent of the inspirations of Western poets of love and chivalry" [5]. This is a rare example of a work which was completed (1,800 further *bayts*) over some two and a half centuries and presents a certain level of inner unity.

The manuscript (113 fols., 15.7×10 cm, text: 10.7×5.6 cm, 2 columns of 10—11 lines to the page), a beautiful example of a handwritten book from Iran in the second half of the nineteenth century, was copied probably in Shīrāz in Indian ink in a lovely *shikastanasta'liq* on glossy thick crème-coloured paper of Eastern origin by Muḥammad Ismā'īl al-Anjāwī al-Shīrāzī, from the family of *sayyid* al-Ḥusayn, during Rabī' I 1284/July 1867. The *ḥāfiẓs* — pagination "holders" — consist of the first word on the next page and are placed in the middle of the lower margins of each even page.

It is richly illuminated: the text is separated by gilded areas in black bands (*tarsī' wa tahrīr*); fols. 1b—2a contain a Qājār style '*unwān* (14.3×8.8 cm) (see back cover of the present issue, *Plate 1*) are decorated over a gold and blue background with numerous interwoven motifs (*islīmī-i bargī, gul-i khatā'ī*) and indentations (*shurfā*) on the margins.

Three folios contain colour miniatures illustrating the text. They were produced in the Qājār style with obvious traces of European influence. The miniature on fol. 48b (4.9×3.2 cm, see back cover of the present issue, *Plate 2*) presents Farhād in the castle of Shīrīn. The one fol. 51b (6.4×4.2 cm, see front cover of the present issue) is devoted to the scene of Shīrīn bathing in the river when Khusraw accidentally sees her half nude sitting on the bank and combing her long black hair (it became obligatory for every illustrator of the poem). In the miniature on fol. 65b (4.8×5.1 cm, see

back cover of the present issue, *Plate 3*) Shīrīn sees Farhād while coming to see the works at Mount Bīsūtūn.

The manuscript is held in a lovely lacquer binding (16.0×9.2 cm) with a leather spine. The decorations on the outer covers (6 loops of convolvulus and a plant motif in gold, as well as flowers — *islīmī-yi bargī* — against a dark green background, see *fig. 1*) match in their execution the high quality of the calligraphy and miniatures.

Our collection holds yet another manuscript of a poem by Waḥshī, but without the continuation by Wiṣāl. The manuscript (call number A 69, 51 fols., 15.2×9.8 cm, text: 11.5×6.5 cm, 2 columns of 10—11 lines to the page, decorated 'unwān, see *fig. 2*) [6] is very similar in format and appearance, which suggests the existence of some kind of canon for copying such works.

Incidents taken from the legend of Khusraw, Farhād and Shīrīn were among the most popular subjects of Muslim book miniatures. Shīrīn is the personification of the best that a woman can be as imagined by Muslim men. Her modesty and fidelity, reasonableness and patience, her beauty, gentleness and womanly weakness made her image irresistibly attractive to men, and we can easily feel this when looking at the splendid miniatures in medieval manuscripts. She is indeed *la belle Dame* of the Muslim East, and no painter could help expressing a truly male admiration of her female nature.

In this regard our attention is drawn by two miniatures from Album (*muraqqa'*) X 3 of the Fabergé collection. One of them (fol. 18b, 13.0×19.1 cm, in a frame) rests in a complex yellow-blue-orange border adorned in gold (outer dimensions: 25.7×19.0 cm). The middle, and widest, part of the border contains a Persian inscription in *nasta'liq*; groups of words are separated by areas of orange pigment with golden dabs. The margins display a yellow background with small flowers in white. The miniature (*fig. 3*) depicts a half-dressed young woman who has just emerged from the water. Two servant-girls assist her, while a young man on a horse observes them from behind a hill. In its iconography, the composition closely resembles standard miniatures that illustrate the episode where Khusraw observes Shīrīn as she combs her long hair after bathing (cf. *fig. 4*). But the upper right corner of the miniature contains an inscription: شمس تبریز (Shams Tabrīz), while a Persian inscription in *nasta'liq* encircles the border with a text about this person [7]:

عاقلاً آگاه منم دورمشو دورمشو روح منم مطلق  
مفتوح منم

"I am a wise man, do not leave, do not depart; I am joy,  
I am the spirit, I am perfection conquered".

شمس تبریز منم صبح سحر خیز منم غنی کن ز کنج قناعت  
مرا تو هستی نگهدار آمان من

"I am Shams from Tebrīz; I am the early morning,  
enrich me with a snippet of pleasure; You are the guardian  
of my faith".

مطلق مصبوح منم دورمشو دورمشو یار منم غار منم  
دلبر دلدار منم غنچه منم خار منم دورمشو دورمشو نفخ  
نفخ منم صور منم قرب منم دور منم

"I am morning perfection; do not leave, do not depart; I  
am a friend, I am the universe (or: I am a loyal friend), I am  
a [brave] beloved, I am the bud and the thorn, do not leave,  
do not leave, I am a cheek full of breath and the horn [of  
Isrāfil], I am near and far".

رکن منم راه منم صاحب درگاه منم شمس تبریز منم صبح  
سحر خیز منم شهید و شکر ریز منم دورمشو دورمشو  
دورمشو علاج وا

"I am a pillar, I am the way, I am the owner of the pal-  
ace, I am Shams of Tebrīz, I am the early morning, I am a  
martyr and sweet-tongued [orator], do not leave, do not  
leave, do not leave, [I am] healing and..."

Shams of Tebrīz is an unusually vivid figure. The spiri-  
tual mentor of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, he was a decisive influ-  
ence on the great poet's life and work. His influence was so  
profound that after Shams's death, Rūmī felt that he "lived  
on in him" and began to sign his poems with Shams's name.  
Shams Tabrīz claimed to have reached the highest, third  
level of the spiritual hierarchy — *ma'shūq* or "the *qutb* of  
the beloved ones". According to Annemarie Schimmel,  
"the world owes to his inspiration the collection of the most  
fiery mystical love lyrics, the *Dīwān-i Shams-i Tabrīz* by  
Rūmī, and without his influence Rūmī's *Mathnawī* would  
not had been composed either, for he was the inspiring  
power behind every world that Rūmī wrote" [8].

The reverse of the folio (*fig. 5*) contains a calligraphy  
sample (*qit'a*): four parallel lines in large-scale *nasta'liq*  
written into three cartouches (the background of a central  
one, which contains two lines, is orange, the background  
of the other two is light-yellow, outer dimensions:  
20.0×3.9 cm).

The Persian texts are as follows:

الهی جعفر را در دو جهان عزت بده که ترا دریا بم بیابم مکن  
کرمرد می بسیار خواری

"O God! Grant Ja'far greatness in both worlds, that I might  
find Thee, find Thee!  
Make not the people deaf who [dwell] in a most humiliated  
state".

یا علی مرا نصرت دوجهان را عطا کن

"O 'Alī! Grant me victory in both worlds".

محمد مهدی حسن حسین فاطمه است محمود محمد احمد  
است علی ولی است محمد تقی

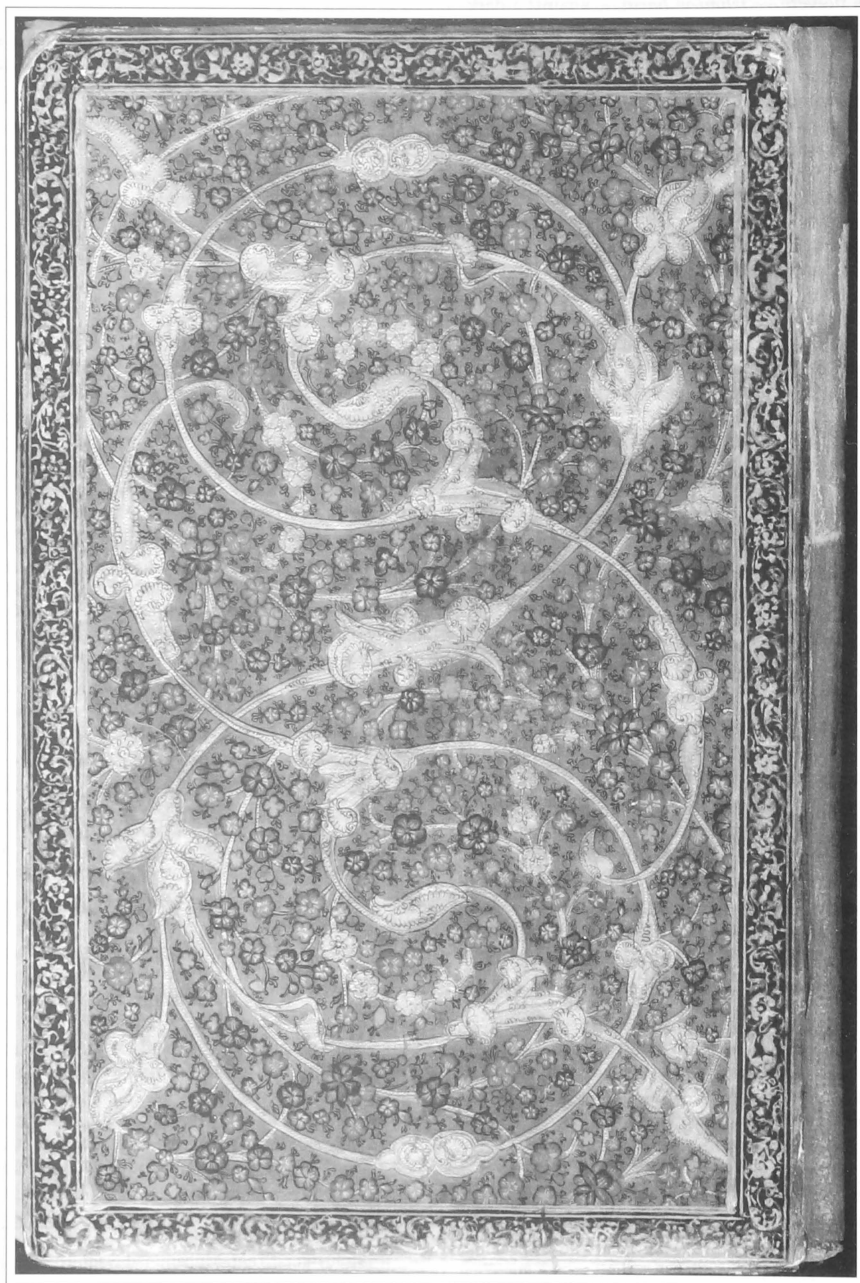
"Muḥammad Maḥdī, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Fāṭima there are.  
Maḥmūd, Muḥammad, Aḥmad there is. 'Alī is the favorite  
[of Allah]". Muḥammad Taqī.

محمد تقی محمد نقی حسن عسکری

"Muḥammad Taqī, Muḥammad Naqī, Ḥasan Askarī [9]".

الهی من بنده ضعیف و کثیف ام چو تنپور است اندر  
فراخی

"O God! I am your infirm and unclean slave, slothful, lost in  
pleasures".

*Fig. 1*

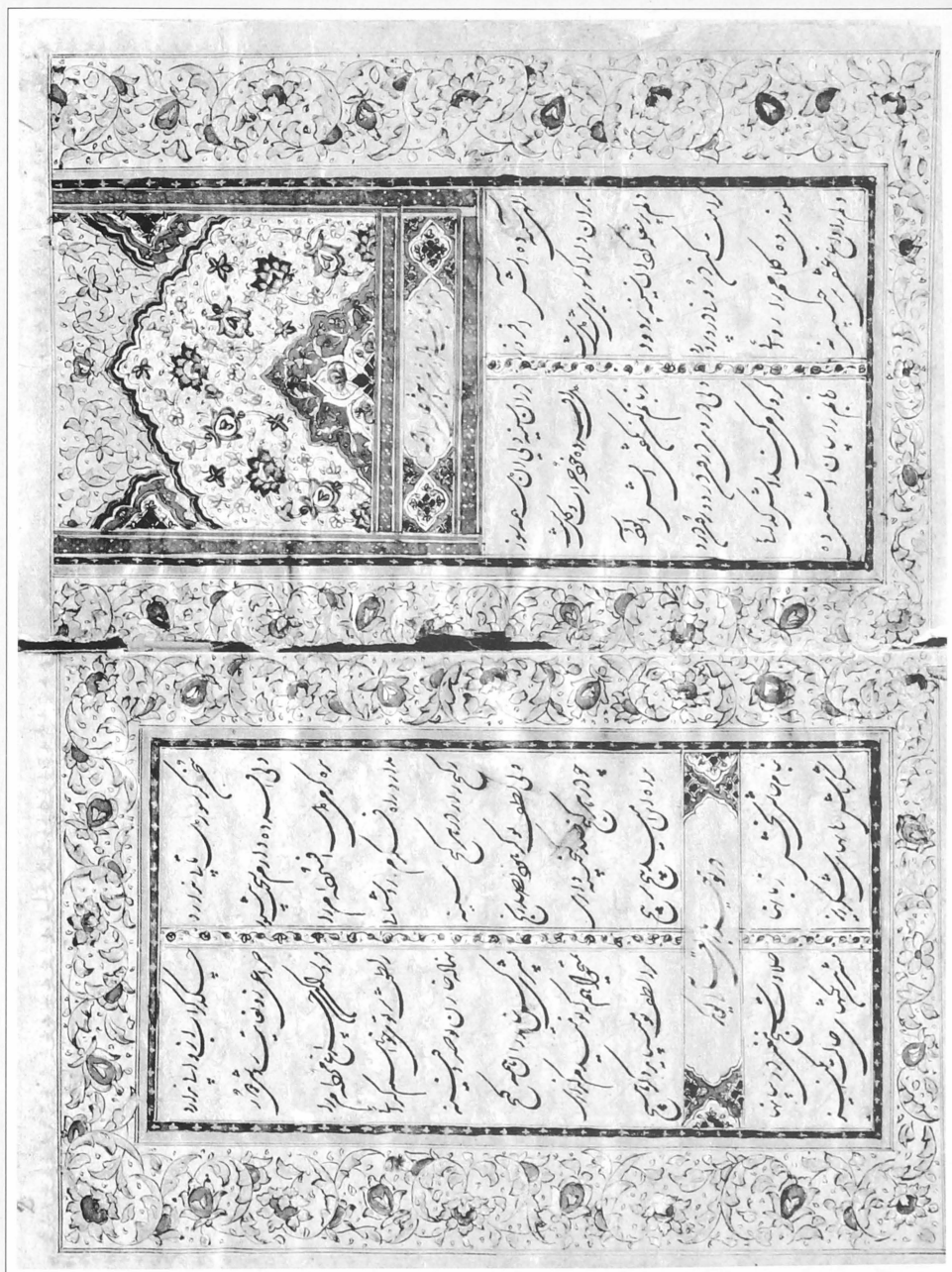


Fig. 2

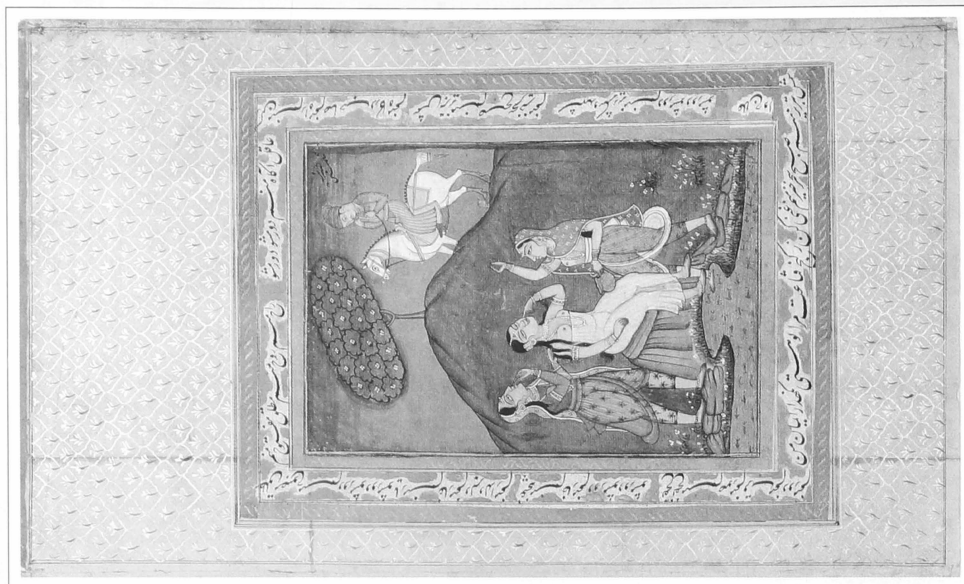


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



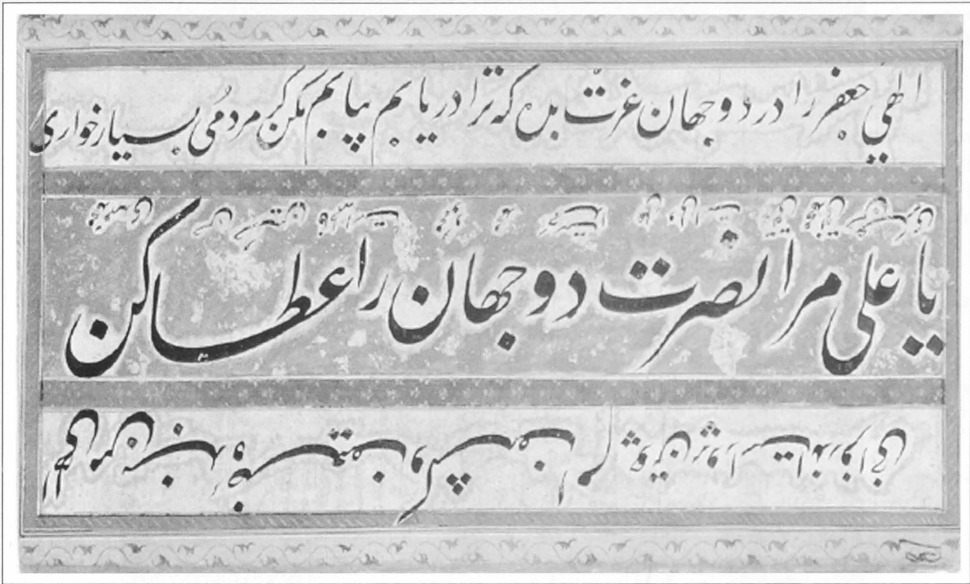


Fig. 5

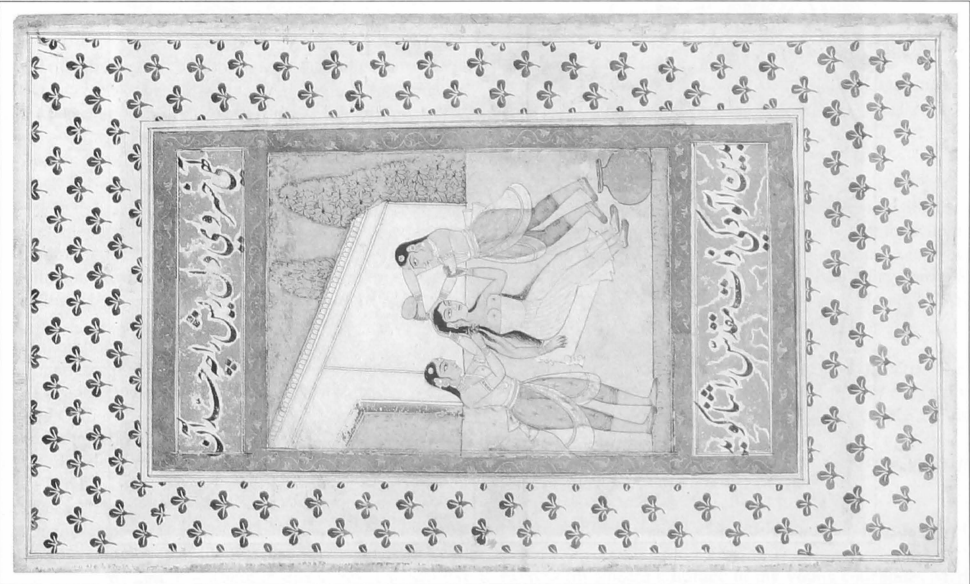


Fig. 6





The miniature on fol. 15a (fig. 6) is a continuation of the miniature on fol. 18b described above. A young woman sits not on the shore, but in the courtyard of her home. Servant-girls busy themselves with her hair; one of them uses the contents of the vessel that she holds in the first miniature. Both folios are decorated by means of one and the same devices (for example, orange pigment with golden dabs).

The miniature (12.5×17.0 cm, in a border) rests in a complex green border adorned in gold (outer dimensions: 15.4×28.0 cm). Two cartouches above and below contain a Persian inscription in *nasta'liq*, groups of words are separated by areas of orange pigment with golden dabs. The margins display a light-yellow background with small flowers in green.

The Persian texts are as follows:

الهی خسروی دل ریش را چه حسد آن

"O God! Why should the king envy [a lover] with a broken heart?"

بدین الود کی ذات مقدس را ثنا گوید

"In [an atmosphere of] such immorality they praise the sacred essence (the soul)".

The reverse of the folio (fig. 7) contains calligraphy samples (*qit'a*) written into 3 cartouches and a wide frame around the central rectangular cartouche. The central cartouche (8.2×15.3 cm) is enclosed in a yellow border with gold. It contains a text of 12 lines (*naskh*) on a light yellow background. The text is in Arabic and contains Persian words. It is a careless rough draft with numerous repetitions and corrections. Eliminating the latter, one can grasp the meaning of these religious and ethnical maxims, which were copied as an exercise in calligraphy. For example:

'Ja'far b. Muḥammad said — may peace be upon both of them —

'[...] Truly has Allah trained me through ordinary deeds and trained you through ordinary deeds.

And I fear that He will remove ordinary deeds from me".

The upper and bottom cartouches contain texts in Persian written against orange background with golden dabs:

خط خوب برادر دلپذیر است چو روح اندرش برنا پیر است

"[Lovely handwriting] brings joy; brother, in whom the spirit of a youth and wings are combined".

ا کر منعم شوی آرایش او اگر مفلس شوی دستگیر است

"If you become rich, you are His adornment; if you become poor, He is your defense".

Persian text written around the perimeter (against green background with golden dabs):

امامی کو امامت را حسن بود حسن آمد که جمله حسن ظن بود

"The *imām* like him adorned the imamate.

Hasan came (or 'good') that all might be benevolent (or 'reason correctly')".

هم حسن وهمه خلق وهمه حلم همه لطف وهمه جود وهمه حلم

"Striving toward beauty (good), toward all that has a good character, toward all dreams (and beauty, and good character, and all dreams), all mercy, generosity and humility (patience)".

الهی مرا در رحمت خویش نکه دار

"O God! Keep me in Your mercy!"

یا محمد الرسول الله فتح ده مرا

"O Muḥammad, messenger of Allah! Grant me victory!"

## Notes

1. Key elements in the legend of Farhād are paralleled in the group of legends connected with Queen Semiramis, for whom the prototype was Sammuramat, wife of the Assyrian king Adadnērari III. By the hill of Bīsītūn, she ordered a castle and garden constructed; at her behest, the mount Oront was split in two and a canal dug to supply the city of Ekbatan with water. See G. Iu. Aliev, *Legenda o Khosrove i Shirin v literaturakh narodov Vostoka* (The Legend of Khusraw and Shīrīn in the Literatures of Eastern Peoples) (Moscow, 1960), pp. 56, 74, 82—4.

2. Useful bibliography could be found in the above-mentioned work by Aliev (see n. 1).

3. The manuscript was displayed at the exhibition "Pages of Perfection" ("De Bagdad à Ispahan" in Paris), Paris—New York—Salzburg—Lugano, 1995—1997, and described in details by Oleg Akimushkin in the exhibition's catalogue *Pages of Perfection. Islamic Paintings and Calligraphy from the Russian Academy of Sciences*, ed. Yu. A. Petrosyan (Milano, 1995), pp. 298—9; there are also French, German and Italian editions of the catalogue.

4. For a detailed retelling of this narrative, see H. W. Duda, *Ferhad und Schirin. Die literarische Geschichte eines persischen Sagenstoffes* (Praha, 1933), pp. 110—4.

5. H. Masse, "Farhād and Shīrīn", *Encyclopaedia of Islam* CD-ROM edition v. 1.0 (Leiden, 1999).

6. The manuscript contains an owner's note dated A. H. 1315 (fol. 1a). In 1905, it was acquired for the Asiatic Museum by Orientalist Leonid Bogdanov, employee of the Russian-Persian bank in Tehran.

7. As has been the case elsewhere in this series, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my young colleagues Maria Rezvan and Boris Norik, and most of all to Prof. O. F. Akimushkin, for their help in translating and interpreting the Persian texts.

8. A. Schimmel, "Shams Tabriz", *Encyclopaedia of Islam* CD-ROM edition v. 1.0 (Leiden, 1999). The novel "Black Book" by Orhan Pamuk, the "Turkish Umberto Eco", which has been translated into many languages, gives some sense of the vibrant spiritual and intellectual impetus that Shams Tabriz left behind him and that still could be found in modern Turkey.

9. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh *imāms* of the Twelver Shī'a.

## Illustrations

## Front cover:

"Khusraw watching Shīrīn combing her hair after bathing", miniature from the manuscript *Farhād wa Shīrīn* by Kamāl al-Dīn Bāfiqī Waḥshī and Muḥammad Shafī' al-Shīrāzī Wiṣāl in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number A 910. Copied by Muḥammad Ismā'il al-Anjawī al-Shīrāzī in Rabi' I 1284 / July 1867, fol. 51b, 6.4×4.2 cm.

## Back cover:

**Plate 1.** 'Unwān and page decoration, a Qājār style, the same manuscript, fols. 1b—2a, 14.3×8.8 cm.

**Plate 2.** "Farhād in the castle of Shīrīn", miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 48b, 4.9×3.2 cm.

**Plate 3.** "Shīrīn sees Farhād while coming to see the works at Mount Bisitūn", miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 65b, 4.8×5.1 cm.

## Inside the text:

**Fig. 1.** Lacquer binding with a leather spine, the same manuscript.

**Fig. 2.** 'Unwān and page decoration, manuscript *Farhād wa Shīrīn* by Kamāl al-Dīn Bāfiqī Waḥshī in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number A 69. Copied in Persia, second half of the 19th century, fols. 1b—2a, 9.8×15.2 cm.

**Fig. 3.** "Khusraw watching Shīrīn bathing in the river", watercolour, gouache and gold on paper, miniature in *Muraqqa'* (Album), the Fabergé collection at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number X 3. Deccan, second half of the 18th century, fol. 18b, 12.5×22.5 cm.

**Fig. 4.** Tracing of miniature "Khusraw watching Shīrīn bathing" from *Khamṣa* by Niẓāmī, manuscript 364 at the Victoria Museum, Calcutta. Isfahān, A. H. 1041 / A. D. 1631—1632, fol. 19, 16.0×28.0 cm. Cited from *Miniatures Illuminations of Niẓāmī's "Khamṣa"*, compl. by Fazila Sulcymanova (Tashkent, 1985), No. 83.

**Fig. 5.** Calligraphic sample (*qit'a*), watercolour, ink and gold on paper, *Muraqqa'* (Album), the Fabergé collection at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number X 3. Deccan, second half of the 18th century, fol. 18a, 12.5×22.5 cm.

**Fig. 6.** "Servant-girls busy with their lady's hair after bathing", watercolour, ink and gold on paper, the same Album, fol. 15a, 12.5×22.5 cm.

**Fig. 7.** Calligraphic sample (*qit'a*), watercolour, ink and gold on paper, the same Album, fol. 15b, 12.5×22.5 cm.