The collection of Oriental manuscripts in the St. Petersburg State University Library cannot compare with famous St. Petersburg manuscript depositories, such as the National Library of Russia and the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). Islamic manuscripts in the University are now concentrated in the Oriental Department of the University Library which serves the needs of the Oriental Faculty of the University. The teaching of three Oriental languages — Arabic, Persian, and Turkish — had been provided since the foundation of the Imperial St. Petersburg University in 1819, and a significant amount of books and manuscripts in these languages began to come to the University from different sources.

In the middle of the nineteenth century manuscripts came from three large depositories: from the Imperial Kazan University, the Lycée de Richelieu in Odessa, and the 1st Gymnasium of Kazan. Manuscripts from these three places remain the most valuable part of the collection. All were registered in the lists of Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts, made by the University scholars. The first was compiled and published by C. Salemann (1849—1916), with the help of Baron V. R. Rosen (1849—1908) in 1888 [1], the second one was edited by Professor Alexander Romaskevich (1885—1942) in 1925 [2]; and the last, a catalogue of the newly arrived or newly discovered Persian and Turkish manuscripts in the University collection, was prepared by Professor A. Tagirdjanov (1907—1983) in 1967 [3].

It seems rather strange that the manuscript we would like to discuss in the present article [4] was mentioned only in the last list of 1967. It is also difficult to imagine that Salemann, who won his fame as an extra-thorough librarian, would have omitted it in his edition. Be that as it may, the earliest information on this codex in the University Library is contained in the 1967 catalogue by Professor Tagirdjanov. The MS has been registered under the title Tarjuma-yi nathri-yi Shâh-nâma. Jild-i duwwum (call number 1378) [5]. One can easily assume that it is the translation of the celebrated Shâh-nâma by Abû'l-Qâsim Firdawsi-ya Ŧust, popular at the Turkic courts to such extent that during the last Saljuqs, for instance, even the town walls of their capital were adorned with Firdawsi's verses [6].

It is well known that Turkish literature in the early Middle Ages was greatly influenced by literature of Persia and partly of Mawarannahr. Turkish court poets had a good command of the Persian and Arabic languages and were well trained in Persian and Arabic poetry. Probably it was one of the reasons why Firdawsi's Shâh-nâma was translated into Turkish rather late, as compared, for example, with the brief Arabic version of the poem dated back to the beginning of the thirteenth century. This was made between 615/1218 and 623/1227 by the Arabic historian Qâwâm al-Dîn al-Mu'aqqam 'Isa (d. 1227) [7].

As far as I know, there are two Turkish translations considered to be among the earliest ones so far survived [8]. A versified Turkish translation was made by Tûhâr-‘Alî Efendi in 916/1510—11 for the Mamûlîk Sultan Qânsûh Gûrî (r. 1501—17) [9]. According to Ch. Rieu, G. N. Meredith-Owens and others, the author of this version calls himself either Sharîf or Sharîfî [10], or Sharîf Amîdî [11], or Hûsâyîn b. Hasan Muhammâd al-Hûsâyînî al-Amîdî [12], or Hûsâyîn b. Hasan Muhammâd al-Hûsâyînî al-Ḥanâfî [13]. He finished his work on Monday 2 Dhûl-Ḥija 916/2 March 1511.

The second Turkish version of Shâh-nâma (in prose) was observed by A. A. Romaskevich in his article published in a special volume on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of Firdawsi. As Romaskevich believed, the translation had been executed in 1030/1621—22 by some Maḥîf, a court official of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618—22) [14]. This information of Romaskevich was
most likely based on the MS in question from the St. Petersburg State University Library, but the scholar was not correct when mentioning both the name of the author of the writing and the date of its compilation.

In the introduction which our MS contains there is the name of the author of this translation of Firdawsi's poem. He calls himself Madhî (fol. 2b). This name is also mentioned on the last folio (373b) as the name of the composer of the work.

The copy has the dedication to Sultan Osman II. On fol. 124a the title of the book is mentioned as Kitab-i 'Uthman-khan. The "Story of Iskandar" is concluded by a poetical dedication to the same Sultan 'Uthman-khan (fol. 174b):


The epilogue comprising the praise of Sultan Osman (fol. 373b) presents another evidence that the volume was finished in the reign of Osman II:


So we can assert that the author of the Turkish prose version of Shâh-nâma was a compiler named Madhî who made his work for Sultan Osman II in 1621-22, shortly before the tragic death of this ruler.

On fol. 373b there is a colophon where the name of the transcriber and the date of copying of the MS are given:


That is, the MS was finished in the middle of Rabi' I 1030/December-January 1620-21 by Ibrâhîm Jawrî (Turk. Cevrî)

The MS from the St. Petersburg University Library deserves special attention because of at least two reasons. The very fact that the illustrated codex comprises the Turkish translation of Shâh-nâma, dedicated to the Ottoman Sultan Osman II, is interesting to a high degree. It is known that this sultan, who was the first to attempt to abolish the Janissary corps, inefficiency of which was evident as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, and, according to some accounts, to transfer the Ottoman capital to Egypt, was extremely unpopular among his court officials. His final execution in 1622 might be regarded as a result of this utmost unpopularity. The writings dedicated to this sultan are very few. The translation is among those few ones. Judging from the praise of Osman by the author of the translation, a takhallus of the latter, Madhî (from madhî — “praise”), was not accidental at all. Most likely, the author was one of those few high-ranking Ottoman officials who approved the politics and activities of this sultan.

That the author of the translation was a court official is not quite clear. The leaves of the book are lacking miniatures.

Certainly, Ibrâhîm Cevrî (d. 1654) is an outstanding figure in the history of the Turkish art and literature of the seventeenth century. He was born between 1595-1600 and received good education, judging from his early appointment as kâtib (secretary) at the Imperial Chancery and his connection to the famous Sûfîs, mawlâwî Shaykh Ismâ'îl Anqarawî, as well as to a representative of the Melami-Bayramî order, Sârî Abdullah Efendi. His link with mawlâwî order is also confirmed by his learning the art of calligraphy from the mawlâwî darwish.

Ibrâhîm Cevrî's life proves his being an extraordinary person. His work as a secretary was not long. It is known that as early as 1620, when he was about 20-25 years old, he copied the Mathnawi by Jalâl al-Dîn Rûmî for Head of the State Chancery (Diwân-i Humâyûn), ra'îs al-kuttab Emir Çelebi Efendi. It must have been a great success, since Ibrâhîm Cevrî retired soon and became a professional transcriber and the date of copying of the MS was finished for most eminent Ottoman court officials. The account has survived that he could copy 1,000 bayts within one day and earn 1,000 akçe. He is known to have copied Mathnawi twenty-two times, and several writings in prose of great volume, such as Târikh-i Wâssaf, Kunh al-akhbâr by 'Alî, and, as we can see, Madhî's translation of Firdawsi's poem.

Ibrâhîm Cevrî was not an ordinary copyist, he was a great master of calligraphy who invented a new script known as shikasta-yi ta'tîq (Turk. tâlîq karmast). Manuscripts copied by him were highly appreciated, as seen, for example, from the fact that the Ottoman Sultan Selim III (1789-1808) presented a copy of Mathnawi transcribed by Ibrâhîm Cevrî to the famous poet and mawlâwî Shaykh Ghâlib (1757-1798).

It is worth noting that Ibrâhîm Cevrî was also a poet, an author of Diwân (38 copies survived), of several poems (mathnâvî). A great many of his writings and manuscripts copied by him are preserved in the manuscript collections throughout the world [15].

All this makes our MS of the Turkish translation of Firdawsi's Shâh-nâma especially noteworthy. It is all the more so since the MS contains miniatures.

The history of the MS is fairly mysterious. Its provenance is not quite clear. The leaves of the book are lacking any Oriental owners' seal. On the fly-leaf one can see an ex-libris with illegible but rather characteristic signature. The same signature we encounter in the MS from the Muslim collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). This manuscript contains an Arabic military treatise under the title Kitâb al-makhzûn fi jâmî 'alî fî al-funun by Ibn Abî Khazzâm (call number C 686) [16]. The treatise has similar ex-libris with the signature by the same hand: "Ex Bibliotheca Orientalis Wenceslai" that belongs to Prince W. Rzewuski, a famous traveller and collector of Oriental rarities. It is known that in 1808 he brought from the East some very valuable items. It is most probably that among them was a manuscript comprising the above-mentioned treatise.

In the description of Turkish manuscripts of the Institut des Langues Orientales the present MSS are preserved in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies collection) published by
Plate 3
V. D. Smirnov in 1897 there is a mention of the MS of the Turkish translation of Firdawsí's Šah-náma which at that time was found in Odessa [17]. According to the evidence of Smirnov, this MS was preserved in the collection of the Musee de la Societe d'Histoire et d'Archeologie [18]. The description of the copy made by Smirnov leads us to conclude that it is the same MS that we describe here, in this article. We can only guess at what time it was brought to St. Petersburg. Most probably it was sold or donated by the Museum to the Lycée de Richelieu in Odessa and afterwards, as a part of the Lycée collection, was transferred to the St. Petersburg University Library.

The MS represents only the second of the two volumes of the Turkish translation in prose. The codex contains the stories of Kay-Khusraw, Isfandiyar, Gushpshap, Farâmarz, Bahman, Dârâb, Dârâ b. Dârâb, Iskandar, Shâpûr, Tâyîr, Mânî ("Mânî-naqshâsh"), Yazdagird b. Shâpûr, Bahram Ghûr, Frûz, Qubâd b. Frûz, Khusraw Nushirvân, Khurmuzd, Bahram Chûbîna, Khusraw Parvîz, Khusraw and Shîrîn, and Yazdagird. Most likely the translator used the Persian text of Šâh-nâma which comprised numerous interpolations, the largest being the writing well-known as Bahman-nâma.

The structure of the work is as follows. First the author gives a versified passage from the main body of Firdawsí's text in Persian; and after that he gives his adaptation of the poem in Turkish, commenting on and decorating plentifully the text in prose with Turkish verse.

Three leaves in the codex are missing (between fols. 32 and 33, 110 and 111, 215 and 216). The last folio contained probably a miniature referring to the section entitled دايساوال ملوئ طوايت. In all, there are 373 folios in the MS. The size of the folios: 36.0 x 23.0 cm, and the surface occupied by the text measures 29.0 x 14.9 cm.

There are 23 lines per page. The text written in large-size nasta'lıq is framed with gold and black rules. The margins of the pages containing miniatures are covered with floral designs made in gold and silver. The text is written in Indian ink, the key words are in cinnabar.

The binding is European, of cherry-brown leather mounted on cardboard. During restoration, the leather of the previous binding, also European, was patched on the outside of the covers with a border of gilt-stamped floral motifs border.

Incipit:

بناه هدایا زمین و زمان که بخشید تبر حسروان عزوزیان...

Excerpt:

وجودی سعادت‌های موجودی اولا کتیبه کیشی همان سختی مسعود اولا...

The MS is remarkable with its fine miniatures. In all, there are 29 miniatures and an 'unwan performed by a professional hand, unfortunately, anonymous. It is even possible that the miniatures were made by several artists. Since this copy was most likely intended to be presented to the Sultan himself, it may be assumed that the miniatures were created by the artists from the workshop of one of the most prominent painters of Sultan Osman II's reign where Naqâsh Hasan, Ahmad Naqshî, Qalandâr Pasha and Mr. Sa'id Muhammad (Mehmet) worked [19].

The tradition of illustration of Firdawsí's poem was several centuries old by the early seventeenth century. During this period some illustrations became almost obligatory for all artists, independently of their school or their individual attitudes. For instance, such episode as "Rustam wading off the stone thrown at him by Bahman" (cf. e. g. a miniature on the same subject in the MS from the Dorn collection in the National Library of Russia [20]) was pictured quite traditionally. Rustam was shown in an unnatural pose, with the leopard helmet on his head (see miniature in our MS on fol. 94a). The miniature illustrating an episode with Isfandiyar slaugthering the dragon (cf. e. g. a corresponding miniature from Šâh-nâma of Firdawsí, published by Sotheyb's and Aboulala Soudavar [21]) was also almost identical in numerous copies of Firdawsí's work.

Despite a number of investigations dedicated to Turkish painting has appeared recently [22], Ottoman painting, rare in western and especially in Russian collections, has not received sufficient reflection. We cannot but share the opinion of Ernst Grube that the very special qualities of the Ottoman style of painting set it apart from any other school in the Islamic world. It differs greatly from both the lyrical grace of the Persian miniatures and the detailed perfection of Mughal painting. Notable also is the fact that Byzantine painting, as well as European, in particular, Italian one, had but insignificant effect on the Ottoman art of painting since the time of Gentille Bellini's visit to Istanbul around 1477 [23], or between 1479 and 1481 [24]. Although the influence of Italian painting was considerable during Mehmet II's rule (r. 1451—1481), it was strong in the genre of portrait painting alone.

The Persian style most noticeably influenced the Ottoman painting beginning from the early sixteenth century and attained its zenith at the end of the century. The channel of this influence was not only the Persian artists and numerous Persian manuscripts brought to Istanbul by Selim I (r. 1512—1520) as a result of his campaigns against Safavid Iran. The models for Ottoman artists were also luxurious Persian manuscripts presented to Ottoman sultans. It is known that the splendid illuminated Šâh-nâma (the famous Edmond Arthur Houghton Šâh-nâma [25], dating back to ca. 1522—1540 [26]) was sent in 1566—67 by Shâh Tâhmâsp (1524—1576) to Selim II (r. 1566—1574) as a gift on the occasion of the Sultan's ascending the throne. A Safavid delegation of 320 officials and 400 merchants arrived then in the Ottoman capital with presents laden on thirty-four camels. A list of the gifts was made by Ottoman officials. The Qur'ân (supposedly copied by Imâm 'All; d. 661) and a copy of the Šâh-nâma decorated with 258 miniatures (its copying had taken twenty years) were shown as the most precious items of these gifts [27].

In February 1594, Sultan Murâd III (r. 1574—1595) had got amongst the other gifts from 'Abdallâh II, who was sent as an ambassador of Uzbek-khân, another fine copy of the Šâh-nâma dated by 1564—65 and illustrated with twenty-eight miniatures made in the Bukharian style of that time. In September 1619, Shâh 'Abbâs (1587—1629) sent to Sultan Osman II several manuscripts richly decorated
with miniatures, together with other valuable gifts, such as
elephants, a panther, and rhinoceroses [28].

Copies of Firdawsi's Shāh-nāma performed by Turkish
artists have been catalogued by M. And. A major part of
them is now preserved in the Topkapı Sarayi Museum
(8 MSS), in the Library of the Istanbul University (3 MSS),
in the British Library (1 MS), in the collection of Edwin
Binney 3rd (1 MS), in the New York Public Library, the
Spencer Collection (1 MS) in the Bibliothèque Nationale in
Paris (1 MS), and in the Uppsala University Library (1 MS).
In all, there preserved six hundred miniatures [29].

The collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute
of Oriental Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences) pos-
sesses two more copies of the versified Turkish translation
of Shāh-nāma dating back to the seventeenth century (call
numbers: B 3690 - first volume, E 8 — full copy). In both
of them Sharif Amid is named as the author of the writ-
ings. MS E 8 has two miniatures made by rather dainty
hand [30]. They are not mentioned by M. And.

As was mentioned, our MS contains 29 miniatures the
list of which we are giving here. They are typical of the
seventeenth-century Ottoman miniature painting that ab-
sorbed many elements of various schools of Persian paint-
ing. In Dr Akimushkin's opinion, all the miniatures of
the manuscript were produced in the manner close to the Shīrāz
commercial style. Some of them, however, represent the
style suffered a great influence of Tabrīz, or rather Qazwīn.
The miniatures related to this last one are marked in our list
with a "Q" (the figures in the brackets are given to single
out the peculiarities of the miniatures inside this group, re-
fecting probably the individuality of the artists):

1) fol. 6a — "Bīzhan killing Hūsān";
2) fol. 12b — "Gūdarz killing Pirān" (Q 3);
3) fol. 20b — "Kāy-Khusraw killing Shīda";
4) fol. 50b — "Gushtāṣp leading captured Īlyās to
Qaysar" (Q 3);
5) fol. 61a — "Battle between Iranians and Turanians";
6) fol. 78b — "Battle of Isfandiyār with the Dragon";
7) fol. 94a — "Rustam warding off the stone thrown at
him by Bahman" (Q 2);
8) fol. 116a — "Rustam and Zīvārā fallen in the wolf
trap. Rustam killing Shīghad who has hidden behind
a platan";
9) fol. 135b — "Bahman ordering to finish off
Farāmarz shoot by the arrows" (Q 3);
10) fol. 146a — "Pashutan persuading Bahman to
free Zāl";
11) fol. 157b — "Barzīn Āzar defeating the Black
Man" (Q 3);
12) fol. 170a — "Bahman perishing in the Dragon's
throat" (Q 3);
13) fol. 193a — "Iskandar defeating Fūr";
14) fol. 196a — "Iskandar at the court of Qaydāfā";
15) fol. 205a — "Iskandar listening to Isrāfīl";
16) fol. 233a — "Shāpūr destroying the Qaysar's
camp" (Q 1);
17) fol. 239a — "Bahram Ghūr hunting";
18) fol. 243a — "Bahram Ghūr's enthrone after
his killing the lions";
19) fol. 258a — "Bahram and Shingil watching
chawgān players";
20) fol. 276a — "Nūshīravīn assaulting the Rūm citi-
del";
21) fol. 289a — "Arrival of the Khāqqān's daughter to
Nūshīravīn";
22) fol. 296b — "Buzurjmīr at the court of Nūshīravīn
guesses the riddle of the Rūm envoy";
23) fol. 309a — "Hurmuzd appointing Bahram
Chūbīnā the commander of the battle with the Shāh Sāvā";
24) fol. 315a — "Bahram Chūbīnā defeating Sāva" (Q 4);
25) fol. 329b — "Bahram Chūbīnā being pursued by
Khusraw Parwīz who kills his horse with the Gustakhīm's
arrow" (Q 1);
26) fol. 339a — "Angel Surūsh saving Khusraw Par-
wīz";
27) fol. 346b — "Bahram Chūbīnā's fighting with the
Kapī lion" (Q 2);
28) fol. 356b — "Khusraw and Shīrīn";
29) fol. 368a — "Shepherd of Khusraw killing
Yazdīgīr".

This article is not aiming to give a full scholarly analy-
sis of the miniatures presented in the manuscript. Our aim
was much more modest — that is, to call attention of spe-
cialists to this most valuable illustrated Ottoman copy of
Firdawsi's Shāh-nāma preserved in the St. Petersburg
University Library. Taking into account that Ottoman il-
lustrated manuscripts are not numerous and every item is of
great interest to the scholars, we decided to give a descrip-
tion of the MS in this article. We hope that this brief pres-
entation will attract the attention of all those interested
in the field.

N o t e s
1. C. Salemann, V. Rosen, Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum qui in Bibliotheca Universitatis Litterariae Petropolitanae adser-
vantur (St. Petersburg, 1888).
2. A. A. Romaskevich, Spisok persidskikh, turetsko-tatarskikh i arabskich rukopisel biblioteki Petrogradskogo Universiteta (List of
the Persian, Turkish-Tatar, and Arabic Manuscripts in the Petrograd University Library), Zapiski kollegii vostokovedov pri Aziatskom mu-
zee Rossistskoi Akademii nauk, 1 (Leningrad, 1925).
3. A. T. Tagirzhanov, Opisanie persidskikh i tadschikskikh rukopisel vostochnogo otdeла biblioteki LGU (Description of the Persian
and Tajik Manuscripts from the Oriental Department of the Leningrad State University) (Leningrad, 1967).
4. Manuscript (call number 1378) from the St. Petersburg State University Library, henceforth MS 1378.
5. Tagirzhanov, op. cit., p. 16.
7. J. Mohl, Le livre des Rois par Abou l Kasim Firdousi (Paris, 1838), i, p. XXII; M. A. Zajaczkowski, Turecka Ll/ersja Sah-name z
Egiptu Mameluckiego (Warsaw, 1965); N. Lugal, Şehname terciimesi (Istanbul, 1956), p. XX; Storey mentions another name for the
author of the Arabic translation: al-Fath b. 'Ali b. Muḥammad al-Bundārī — see Russian edition of C. A. Storey's work (Moscow, 1972),
vol. II, p. 746.
It is interesting that in the Persian manuscript of Firdawsí's *Shāh-nāma*, discovered by Professor Piemontese in the Central National Library of Florence, dating back to 30 Muharram 614/9 May 1217, there are above-linear glosses and translation into Ottoman Turkish. This incomplete at the beginning and at the end copied appear in Rome at the time of Pope Gregory XIII (1502—1585), then it was transferred to Florence where it had been preserving, under the title of *Tağır-i Qur‘ân-i Pârâ*, for several centuries, see Jalâl Khâliqi Mutlaq, "Mu‘arrif wa ʿarzābī-yi bârkh-i az dastnawīshâ-yi ʿIrân-nâma", *Árân-nâma*, sâl-i sixvevem, pp. 380—1.


18. Ibid., p. 82.


22. And, op. cit.; Atasoy, op. cit.; N. Atasoy, F. Cagman, *Turkish Miniature Painting* (Istanbul, 1974); *Miniatures from Turkish Manuscripts* (London, 1981), and others.


25. Modern provenance: Baron Edmond de Rothschild, inherited by his son, Maurice, grandson, Edmond Arthur Houghton, Jr.


27. Soudavar, op. cit., p. 164 and 250.


29. And, op. cit., p. 119.


**Illustrations**

**Plate 1.** "Bîzhan Killing Hûman", miniature from the *Tarjumâ-yi Shâh-nâma*, a manuscript (call number 1378) in the St. Petersburg State University Library collection, fol. 6a, 21.5 × 15.0 cm.

**Plate 2.** "Îskandar at the Court of Qaydafla", miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 196a, 24.0 × 15.5 cm.

**Plate 3.** "Bahrâm Ghûr Hunting", miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 239a, 26.1 × 15.0 cm.

**Plate 4.** "Arriving of the Khâqân's Daughter to Nûshirwân", miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 289a, 29.4 × 20.8 cm.

**Plate 5.** "Buzurjmihr at the Court of Nûshirwân Guesses the Riddle of the Rum Envoy", miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 296b, 29.3 × 19.4 cm.
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“A Ship Among the Blocks of Ice”, a colour drawing from the book 2 of the manuscript Kankai Ibun preserved in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (C 191), fol. 14a, 14.0 x 20.5 cm.

Back cover:
“Theatre in the Capital of the Russian Empire”, a colour drawing from the book 11 of the manuscript Kankai Ibun preserved in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (C 191), fols. 11b—12a, 32.5 x 26.5 cm.