The Mongol Style under the Il-Khans

The conquest of Persia by the Mongols was carried out by a succession of raids of devastating ferocity from 1220 to 1258, in which the population of the cities was reduced to a fraction and many of the leading centres of civilization were ruined. The aim of these methods was to reduce the country to a terrorized subservience, so that it could be held down by a comparatively small army of occupation, but the rule was so harsh that there were many revolts followed by new massacres. The loss of life and the material destruction are beyond calculation, and it is clear that the country never really recovered and that the irrigation of the land and the rebuilding of many cities was never fully accomplished. Destruction of libraries was so severe that it is no surprise that it is hard to find a single illustrated manuscript dating from before this cataclysm. But the Mongols found that they could not govern the land or gather the taxes without the help of some Persian ministers and officials. Even under Chingiz Khan himself merchants were a protected class as being of evident value to the whole economy. Moreover some parts, like Transoxiana, which provided grazing grounds not unlike the Central Asian home of the Mongols, were spared the worst destruction, which befall in particular Khurasan and Iraq. Indeed the Persian minister and historian Alā al-Dīn Juwaynī records that under Chaghatai “a woman with a golden vessel on her head might walk without fear” in Transoxiana. The Mongol rule brought as its first compensation security and law and order.

Moreover under the rule of the Great Khan Mangu, from 1251, reforms were introduced, and they were promulgated in the west by Hulagu who took up his rule at Samarqand in 1255. But even then the Mongols still led a nomadic life and their patronage of art would not have extended beyond a tent with embroidered pictures. It was not until the time of the Il-Khan Ahmad (1282-1284), that Persia had a Moslem ruler who could be really sympathetic to her culture. His predecessor Abaqa (1265-1282) had a Christian wife, Maria Palaeologos, and was in correspondence with several Western rulers: Christian influence is to be seen in the art of the Mongol court for long after this. Meanwhile Arghun (1284-1291) was a Buddhist, and this was no doubt one of the reasons that the country was open to artistic influences from Central Asia and China. The early capitals of the Il-Khans were cosmopolitan centres with, in general, wide tolerance of
Bestiary (Manafi' al-Hayawan) of Ibn Bakhtishu: Lion and Lioness, Maragha, 1298. (13¼ x 9¼˝)
ς. 300, folio 11 recto, Courtesy The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

Bestiary (Manafi' al-Hayawan) of Ibn Bakhtishu: A Mare followed by a Stallion. Maragha, 1298. (13¼ x 9¼˝)
ς. 300, folio 28 recto, Courtesy The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.
other religions. Even after Ghazan (1295-1304) had officially made Islam his state religion, his interest in scholarship ensured the presence in Tabriz of foreign scholars from many countries. From this time the Mongols settled in the cities and started to build fine and permanent quarters.

It is from the reign of Ghazan that the earliest surviving illuminated Persian manuscript has come down to us—a work on natural history, translated from the Arabic of a Christian doctor Ibn Bakhitishu, who was physician to the Caliph al-Mutadi in Baghdad, for whom he compiled this work in the year 941. Ghazan had this well-known work translated into Persian by Abd al-Hadi, and it is probably the original copy which is preserved today in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York under the number M. 500. The third figure of the date in the colophon is not clear, but it was probably written in 1298, and in any case at Maragha, an early Mongol capital in Azarbaijan, about seventy miles south of Tabriz. In its present state it contains 94 miniatures, but many of these are no bigger than an inch or two each way. Moreover unfortunately the manuscript illumination was never finished and there is also a good deal of later work on a number of the pages.

The original text was composed in Baghdad, and no doubt the copy used by the translator would have been a product of that same school, similar to the fable books which have been preserved from the thirteenth century, or the natural history manuscript now in the British Museum (Or. 2874). The style of these miniatures is unnaturalistic. They are flat diagrams, the animals being decoratively designed in a setting of conventionalized landscape elements. The outline is strong and there may be a touch of humour in the drawing of the expressions: trees and water are not derived from nature directly, but are generalized foliage arranged on the stems in a decorative pattern. A pool is a mosaic of ripples, the grass round it a repeated leaf symbol. When the sky is represented it is by an inverted arc in which a sun is placed like a jewel in a setting. The whole is displayed on the page like the illustrations to a Herbal without frame to separate it from the text. In contrast, though not all, of the Morgan Library miniatures are framed, and the background vegetation is comparatively naturalistically rendered. Although Chinese elements are thus present in nearly all the miniatures, yet the Mesopotamian strand in the whole book is unmistakable. That is to say that there is an archaistic air about much of the work, which mixes awkwardly with the new naturalism of China. What does this mean? The animal world of the Morgan manuscript is seen from their own animal point of view: they inhabit the landscapes, and this is just as true of the first hand on the folios up to 20v. which drew the animals in their simple settings as of the impressionistic trees of the “magpies” on folio 60v. Behind these two styles are two different types of Chinese painting, one the handscroll or album-leaf with the minimum of tree or foliage to place or support an animal or bird, the other the landscape in ink and light colour from which the bestiary miniature could be a cut. Of course the Moslem painter could not avoid giving a more heraldic look to all his material. In order to combine on his page with the regular Arabic script, it needed to be formalized; but withal its quality of line differs from the firm outlining of the Baghdad
other religions. Even after Gha\textsuperscript{2}zan (1295-1304) had officially made Islam his state religion, his interest in scholarship ensured the presence in Tabriz of foreign scholars from many countries. From this time the Mongols settled in the cities and started to build fine and permanent quarters.

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Of course the Moslem painter could not avoid giving a more heraldic look to all his material. In order to combine on his page with the regular Arabic script, it needed to be formalized; but withal its quality of line differs from the firm outlining of the Baghdad school. It retains the sensitivity to the fur or hide of the creature depicted usual in the Chinese school. The Two Bears of folio 24v have no formal outline at all, but their coats are brushed in and then enhanced with gold, which is also used to point the eyes of all the early animals in this book. The Lion and Lioness, too, are outlined in pen only along the heads and backs, while the forequarters are drawn in red and the bellies are hatched. Even the more monumental Elephants and Zebu are drawn with a regard for the texture of the animals; the throat line of the zebu being delicately contoured to correspond to the folds in nature. The trunks of the elephants too have the softer undersides and the loose folds of the skin are recorded in contrast with the schematic rendering of the bodies: but in all these earlier pages the animals are generalized in a way appropriate to a Bestiary, while the more elaborate background landscapes for the later pages are better suited to larger pictures than the few inches of the book. Here for the first time the artists practise the cutting of the edge of the miniature with the frame, as had long been the custom in the bird and flower pictures in China. It will be seen in other work of the Mongol school in Persia how striking and effective this practice could be. But at this time the old tradition was too strong to allow of its being done very often. And the clouds are generally gold, edged with colour and entirely unnaturalistic in drawing. The splendour of these miniatures lies in the balance between the monumental and the naturalistic in the animal drawings. Even the most monumental pages which occur on the first twenty-four folios, give the animals a world to inhabit: however decorative the treatment of the trees and flowers, they are not mere symbols, but spread out into the margins because that is the way that they grow. So too they are not space-fillers but provide a setting for the beasts who move in and out among them, though they still seem a little artificial or contrived. The later pages show little vignettes calligraphically drawn in a much more Chinese manner, and therefore dependent on a far older tradition of landscape painting. Since the spectator is now looking through the paper into a world that opens out beyond it, it is no shock to allow the view to be cut off at any point that is convenient by the edge of the picture-space, even if that means dividing the body of the horse which is the ostensible subject of the miniature. This daring step is of the utmost importance for the future history of the school, for the concept of the window, setting the miniature behind the surface of the written page of the manuscript, allows all the later development of the composition. It is not denied by the frequent practice of allowing part of the scene to appear in the margin beyond the edge of the text and separated from it by half a page. Indeed the lances or tree-tops thus projecting vindicate the continuation of the imagined world beyond the narrow boundaries of the small miniature. Many brilliant devices were to result from this principle; though it was some time longer before the coloured background inherited from the old tradition of wall-painting ceased to be just a curtain before which the action took place, and became the limitless vista of the deep blue or burnished gold skies of the fifteenth century and later.

During most of the fourteenth century at least, the illustrator was rather awkwardly manipulating the landscape elements that he had received from China. The ways that
these were introduced suggest a quite imperfect acquaintance with Chinese painting, perhaps entirely known at first through the media of the decorative and applied arts, such as ceramics and textiles. The cloud-forms are those which were used in tapestry and embroidery and, above all, in costume. Gold-embroidered squares, though not perhaps precisely dragon-squares, are found in early fourteenth century Persian manuscripts, including the Edinburgh University Rashid al-Din of 1306 A.D., to be described below. They all appear to include cloud motifs in the design; and the dragon, the phoenix, and the crane also were no doubt found in Chinese woven and embroidered silks. Another element in the landscape which was a revivification of a convention in Chinese art was that used for water. Throughout the first half of the fourteenth century water is shown as a scale-like pattern, as curled whirls or as crested waves, generally on a large scale in relation to the rest of the picture. All of these forms are found in Chinese painting of the time as well as much earlier, but not so conventionally rendered as in Persia except on the earliest blue and white porcelain with pictorial compositions. These however are now not believed to commence before the middle of the fourteenth century. It would therefore appear that these conventions must have been conveyed to Persia in some other manner. Possibly woven silks or carved lacquer may have been the media, but we know much less in detail of the history of these crafts than of porcelain before the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).

The most conspicuous of all the Chinese borrowings in the miniatures of this period are the trees and mountains. These can hardly have been derived from any source but actual paintings, access to which is likely to have been limited to court circles. We know

Jami' al-Tawarikh (Universal History) of Rashid al-Din. The Sacred Tree of Buddha. Tabriz. 1314. (4½"x7½")
Arabic ms 26, folio 35 verso, Royal Asiatic Society, London.
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The most conspicuous of all the Chinese borrowings in the miniatures of this period are the trees and mountains. These can hardly have been derived from any source but actual paintings, access to which is likely to have been limited to court circles. We know that there were Chinese scholars at the capital Tabriz, and that the vazir, Rashid al-Din, had Chinese helpers in compiling his universal history. It is in the Tabriz manuscripts that the Chinese landscapes occur in their purest form; that is, in the Morgan Bestiary and the two surviving portions of the Jami‘ al-Tawarikh, dating from the lifetime of this author, Rashid al-Din, and now preserved in the libraries of the Royal Asiatic Society and the University of Edinburgh. These last are dated respectively 1314 and 1366. In the Bestiary, the trees are conspicuously naturalistic and calligraphic, while the indications of ground are limited to crags and hillocks outlined by double contoured borders. Possibly these represent the Chinese heavy brushstroke made with the side of the brush, but they might be referred more naturally to the imitation of embroidery or tapestry weaving. The shading within these contours is much richer in the other manuscripts of the group, especially the Jami‘ al-Tawarikh and the History of Ancient Peoples by al-Biruni, also in the library of Edinburgh University (Arab 161). We find the same jagged contours but enriched by strong colour, in earthy tints, chocolate brown, slate blue, and brown ochre, often strongest near the summits and enclosing curious bubble-like reserves which are perhaps intended to represent stones; or filled with internal contour systems which may indeed be used to convey the same information as the contours in a modern map. If so, this would be a useful indication of the fundamentally symbolic character even of this most naturalistic sort of Persian book-painting. So that although in the Jami‘ al-Tawarikh the colouring is much more subdued and limited, the basic
concept is usually nearer to the Persian conceptual picture. Scale relationship is habitually disregarded and the landscape elements become space-fillers in these compositions. Although the frame still cuts the composition, where it is required, for effect of balance or drama, miniatures are tied to the text by the device of prolonging the lances of the mounted troops as it were behind the lines of the text, to reappear in the margins beyond them.

A curious feature of this manuscript is the free and almost indiscriminate use of silver paint, not only for the enhancement of the blue of water, where it might seem appropriate, but also for dress-folds and even on the faces of bearded men. It is possible that this strange custom was derived from the illuminated manuscripts of the east Christian churches, especially the Jacobites. It is obvious that there were at Rashidiyya, the library centre established by Rashid al-Din, Christian scholars to help in the universal history, and the influence of the schools of Syria and Mesopotamia is to be seen not only in these particulars but also in the drapery folds, especially in the al-Biruni in which the Chinese influence is less strong. But it is only to touch on externals to seek to disentangle the several influences in these manuscripts; their most striking characteristic is dramatic power achieved with a minimum of means. Instead of being strung across the page, avoiding overlapping, as in the school of Baghdad, here the figures are arranged in tight groups, on two or three planes, with a preference for asymmetry; and so as to emphasize the main action by spacing as well as gesture. Apart from some Biblical history scenes, and a series of portraits of the Chinese emperors, the compositions are likely to have been invented for these volumes, and the many other copies, now alas all vanished, which Rashid al-Din arranged to have made every year in this library for the great libraries of the Islamic world. The choice of subject is therefore significant and sometimes daring. For instance, there is a pure landscape without any figures, to represent the Sacred Tree of Buddha (which is incidentally quite unlike any Indian representation of this subject), and another of the Mountains of India, both of them highly imaginative and romantic, in spite of a certain childish incompetence in the use of the sophisticated Chinese terms for mountains, trees and water.

Although there can be no doubt that the al-Biruni history book (Arab 161, in Edinburgh University) is a product of the Il-Khanid school and presumably from Tabriz, and that it is dated between the two volumes of Rashid al-Din, in 1367-1368, it stands rather apart from them in its greater dependence on the Mesopotamian school. There is no opening up of vistas, but the horizon is closed not far behind the picture plane so that it rather resembles the Morgan Bestiary, as it does also in its richer colour range. But the most significant difference lies in the new conventions for drapery folds. Instead of the flowing, open folds of the Rashidiyya library, we find the enclosed spirals and curls which characterize the Mesopotamian manuscripts. As in Mesopotamia many of the heads are haloed in gold with a double rim simply for emphasis, and they crowd the foreground in an old-fashioned way. There is nothing in this manuscript to compare with the expanse shown in the Drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea or in the Swallowing of Qarun by the Earth in the other Edinburgh manuscript. But one striking feature of the al-Biruni
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Although there can be no doubt that the al-Biruni history book (Arab 261, in Edinburgh University) is a product of the Il-Khanid school and presumably from Tabriz, and that it is dated between the two volumes of Rashid al-Din, in 1307-1308, it stands rather apart from them in its greater dependence on the Mesopotamian school. There is no opening up of vistas, but the horizon is closed not far behind the picture plane so that it rather resembles the Morgan Bestiary, as it does also in its richer colour range. But the most significant difference lies in the new conventions for drapery folds. Instead of the flowing, open folds of the Rashidiyya library, we find the enclosed spirals and curls which characterize the Mesopotamian manuscripts. As in Mesopotamia many of the heads are haloed in gold with a double rim simply for emphasis, and they crowd the foreground in an old-fashioned way. There is nothing in this manuscript to compare with the expanse shown in the Drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea or in the Swallowing of Qarn by the Earth in the other Edinburgh manuscript. But one striking feature of the al-Biruni is significant for the future, the coloured skies shading gradually from deep blue at the top to the plain paper below, and the elaborately convoluted clouds in blue with white linings. From this time on this kind of cloud convention was frequently used, though not so prominently, in Persian miniatures. As if to emphasize the picture openings on these pages, several of the miniatures are framed not only with gold rules but with patterned borders. These borders are Islamic, but the clouds and the similar conventions for fire and smoke are of Chinese origin and are frequently found in Buddhist paintings.

With their richer colouring these miniatures are more decorative than the Jami' al-Tawarikh, but less effective as illustrations owing to their timid gestures which contrast with the dramatic movement of these latter. In one miniature only, in the al-Biruni, is there considerable dramatic force: that representing the destruction of a domed building, which achieves a powerful effect just in the same way as the rather similar subject in the Jami' al-Tawarikh illustration of the end of Samson and the fall of the Philistine temple (reproduced in Persian Miniature Painting, pl. xviii). In both the action is crowded into the front of the picture-space. But that here reproduced is much the richer of the two.
One of the most striking features of the *Jami’ al-Tawarih* manuscripts is the great size of the page, about 17 by 12 inches. And this we know to have been a special feature of the production at Rashidiyya: even the theological works of the master were written on paper of this size. Not again until the first half of the fifteenth century, in the historical recensions of Shah Rukh which will be discussed later, was this large page used in any illustrated manuscripts, except in two cases with which we must now concern ourselves. A manuscript of the *Shah-name*, now called after its former owner Demotte, which is known to survive in only about sixty folios carrying miniatures, and a very few with text alone, has a page measuring about 16 by 11½ inches; and a copy of *Katila wa Dimna*, of which the fragmentary remains are mounted in an album preserved in the library of the University of Istanbul, must have measured at least 13 by 9½ inches. And both these fragmentary manuscripts devote a much larger area of their pages to miniatures, so that their actual scale is considerably larger than any in the *Jami’ al-Tawarih*. They are generally agreed to be the most remarkable and impressive of all the work of the
fourteenth century. In particular the Shah-nama pictures sum up and transcend all that can be found of drama and decorative richness in the earlier Tabriz books. The colouring of the al-Biruni is combined with the movement of the Jami’ al-Tawarikh; while the role of landscape has increased, and it is brought into closer relation with the figures.


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Museum page; the tree which speaks to Alexander through the many heads on its
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Fogg Art Museum page showing Bahram Gur shooting the gazelle and trampling on Azada,
the deer really run along the hill slopes, up or down, but the conventional patch of maize
filling the corner and the cloud-patterns remain as they were in the earlier books. For
earlier they certainly are. The question still debated is, "how much earlier?" Historical
consideration suggests that important books like this are not likely to have been produced
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this stylistic development in terms of temporal interval.

If we now turn back, or rather on to the Demotte Shah-nama, we can understand
what has been accomplished. The often rather exaggerated size of the mask-like faces
preserves the essential of the heroic dignity that we must suppose native in the Persian
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The main figures are still placed near the front of the picture, but are now turned in
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While the vista is never closed, skies of deep blue or gold have become the rule; and,
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forth this vigorous style of inspired illustration.

Because of its connection with the school of Tabriz, most critics have inclined in
recent years to place the Demotte Shah-nama about 1330, although they hardly ever fail
to suggest it must have taken a considerable time to produce. The most recent datings
are those of Dr Ettinghausen, to 1330-1350; of Dr E. Kuehnel to 1330-1340; and of
M. Ivan Stchoukine to between 1330 and about 1375. It does not seem that the fall of
the house of Rashid al-Din in 1336 can have immediately put an end to the practice
of the style, but the political state of Persia between that year and 1360, when the
Jala'ir established themselves, would have provided no patron with enough resources to
produce so ambitious a book as this was. From what survives it can be estimated that
the whole poem would have been illustrated by about a hundred and twenty miniatures.
The dragon slain by Bahram Gur winds itself round the great tree-trunk, in the Cleveland Museum page; the tree which speaks to Alexander through the many heads on its branches, on the Freer Gallery page, is rooted in the ground at his horse’s feet. On the Fogg Art Museum page showing *Bahram Gur shooting the gazelle and tranmiling on Azada*, the deer really run along the hill slopes, up or down, but the conventional patch of maize filling the corner and the cloud-patterns remain as they were in the earlier books. For earlier they certainly are. The question still debated is, “how much earlier?” Historical consideration suggests that important books like this are not likely to have been produced during the period of disturbance and fighting which followed upon the break up of the Il-Khanid power in 1336. From that date until 1360 there was no ruler powerful enough to support a library staff competent for such a task. In style the miniatures are nearer to what precedes than what follows this interval, but it is rash to attempt to evaluate this stylistic development in terms of temporal interval.

If we now turn back, or rather on to the Demotte Shah-nama, we can understand what has been accomplished. The often rather exaggerated size of the mask-like faces preserves the essential of the heroic dignity that we must suppose native in the Persian school, while the artists were now able to compose their scenes in free space. The backgrounds may not be in close relation of scale with the main action, but they are all that is required to give the figures a scale suited to the illustration of the national epic. The main figures are still placed near the front of the picture, but are now turned in every direction, quite often inwards, so as to present their backs to the spectator. While the vista is never closed, skies of deep blue or gold have become the rule; and, as has already been remarked, the cutting off of the action by the edge of the “frame” to the miniature has been developed to a fine art. The result is a unique combination of drama with a grand concept of nature suited to romance. The world is sympathetic rather than engenhful as it later became, when the beauty of the natural world became the real theme of so much Persian painting. It is strange that the influence of China should have been so effective in bringing out this sense of drama; and the pathetic or heroic which was native in Persian poetry of the epic kind; whereas in China itself themes of this kind were never treated in superior painting. It seems that the very tension between the native tradition and the newly learnt science of picture-making brought forth this vigorous style of inspired illustration.

Because of its connection with the school of Tabriz, most critics have inclined in recent years to place the Demotte Shah-nama about 1330, although they hardly ever fail to suggest it must have taken a considerable time to produce. The most recent datings are those of Dr Ettinghausen, to 1330-1335; of Dr E. Kuehnel to 1330-1340; and of M. Ivan Stchoukine to between 1330 and about 1375. It does not seem that the fall of the house of Rashid al-Din in 1336 can have immediately put an end to the practice of the style, but the political state of Persia between that year and 1360, when the Jal’al established themselves, would have provided no patron with enough resources to produce so ambitious a book as this was. From what survives it can be estimated that the whole poem would have been illustrated by about a hundred and twenty miniatures.

Attempts have been made to distribute the miniatures among several different hands, and even to allocate their production to different decades of the fourteenth century. It is indeed obvious that a number of artists worked on this book; but the stylistic variety, or the varying degrees of Chinese influence, do not really require that it need have been in production for several decades; but, on the contrary, given that it was a revolutionary book, such differences are just what would be expected. Each artist might be assumed to have executed at least twelve of such miniatures during a year, so that if there were six painters employed on it, the illumination would have been completed in about one year and eight months. Even if allowance is made for interruption and other urgent commissions, three years would be a sufficient allowance; and, even if there were only three painters engaged, a total of six years would have sufficed. The period 1330 to 1336 seems to me the most likely. The two most striking advances on the early fourteenth century miniatures are the greatly enriched colour-range, and devices to open out the structure of the composition, frequently by use of a *repoussé*, a figure in the extreme foreground, sometimes even with his back turned towards the spectator, or even seeming to come forward out of the picture, as in the *Battle of Bahram Gur with the Dragon*. The whole sky is now filled with a solid ground of gold or blue, often with no clouds; flowering trees are frequent, and the pine is now allowed to show red-tipped needles. This *Bahram Gur* picture has a fully developed landscape background, but in some of the other pages such as the *Bahram Gur tranmiling Azada* stalks of maize and scalloped swirls are still used for fields and cloud, as symbols.

As has already been remarked two themes were treated with outstanding success in this manuscript, the heroic and the pathetic. Never again in Persian painting do we find this powerful sense of destiny which dominates and inspires these few memorable pages. And of the heroic subjects it is rather those concerned with the struggle against the forces of evil which predominate than those of mere personal tragedy. On page 199, now unfortunately missing since an exhibition in 1937, the iranian king Kay Ku’us is shown at the outset of his disastrous campaign against the magicians of Mazanderan and their devilish helpers; the knotted trunks of two trees are leafy only on the side away from the sinister horned devils, some of whom are being trampled under foot by the king. The impression is well given of a desperate fight in a wild country. No pages are more striking than those depicting the exploits of the heroes Bahram Gur, Rustam, and Alexander; and especially their combats with dragons. These are very different from the decorative creatures which are depicted in the miniatures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Bahram’s dragon is indeed closely derived from a Chinese prototype, but is all the more formidable for that reason. But the subject is of course inconceivable for a Chinese for whom the dragon typifies the cosmic force; so that the painter has completely changed the character of the creature in showing it prostrate with its huge scaly tail coiled round a bare tree on a mountain side, its great jaws open, not to emit fire and smoke, but its last gasp. Bahram Gur with his sword drawn turns his back to finish off the dragon, and faces the landscape which is thus involved in the heroic scene. The creature which Iskandar (Alexander) attacks is not so formidable, but in combining
the fangs of a wolf with the horn of a rhinoceros and the wings of an eagle, and the claws of a lion, it effectively typifies all natural animal strength, from which, realistically, the king's horse turns away its head. The smaller scale of the monster here is set in a nearer and therefore more formidable landscape; which is again made up of Chinese

Shah-nama (Demotte) of Firdawsi: The Bier of the Great Iskandar, Tabriz, 1330-1336. (99 1/2 x 11"")
No. 183. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, d.c.
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Even more striking are the "pathetic scenes," as they have been named by a French critic, the late Eustache de Lorey. Scenes of mourning are among the finest in the series; and, in all, the human figures crowd the whole picture. The most moving and accomplished of these scenes of mourning is that showing The Bier of the Great Iskandar. In the version of the Alexander legend followed by Ferdawsi, Iskandar died at Babylon and his coffin was carried to Iskandaryyah after the echoing cliff of Khulm had been consulted. There, on the plain, it was surrounded by ten thousand mourners of his army and of the Persians. At dusk he was buried. Once more the artist (certainly not the same hand as the last) has altered the setting of the scene; which he has chosen to depict as a palace in which the coffin of the dead king has been placed on a platform like a Chinese emperor, with carved panels of Chinese floral subjects round the sides, but it is surrounded by four tall candles set in candlesticks of Islamic shape; and the whole stands on a carpet with an interlace centre and border of stylized Kufic. Above the bier and on either side hang glass lamps, as used in a mosque, while richly embroidered curtains hang behind in what seems to be a niche. The mourners stand on either side, bare-headed and having let their hair and beards grow; their hands either crossed on their breasts or stretched out in supplication. Behind the coffin and next to it stands a bearded figure, Aristotle, the tutor of the dead king; but the drama is concentrated in the women in the centre foreground, all seen from the back or in half profile, with their hands stretched above their heads, the fingers wonderfully expressive of grief. Beyond them and falling across the bier itself is the distraught figure of the mother of Iskandar, her robe hanging in outreached folds, which are the focal point of the whole picture; the only strongly accented lines in it. The composition is held together and given stability by the architectural structure, with its emphatic verticals, and the symmetrical plan. Such symmetry had been an Iranian contribution to the school of Mesopotamia in the previous century, and its persistence here and in other pages of this manuscript shows that the Chinese innovations were fitted into an Iranian conception of the picture.

These subjects do not end the pathetic line so often preferred in this manuscript. One other striking example only can be mentioned here. The captured king Ardawan, last of the Parthians, is brought before his captor Ardashir, just before his execution. He is a pathetic sight, his hands tied behind his back, a halter round his neck, his face white in strong contrast to the sanguine cheeks of his tough jailers.

The resourcefulness of the artists of the book is not exhausted: for there are other manners for the court scenes and the scenes of battle, in one of which for instance the title has been taken into the field of the picture, while the lances of the horsemen are raised up between the columns of the text of the epic. None of these battle scenes is richer in colour effects than the charge of Iskandar's iron horsemen at the battle of Hydaspes against the army of King Fur. Gold and silver have been used to depict the polished steel of these naphtha-filled engines of war, and the fire from their nostrils and spear-points...
colours the underside of the clouds with red and gold lights. The landscape is here as simple as in the Morgan Library Bestiary: no further setting is required for this subject, which is the best example of the effective cutting by the margins of what might be taken from a narrative handscroll of the Far East. The terrified Indians glancing backwards have already almost fled out of the picture. This composition must surely have been seen by the illustrator of the Sarayi Library Garshaspnama (Hazine 574) which, as Dr Ettinghausen remarked, dates this Demotte page before 1354, the date of that manuscript. Evidence of the workshop practice at this time is provided by the condition of the double margins of this miniature. Between the ruled lines is still to be seen the continuation of the underdrawing of the miniature, with only tints added. It follows that the strong colouring within the margins must have been added subsequently, and may not be by the same hand; though it is certainly of the same period. Even so simple a subject as Darab sleeping beneath the ruined arch under which he had taken refuge from a storm, and from which a mysterious voice designates him as king and son of a king; even this is made memorable by the height of the arch set in a perfectly symmetrical building which entirely fills the picture-space. The dreaming king has been given the crown which was not to be his until some time later, but his solitude is therein emphasized. Moreover this miniature is prophetic in another sense; for in it is to be seen the exemplar of the fifteenth century style in which too great damage is not done to the unity of the page by closing the horizon with a building or a high hill-side, and keeping the figures within the coulisses of the one on the other. The Demotte Shah-nama is in fact the first of the modern books of Persia as well as the highest point in the development of the Mongol school under the Il-Khanids. It was rightly said by a sixteenth century Persian critic, Dust Muhammad, that the modern style of painting as it was known in his time took its rise under Abu Sa'id (1317-1358).

This writer was a calligrapher and painter who was ordered by the Safavi prince Abu'l Fath Bahram Mirza to form an album of his collection of paintings and calligraphic specimens in 1544, and to prefix to it an account of the past masters of these crafts. This album is now preserved in the Topkapu Sarayi Library in Istanbul. All that precedes the time of Abu Sa'id in this account is legendary, but from that point the story is coherent and in its main lines entirely convincing. For he gives the succession of patronage of the leading schools as passing from the last of the Il-Khanids to the Jala'ir, who we shall see to have been the patrons of the most impressive books which survive from the later part of the fourteenth century. Then the school is represented as having been transplanted to Samarqand by Timur on the fall of Baghdad in 1393; and so as having passed to his descendants, of whom he mentions especially Baysunghur, Ulugh Beg and Sultan Husayn Mirza. This important document will be referred to again for these later periods; now we are only concerned to note that he states that it was Ustad (master) Ahmad Musa who "withdrew the covering from the face of painting and invented the kind of painting which is current at the present time. An Abu Sa' id-nama, a Kailila wa Dimna and a Mi'raj-nama, copied by Maulana 'Abdullah, were illustrated by this painter; and also a History of Things, afterwards in the library of Sultan Husayn Mirza."
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Kalila wa Dimna (Album from the Imperial Palace of Yildiz): The Deposed King of the Monkeys throwing Figs to the Tortoise, Tabriz, 1360-1374 (f.132v-133v) r. 1422, folio 19 verso, University Library, Istanbul.
It has been suggested that the *Kalila wa Dimna* here mentioned should be identified with the series of miniatures cut from a manuscript and now preserved in a very large album which was formerly in the Ottoman Imperial Palace of Yıldız, and is now in the library of the University of Istanbul. They are indeed among the most remarkable work of the whole century, and have already been mentioned as having preserved the same sort of scale as the Tabriz books of the first quarter of it. But they are considerably more advanced, especially in the landscape. There is greater variety of tree, more freedom in composing, and more advanced perspective. A striking and highly successful innovation is the extension of the miniatures into the margin. This is not at first sight so obvious since they are now mounted several on one album page; nearly all the text having been cut away, and the miniatures fitted together, sometimes even overlapping. But study reveals that almost every one follows the same plan of an extension into the margin, and then a development upwards of plants or trees which seem often to have extended to the full height of the page. In at least one case there is an architectural extension into the margin, but the demarcation line is always preserved; in this case by showing an open balcony in which plants are growing. In fact in each case the white paper of the background stands for the open air, but by an odd convention this is left blank as in a Chinese picture, whereas in the margined area the sky is coloured blue or gold, just as it is in the Demotte *Shah-nama*.

On one page of the *Kalila wa Dimna* (now mounted on folio 18 r. of the album) thick white clouds are drawn on the upper margin of the page and blue seems to have been added later by someone who was perhaps worried by the unusual effect. On other pages, such as the *Monkey throwing Figs to the Tortoise*, here reproduced, the landscape also extends into the margin in each of the two miniatures here mounted together, and is evidently conceived as projecting into free space. In the court scenes, of which there are several, the margin represents the “outside.” There is only one later example of this concept of the page, and this is a volume of poems prepared for the last Jala’îr ruler, Sultan Ahmad, in about 1495. The effect there is quite different, and the colouring is limited to pale blue and gold instead of the rich and strong colouring of the *Kalila wa Dimna* pages; which in this resemble the Demotte pages. In fact, it seems quite inconceivable that the former could be the earlier of the two, as has been suggested; or indeed that they are not considerably later. However, there are enough points in common to convince one that they belong to the same family descent. For instance, in one of the throne scenes, there is an unexplained valance across the top, just as in several of the Demotte pages of similar subjects. Architecture is still depicted as a straight wall forming the background, and carpet or tiling is shown extended below it as though it were continuing in the same plane. The animals are however, very suitably, far superior in liveliness and naturalism in the Fable book. In fact they were never surpassed in the Persian school in these respects. Although so well observed, they nevertheless lack the sympathy found in the fifteenth century miniatures, and consequently do not touch that lyrical height which is then the special quality of the school. But the compositions are more complex, and have greater depth. For instance the old king of the monkeys who
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No piece of blue and white porcelain is however represented in this manuscript; they are all of gold, silver or a bluish-green all-over glazed ware that might be intended as celadon, or less plausibly for the pale-blush glaze of the Chinese porcelain known as ch'ing-fai or ying-ch'ing; but the shapes are more like those of celadon. The tiles and carpets are naturally of Persian types, and seem to belong to a period nearer to the end than the beginning of the fourteenth century. Of great interest is the transitional characteristic of these pages as instanced by the representation of interiors in the two bedroom scenes reproduced. Although both have the same flat back wall, in one the open door marks a significant step towards the opening of a second plane, which was to become the normal device in the Timurid style of the next century. Indeed this page is much more advanced than the other, in its handling of spatial relations. As we have seen the best Il-Khanid painters had used the inward turned figure in the foreground as a repoussoir, but now in the third quarter of the century mastery of perspective and of foreshortening has gone far enough for the best artists to do without this kind of aid. What is still unresolved is the inconsistency of free space of the natural world in the background, now relegated to the margin, and the controlled perspective of the interiors. The Chinese heritage gives these pages a unique cosmic feeling, and the Persian illustrations of these fables, which are after all directed to pointing the morals of the folly, deceitfulness and inconstancy of man in the allegories of the animal world, and are of great antiquity and universal application. The wild rocky settings of many of the pictures, the more emphasized by the patches of exotic vegetation, are ideal for the purpose; while the stories of men are mainly court scenes, or in the houses of the rich whose wealth attracts the robber and the murderer. This page is also the only one which has remained intact and still shows both the relation of text to illustration and also the relation of the margined page to the border. The size of the page within the margins, which on the unillustrated pages would have been filled with script, is 11 1/4 inches by 6 1/2 inches. The width of the margin at the top is 2 1/4 inches and at the side 3 inches. It appears that the miniature never extended into the lower margin which thus always formed the base line of the composition.
Kalila wa Dimna (Album from the Imperial Palace of Yildiz): An Attempted Murder Frustrated. Tabriz, 1356-1374. (9 x 8") 21422, folio 11 verso, University Library, Istanbul.

In the same album in the Sarayi Library which contains the account of Persian miniature painting by Dust Muhammad, are to be found another series of large-scale miniatures cut from a manuscript which must have measured at least 13\% by 10 inches, very near to the dimensions of the Kalila wa Dimna pages. These miniatures illustrate the Mi’raj or night ride of the Prophet.

These also must be later in date than the Demotte pages; but they are in their different ways of nearly as fine quality. Could they mark the return of patronage to Tabriz in the person of Sultan Uways? That would put them in the 1360s or 1370s, which are otherwise at present a blank in the history. How far the school had developed by about this time is indicated by some other pages which are all that remain of another monumental Shah-nama preserved in yet another album in Istanbul (2153). In them the landscape plays a much greater role than any miniatures which we have so far considered. The action in fact takes place in the landscape, and not against a landscape background. The elements are still recognizably Chinese, but they are used to build up that romantic listening world which was to be so characteristic of the Timurid age.

There is some stiffness and awkwardness in the placing of the figures, but not more so than is found for instance in a well-known manuscript of the Mi’raj-nama in the Bibliothèque Nationale of the period of Shah Rukh in Herat, where it was copied, in the year 1436. Many of the Persian miniatures mounted in this album 2153 and its three fellows in the Sarayi Library, 2154, 2155, and 2160, have been convincingly attributed to this early fifteenth century school by Dr Ettinghausen; but he does not include in his summary account of the contents of these albums any mention of this group of Shah-nama pictures. And of some of the others he does remark that they appear to be the work of a school in which there is a not fully consolidated union of Far Eastern and Persian elements. While he seems undoubtedly correct in his attribution of many of these paintings to the school of Herat under the Timurids of the early fifteenth century, some seem to the present writer to belong to an earlier period before this style had developed so far. It will not be sufficient to point to the large scale of the page nor to the Mongol features found in some details, since it will be shown that both these are features of the atelier of Shah Rukh, who deliberately revived the style of historical illustration which had been characteristic of the Rashidiyah school. In these pages however it is not a question of revival or survival, but of a further development of the style that has been seen in the Istanbul Kalila wa Dimna pages. The same strong colouring is there, deep blue skies with tufts of white cloud, similar water conventions, but above all the dramatic tension which was never recaptured in later times. In the beginning of the fifteenth century there were fresh contacts with China through the frequent interchange of embassies between the Ming court and the Timurids in Samarkan and Herat, and these are clearly reflected in the rich clothing with floating scarves depicted in a number of paintings now mounted in these Istanbul albums. But the pages illustrated here in three examples, are unlike these. To a unique extent in Persian miniatures they are dominated by the landscape. Unlike that in the earlier fourteenth century manuscripts previously discussed, these are no mere backgrounds, but have swallowed and engulfed the figures.
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These also must be later in date than the Demotte pages; but they are in their different ways of nearly as fine quality. Could they mark the return of patronage to Fabriz in the person of Sultan Uways? That would put them in the 1360s or 1370s, which are otherwise at present a blank in the history. How far the school had developed by about this time is indicated by some other pages which are all that remain of another monumental Shah-nama preserved in yet another album in Istanbul (2153). In them the landscape plays a much greater role than any miniatures which we have so far considered. The action in fact takes place in the landscape, and not against a landscape background. The elements are still recognizably Chinese, but they are used to build up that romantic listening world which was to be so characteristic of the Timurid age. There is some stiffness and awkwardness in the placing of the figures, but not more so than is found for instance in a well-known manuscript of the Mi’raj-nama in the Bibliothèque Nationale of the period of Shah Rukh in Herat, where it was copied, in the year 436. Many of the Persian miniatures mounted in this album 2153 and its three fellows in the Sarayi Library, 2154, 2150, and 2160, have been convincingly attributed to this early fifteenth century school by Dr Ettinghausen; but he does not include in his summary account of the contents of these albums any mention of this group of Shah-nama pictures. And of some of the others he does remark that they appear to be the work of a school in which there is a not fully consolidated union of Far Eastern and Persian elements. While he seems undoubtedly correct in his attribution of many of these paintings to the school of Herat under the Timurids of the early fifteenth century, some com to the present writer to belong to an earlier period before this style had developed so far. It will not be sufficient to point to the large scale of the page nor to the Mongolatures found in some details, since it will be shown that both these are features of the teller of Shah Rukh, who deliberately revived the style of historical illustration which had been characteristic of the Rashidiyas school. In these pages however it is not a question of revival or survival, but of a further development of the style that has been seen in the Istanbul Kalila wa Dimna pages. The same strong colouring is there, deep dyes with tufts of white cloud, similar water conventions, but above all the dramatic illusion which was never recaptured in later times. In the beginning of the fifteenth century there were fresh contacts with China through the frequent interchange of missions between the Ming court and the Timurids in Samarqand and Herat, and these are clearly reflected in the rich clothing with floating scarves depicted in a number of miniatures now mounted in these Istanbul albums. But the pages illustrated here in three samples, are unlike these. To a unique extent in Persian miniatures they are dominated by the landscape. Unlike that in the earlier fourteenth century manuscripts previously discussed, these are no mere backgrounds, but have swallowed and engulfed the figures.

Shah-nama fragment mounted in an Album: Zal shooting a Waterbird before the Turkish Maids of Princes Rudabeh. Tabriz, c. 1370. (100-x71?) Hazme 2153, folio 62h, Topkapu Sarayi Library, Istanbul.
In the Shah-nama pages composition in free space has been achieved, and landscape and figures are coherently related. Of the three examples reproduced, The Zal carried by the Simurgh to its Nest in the Elburz Mountains still preserves the old tree-fringed crags, much as in the Demotte book; but the billowing white clouds in the deep blue sky make a vaulted heaven; while the incident of the shooting down of the water bird by Zal to give an excuse for sending a message across the river to the servants of Princess Rudabe, is set in as realistic a landscape as is found in Persian painting. Yet this new science serves the purpose of an imaginative illustration of two dramatic scenes in the epic; the moment of action which was to have great consequences in the national story. Both are built up on a diagonal from left to right, and in both the bird is the centre. The enthusiasm of the attendant has led him to take off his hat in salute to his master’s prowess and his outstretched arm and Zal’s both point to the bird. The old water convention, of Chinese origin, is employed with such variation in line as to produce the effect of a boiling torrent.

The battle scene is at first less striking, but analysis shows a most skilful composition, making use of the Jalai’ir practice of extension into the margin to launch a twofold attack towards the right edge of the picture. In this movement the vital line is that of the lance with which Minuchehr is thrusting at the fleeing Tur. This part of the composition was repeated by another hand in a miniature mounted in another of this same series of albums No. 2152, which was lent to the exhibition of Islamic art at Munich in 1910, and has thus become well-known through reproductions. It has been correctly dated by Dr Kuechel about 1400, for it is certainly later than our miniature, and omits much significant detail, such as the sword falling from the grasp of Tur. The drawing also is much less vigorous and betrays the copy. The scale and placing of this big page in the 2153 album clearly leads on from the Jalai’ir school to the Timurid, which was thus prefigured thirty years before the first Timurid manuscript. There are at least seven more of these great miniatures preserved in this same album, of which one only has ever been reproduced. Several are throne scenes nearer in style to the Kalila wa Dimna scenes, and there cannot be much time between the dates of their production.

There is no doubt that the house of Jalai’ir were the successors to the Il-Khans in patronage of the arts of the book in fourteenth century Persia. This is established, not only on the testimony of Dust Muhammad, writing in 1544, but more convincingly on surviving material. The dated manuscripts do not begin before the reign of Sultan Ahmad (1382-1410), but it is known from the late fifteenth century Persian critic and historian of letters Dawlatshah that Sultan Uways was a highly skilled figure draughtsman and he even credits him with having instructed in the art Abd al-Hayy, the greatest master painter of the age. However according to Dust Muhammad there was at Sultan Uways’ court the master Shams al-Din who had been a pupil of Ahmad Musa, already mentioned as the leading miniature painter under Abu Sa’id. It is here suggested that the fragmentary miniatures of the Kalila wa Dimna and the Shah-nama now preserved in the two albums in Istanbul described above may be the work of the school of Shams al-Din for Sultan Uways and have been produced between 1360 and 1374 when the Sultan died.
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The earliest manuscript with illustrations surviving from the library of Sultan Ahmad is the Book of the Marvels of the World (now Supplément Persan 332 at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) written at Baghdad in 1388. The numerous miniatures in this book are in a far simpler style than those which we have been considering, and perhaps disappointing as the products of this royal atelier, but allowance must be made for the precarious hold which Sultan Ahmad had of power in the troubled times during Timur’s successive invasions and the incursions of the Turkmans. The manuscript is written in

Diwan of Khwaju Qureshi: Prince Humay at the Gate of Humayun’s Castle, Baghdad, 1396, painted by Junayd. (1254-97) Add. 1113, folio 26 verso, British Museum, London.
of Khwaju Kirmani: Prince Humay at the Gate of Humayun’s Castle, Baghdad, 1396, painted by Junayd. (123½ x 9⅜”) Add. 18 113, folio 26 verso, British Museum, London.

the new nastal’iq hand, and the lay-out of the miniatures also is new. They are essentially
coloured drawings and the background is left uncoloured. There is a far stronger tendency
to pattern than in the earlier fourteenth century miniatures, especially in the treatment
of trees and plants. Figures of men and animals are lively in scenes like the Gathering
of Fruit from the Luby Tree, while the astronomical subjects are in an old-fashioned style,
decorative and flat. The silver water was to become the normal convention in the Timurid
period, and the pattern of large plants which cover the ground in many of the miniatures
was also to be a normal form of background. It has been suggested that these miniatures
are at least mainly later than the date of the manuscript, but in a book of this kind
there would be little point in text without pictures, and the colour scheme is in line with
the bright colouring of the previous decades at Tabriz, which was the principal Jalal’ir
capital. These people were one of the Mongol tribes and must have gathered up what
remained of the Il-Khanid artists of the book. As has been suggested, the main interest
of this manuscript is that it looks forward to the early Timurid work like the Kalila wa
Dimna manuscript of the Royal Library at Tehran. For it shows in some of its miniatures
the same delight in the world of nature, if more naively, and with less lyrical feeling.
The simple compositions are illusionist in that they have solved the problem of the
relation of figures to landscape within the margins of a smallish page. The horizon is
carried right up to the top margination, thereby keeping the idea of the back curtain
without losing the sense of space.

Still they do not prepare us for the superb quality of the illustrations of the Divan
of Khwaju Kirmani which is dated only eight years later and is one of the great monu-
ments of Persian painting. This manuscript, now preserved in the British Museum under
the number Add. 18113, was completed in Baghdad in the year 1396, by the famous
scribe Mir Ali Tabrizi, who is credited with the invention of the new script nastal’iq
employed in it. Of the nine miniatures, all but one completely enclose the small area left
for the text, which is in one case reduced to a single couplet. All appear to be contem-
porary with the date in the colophon and all with this exception seem to be by one hand,
or at least under one direction. This can only be the master (Ustad) Junayd, whose signa-
ture is to be found in the design of the sixth miniature on folio 45 v., representing the
marriage of Humay and Humayun, introduced into the window framework above the
throne of the princess. This artist’s name, which is the first to be found on the field of
a miniature, is known to us from the account of the painters of previous ages prefixed
to the album of Bahram Mirza in 1544, to which we have already referred, where he
is said to have been a pupil of Shams al-Din and to have worked at Baghdad; in the
inscription on the miniature his name is followed by the suffix al-Sultani which would
be correct for the court painter of Sultan Ahmad. It is to be noted too that this manu-
script was once in the collection of this same prince Bahram; and may well therefore
have been known to Dost Muhammad.

The three court scenes are the richest in the book: each of them filling the page
with a single architectural construction, crowned by a Kufic inscription in white on a
decorative floral ground. In two of them the numerous figures are divided into groups
the new nastal'iq hand, and the lay-out of the miniatures also is new. They are essentially coloured drawings and the background is left uncoloured. There is a far stronger tendency to pattern than in the earlier fourteenth century miniatures, especially in the treatment of trees and plants. Figures of men and animals are lively in scenes like the Gathering of Fruit from the Lubya Tree, while the astronomical subjects are in an old-fashioned style, decorative and flat. The silver water was to become the normal convention in the Timurid period, and the pattern of large plants which cover the ground in many of the miniatures was also to be a normal form of background. It has been suggested that these miniatures are at least mainly later than the date of the manuscript, but in a book of this kind there would be little point in text without pictures, and the colour scheme is in line with the bright colouring of the previous decades at Tabriz, which was the principal Jala'ir capital. These people were one of the Mongol tribes and must have gathered up what remained of the Il-Khanid artists of the book. As has been suggested, the main interest of this manuscript is that it looks forward to the early Timurid work like the Kalila wa Dimna manuscript of the Royal Library at Tehran. For it shows in some of its miniatures the same delight in the world of nature, if more naively, and with less lyrical feeling. The simple compositions are illusionist in that they have solved the problem of the relation of figures to landscape within the margins of a smallish page. The horizon is carried right up to the top margination, thereby keeping the idea of the back curtain without losing the sense of space.

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The three court scenes are the richest in the book: each of them filling the page with a single architectural construction, crowned by a Kufic inscription in white on a decorative floral ground. In two of them the numerous figures are divided into groups

Diwan of Sultan Ahmad: Pastoral Border. Baghdad, c. 1405, painted by Junayd. (1156/7 n.r.)
No. 32-33. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Kitab al-Bulhan (Tracts on Astrology, Divination and Prognostication): Aquarius. Baghdad, 1399. (9½ x 6¼"
Or. 133, folio 29 recto, Bodleian Library, Oxford.
by strong vertical lines which produce two narrow panels, of unequal width, in one of
which recession is given by an arch and in the other by a receding wall. In the third
where there are fewer figures to control, the whole is enclosed by a single arch under
which a gold semi-dome provides the recess for the royal throne. In all three also there
are magnificent carpets and rich tilework and the effect is sumptuous. In the two more
elaborate scenes an open window, through which girls’ heads look out, continues a device
noted in the Istanbul *Kalila wa Dimna* pages. This is required by the subject of one,
in which Humay on a visit to the court of China thus catches his first sight of Humayun
looking down from a window. It is a device often used by painters of later periods to
aid the construction of their composition. In these two miniatures too, there are figures
of servants holding open doors and so increasing the sense of the enclosure of the scene;
which does not seem to suffer from the lack of perspective in the flat elevation. This is
not quite so successfully managed in the third interior; but the boldness and simplicity
of the device of placing the angle of vision high above the picture-space carries conviction
of the intended transitions from floor to platform and then to wall; and the figures are
tall and elegant, very different from the red-faced men of the first half of the century.
But perhaps the most fundamental change is that the movement is entirely internal
to the composition with a strong circular tendency. The open-air scenes here repro-
duced make this even clearer by their circular horizons, twice sweeping into the margins
in the fashion already found in the Istanbul *Kalila wa Dimna* pages. Now however
the overlapping trees and rocks are in the farther distance, instead of the foreground,
and the sense of free air is made more sensible by the presence of many birds in flight
beyond the edge of the painting, which is thus released from the two-dimensional page.
In one, prince Humay rides up to the gate of the castle of Humayun, where he sees
her on the terrace of a tower enclosed in a walled garden full of flowering trees. Here
the left edge of the miniature forms the flanking wall of the tall tower, on which the
composition forms a half circle. The second situation is, if possible, even more romantic:
as they seek one another Humay encounters her in male disguise and wearing armour
and visor; they fight without recognizing one another until she takes off her helmet.
This is the moment of the painter’s choice, and again the action is surrounded by trees
and birds in flight. In both there is a stream winding across the foreground, bordered
by flowering plants, but on the near side the circle of rocks comes right round to lap
along the lower margin edge. These trees are the native Persian cypress and juniper,
the chenar and the tamarisk, quite unlike the exotic Chinese trees of the Demotte
*Shah-nama* and the *Kalila wa Dimna*.

The hillside of the duel is bare and rocky, but two other miniatures are set in gardens:
the feast at which the lovers plight their troth in the jasmine garden, where, under a
golden sky, the courtiers pick roses and play on the pipe and the tambourine; and the
earlier and more intimate scene when Humay faints with emotion when he finds himself
face to face with his beloved in the moonlight in a garden of flowering trees. The artist
has attuned his art to the melody of Persian lyric poetry and found the perfect proportion
of text and figure subject. At the same time the spaciousness of the Il-Khanid compo-
sition has not been wholly lost. But, if criticism is to be made, it would be that the range is rather small, and the figures a little stiff and doll-like. In colour the contrasts are harsh compared with the mastery in the fifteenth century of subtler combinations than the bitter greens and harsh reds of these experimental pictures. But the way was open for all the developments of the next century.

The basis of Junayd's work was an accomplished draughtsmanship, most clearly seen in the duel scene; and this is even more apparent in another royal manuscript of Sultan Ahmad, his own poetical works, finely written on pages with wide margins. The only pictorial decoration of this manuscript, which is now in the Freer Gallery, Washington, is to be found on the eight last pages, of which the margins are filled with pastoral drawings of the most exquisite quality, enhanced with gold and light blue, which stand almost alone in the whole œuvre of the Persian school. Careful analysis of the elements of the drawings does however show that the landscape is built up in the same way as that in the Khwaju, and this kind of tinted drawing is to be seen in the margins of some of the pages of the accomplished little vade mecum prepared for the Timurid prince Iskandar in 1420, which will be described below when we come to speak of the early Timurid school. There are also two somewhat similar whole pages of gold-enhanced drawings at the end of the Shah-nama of Sultan Ibrahim prepared for this other Timurid prince in about 1435, also reproduced below. There can be no question, as we shall see, that these drawings are contemporary with the two royal volumes, and they thus support the dating of the Divan of Sultan Ahmad and its decoration to the early fifteenth century, which some critics have denied. It is true that these margin drawings are in some ways unique; for instance in their conception as forming a plane behind that of the text page, and continuing behind the central area. This is the reverse of the older convention by which the text was enclosed by the miniature as described above. Miniatures they are not, but only decoration, although elaborate. Stylistically they combine features taken over from Chinese models, especially noticeable in the animals and birds; the new Persian tree and rock conventions; and some European touches, practically confined to the faces of some of the figures. Comparable influence in another manuscript of the same school will be considered very shortly. The convolute and forked clouds can be paralleled in the 1435 end-papers already referred to, in which also are to be seen some ducks in flight and swimming, as on some of the other pages of Sultan Ahmad's Divan.

It is therefore possible to regard these pages both as the last evidence of the naturalism of the Mongol period, and as prefiguring, in their scale and fine drawing, the best work of the Timurid school.

Compared with these the miniatures in a composite volume in the Bodleian Library are rough and vernacular, but thereby probably more typical of the state of painting at the end of the fourteenth century in the Jala'ir kingdom. The volume (Or. 133) contains miscellaneous tracts on astrology, divination, and prognostication; and includes fifty-four full-page miniatures symbolical of the seasons, the climes, the signs of the zodiac and various demons and supernatural beings. It was composed by a native of Baghdad, but of Isfahani origin, in the year 1399, according to Professor D. S. Rice.
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odiac and various demons and supernatural beings. It was composed by a native
Baghdad, but of Isfahani origin, in the year 1399, according to Professor D. S. Rice
who has made a close study of it. In the page showing Aquarius, reproduced, the spandrels
of the arch are filled with a naturalistic design of lilies, which contrasts with the repeated
conventional plant inside the arch and recalls the similar arch in the Khwaju manuscript.
In the small pictures of the four seasons the lesser trees are more impressionistically
rendered. The framing of the subjects in roundels or panels suggests that they may be
derived from metalwork, and if so they represent an old Persian tradition. This is a
more elegant one than that to be discussed in the next chapter under the heading of the
“school of Shiraz.”
Tabriz under the Jalair was still an entrepot for international trade, though restricted
by the unsettled times. Professor Rice has referred to the trading privileges granted by
Sultan Uways to the Venetians and the Genoese, to account for the persistence of
European or at least Mediterranean influences in these pages. As Dr H. Stern has
pointed out, the iconography of the months seems to derive rather from a Byzantine
than a Latin prototype, and the most immediate Christian influence at Tabriz until
the extinction of the Eastern Empire was from Byzantium. It continued after the capture
of the city by the Turkmans, as we shall see. The old Persian influence in these astro-
logical pages is shown in the symbol of the sun which forms the centre of the arch. In
the centre of the rayed twelve-pointed disc is a full face, with strongly marked eye-
brows, and black hair parted in the middle. This same face, but without the rayed halo,
is found in a similar position in the centre of the arch above the throne of Anushirvan,
the King of Kings, in a miniature in the Khwaju manuscript of 1396 in the British
Museum, thus connecting these otherwise dissimilar miniatures, just as we have already
noted the floral designs in the spandrels of this same arch as similar to those in the
signed Wedding Scene in the Khwaju. This particular feature is still found in the
decoration of the Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon) Anthology of Iskandar, a Shiraz
manuscript of 1410 (frontispiece to the second part). Considering the scientific character
of this book the miniatures show a remarkable degree of naturalism in the handling of
both figures and landscape.
Tabriz had a troubled history in the time of Sultan Ahmad. It was captured by
Timur in 1386 and remained in Timurid hands until 1406, when it was seized by the
Black Sheep Turkman Qara Yusuf, at least nominally a feudatory of the Jalair house.
Sultan Ahmad’s capital during these years was at Baghdad, but he then for a time
returned to Tabriz, and it was in attempting to assert his claim to rule in this city that
he met his death at the hands of Qara Yusuf in 1410. He seems always to have received
a welcome from the citizens when he was able to reside at Tabriz, where he patronized
the arts. Consequently it is to his atelier that we should attribute a beautiful manuscript
of the Khurasan and Shiraz of Nizami, now in the Freer Gallery in Washington, which
was copied according to the colophon “in the capital of the kingdom Tabriz by Ali
Hasan al-Sultani.” The date is no longer preserved and it has been attributed to about
1420 by M. Schoukine. The rule of the Black Sheep Turkman continued in Azarbaijan
until 1437, but there is no evidence either in literature or from surviving manuscripts
that they were patrons of the book. Their capital was generally at Shirvan, but the

Illustration page 59

Illustration page 54
Khusrau and Shirin of Nizami: Farhad brought before Shirin. Tabriz, 1405-1410. (10½ x 6⅞" )
No. 33-34, third miniature. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
library staff of the Jala’ir seems to have remained at Tabriz, because when the Timurid prince Baysunghur was sent by his father Shah Rukh to govern this city he found there the greatest calligrapher of the age, Ja’far al-Tabrizi.

The five miniatures in the Khusrav and Shirin are in any case nearer in style and colouring to the Khwaju manuscript of 1396 than to any fifteenth century miniatures. In the Farhad at work carving the Channel through Rock, a delicately drawn tree in the margin recalls the trees which surround the Duel Scene of the 1396 Khwaju; and the looped-up curtains in the Farhad brought before Shirin are exactly those of the interiors in this book. Moreover the text is still enclosed within the field of the miniature in this page just as it was in 1396, but is not in the whole-page Timurid miniatures. The spatial conception is however already changing from the still plastic design of the fourteenth century with recession clearly implied, to a purely conventional scheme which does not bear analysis, but consists of little more than a screen bent like the two wings of a stage background. This was to be the convention in the fifteenth century. Here we still see however the exquisite draughtsmanship and the sensibility in gesture of the otherwise rather stiff figures, of the Jala’ir school. Before considering the succession of this school we must now turn back to the other main stream of Persian painting in the fourteenth century, which was not only vigorous and effective but was to contribute something permanent to the later development of the whole school.