This Koran consists of 215 folios copied in nashti script, illuminated by Mahmud ibn al-Husayn al-Khitf al-Kirmi at Hamadan in 1264. Between each two lines of the text is an arched commentary written in red on the slant in smaller nashti script. The Sura headings are heavily decorated with a different design for each. The binding is late. This manuscript was given as a donation to the Azhar mosque in Cairo by the amin Ahmad Javith (died 1376). The first page is elaborately decorated with a geometrical pattern of intersecting white lines forming 21 medallions, six of which have a blue ground, the others a gold ground. The last page, shown here, contains the colophon and is decorated with a large diamond-shaped figure filled with a net of intersecting circles. The four sides of the diamond are also intersected by half-circles. The colophon is contained in the rectangular field at the top and bottom of the page. The scribe-illuminator Mahmud is not otherwise known, but he completed his work in one of the Seljuk capitals, Hamadan. The illumination and decoration are of the highest quality and Eitingerhausen has compared them with the architectural decoration of the mosque at Qazvin, slightly earlier in date.

Published: Eitingerhausen (1956, pp. 92-100).

506 Double-page from a Koran
Height (of each page) 41 cm.
width: 31 cm
Iran Museum, Tehran.
No. 1408
Khorasan, Ghurid period, 12th century

This Koran is in four volumes with interlinear commentary and Persian translation. It was copied in thuluth by Muhammad ibn Sa‘id ibn Muhammad ‘Ali Nishapuri Luthi for Ghayth al-Din Muhammad ibn S extend Ghiyar in 1188, presumably in his capital Firuzkoh in Khorasan (now in Afghanistan) the site of which is unknown, but may be marked by the famous minaret of Jam which bears the name of this sultan. The manuscript was given as a donation by Shayan al-Islam Ahmad Jami in 1256 and was preserved in his tomb at Turbat-shaykh Jam until 1968 when it was removed to the Museum. The leather binding is contemporary with the manuscript.

Published: Bahrami (1949, nos. 30–31 and 1949, no. 52); Eitingerhausen (1954, p. 490); Ostendorf (1975, p. 33).

507 see colour plate, page 52

510 Binding of leather
Height 17.4 cm, width 14.4 cm
Staatbibliothek Preussischer
Kulturbesitz Orientabteilung, Berlin,
Or. Ost, 3746
Syria (Damascas), Ayubid period, 12th century

This binding contained the manuscript ‘Ardoq al-Mut‘a‘ilmin, ‘Exercise of the Instructed’, by Ahmad b. Muhammad ibn al-‘amili, dated 1183 by two attestations. Only the back and flap of the binding are preserved. The tooled decoration is created by three different units repeated in two complete borders, the central one appearing only at the sides. Corner pieces and flower in the central field.

Published: Weisweiler (1962, 52, fig. 60, pl. 4).

512 Page from the Mustid al-Khans (second part), by Abu Bakr Muhammads b. Zakariya al-Razi
Height 25.5 cm, width 16 cm
Imam Riza Shrine Library, Mashhad, no. 153
Mesoopotamia (Mosul) or Persia, Seljuk period, about 1200

This manuscript was dedicated to the ruler of Mervandarun and was illustrated with human, animal and plant figures. It was formerly in the possession of the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Salih Ismail (ruled 1219–50) and was given by Najr Shih to the shrine of the Imam Riza at Mashhad. This page (folio 37) depicts three medicinal plants. The human figures between have halos typical of manuscripts illustrated in Mesoopotamia in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. The line of foliage forming the ground line also occurs in paintings of this school and period. Pre-Mongol miniatures from Persia are so scarce that it has not yet been possible to assign this manuscript to Mesoopotamia or Persia.

Published: Bahrami (1949, no. 36–47 and 1949, no. 53, pl. 25); Alibay (1976, no. 53, pp. 110–11).

513 Koran
Height (of each page) 39 cm.
width 31 cm
Imperial Library, Tehran, no. 53–60
Persia (Khorasan), Seljuk period, 1209–11

This Koran, with translation and commentary of Taher in thuluth, was copied by As‘ad b. Muhammad b. Abu Khayr b. Ahmad b. Abu al-Husayn Sahlawiyah of Yazd and illuminated by Ahmad b. Abu Nasr b. Abu al’Umar b. Abu ‘Aliq. The title page has a rare example of the signature of the illuminator whose work is characteristic of the late Seljuk style of south-east Persia.

Published: Bahrami (1949, no. 36–47 and 1949, no. 53, pl. 25); Alibay (1976, no. 53, pp. 110–11).
546 Kitâb al-Aghâni, 'The Book of Songs', by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahânî, volume 2
Height 26.6 cm, width 30.3 cm
National Library, Cairo, Addâr fârî 579/2
Mesopotamia (Mosul), 13th century

This frontispiece (folio 28) represents a ruler enthroned with genii above and surrounding emblems of victory in his office. The alphabet (folios 19b) name the scribe Muhammad b. Abu Tâlib b. Badrî.

Published: Rice (1958), p. 138;
Ethington (1965), p. 64.

517 Kitâb al-Aghâni, 'The Book of Songs', by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahânî, volume 20
Height 28.6 cm, width 31.2 cm
Royal Library, Copenhagen, Arabic MS. 168
Mesopotamia (Mosul), 13th century

This volume was copied by Muhammad b. Abu Tâlib b. Badrî and is dated 1219. The presence of the two flying genii above the ruler’s head in this frontispiece indicates a close relationship with classical images even if they do not hold wreaths. Such flying figures are also found in the shields of the Sassanian relief of Khursâw I at Taq-e Bustan in Persia. The rider with a falcon is framed in a double border and probably represents Badr al-Dîn Lu’î whose name appears on his arm band. However, such depictions should not be regarded as portraits, but as ideal effigies of rulers.


558 Khwânsâr al-Abîd, 'The Properties of Plants', by Dioscorides
Height 46.6 cm, width 30 cm
Imam Riza Shrine Library, Mashhad, Mesopotamia, early 13th century

The Materia Medica of Dioscorides was translated from Greek into Arabic in the 12th century, probably in Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid caliphate. The original type of scientific illustrations which accompanied the text were transformed by Islamic artists into genre scenes. This manuscript consists of 384 folios with 677 figures of plants and 184 of animals. The original Greek names of the plants are indicated by notes in Syriac. This volume was presented by Shah ‘Abbâs to the shrine of Imam Riza in 1668. The binding is new. The plans depicted here are drawn in a manner not far removed from the Greek originals with fully displayed roots as appropriate to a scientific work but the human figures are in a Mesopotamian style. This miniature is of the Euphorbia tree, Gruei attributes the manuscript to about 1155-65 anticipating the miniatures from the manuscript of 1248 (see nos. 520-1).

Published: London (1913), no. 5506; Binyon, Wilkinson and Grey (1913), no. 6, p. 25; Bahrami (1940), no. 51; Gruei (1939), p. 171, pl. 124;
Page 320: Page from the Khawāq al-Asḥār, 'The Properties of Plants', by Dioscorides
Height 25cm, width 32cm
Private Collection
Mesopotamia (Baghdad), 1224

This miniature and no. 521 were among 31 cut out from a manuscript now in the Hagia Sophia Library, Istanbul (no. 3703), some time before several of these were included in the Munich exhibition of 1970. The manuscript now contains 203 folios and one figurine miniature as well as numerous plant illustrations; it is dated 1224. This miniature shows a fruit with ears on the river Ganges and a two-storied arcade with a face peering through each arch. The text describes the use of amber for urotene pains.

Published: Munich (1970, pl. 4); Matteu and Vener (1924, I, p. 49); Marin (1973, pl. 56); Migeon (1972, pp. 124–4); Buchthal (1942, no. 22); Grobe (1950, no. 21).

Page 321: Page from the Khawāq al-Asḥār, 'The Properties of Plants', by Dioscorides
Height 32cm, width 32cm
Private Collection
Mesopotamia (Baghdad), 1224

See no. 320. This miniature depicts the patient consulting with two physicians. The text discusses the cure for acconite poisoning (leopard's bane).

Published: Munich (1970, pl. 4); Matteu and Vener (1924, I, p. 49); Migeon (1972, pp. 124–6); Buchthal (1942, no. 23); Grobe (1950, no. 21).

Page 322: Khwāq al-Asḥār, 'The Properties of Plants', by Dioscorides
Height 24.5cm, width 17.5cm
British Library, London, Or. 2784
Mesopotamia (Baghdad), 1240

This manuscript consists of 210 folios with illuminated medallions and headings at the beginnings of chapters 3, 4, and 5. It was copied by al-Hajib b. Almad al-Mushtadi in 1240. The binding in embossed leather in 18th-century Persian work. The numerous coloured drawings of plants are contained mostly in leaves 3 and 4 and are not exceptional though they display a greater degree of realism as a result of a direct observation of nature than other examples (compare no. 529). This miniature (folio 120v) shows a plant at the stages before and after flowering. The plant is known as leefit or yaqin and resembles the aubergine when it becomes yellow. Leefit is also the fruit or produce of the mandrake tree. See Lane (1863, I, p. 266).

Published: Buehler and Teresi (1973–9, II, introduction and pp. 337–447); Grobe (1959, pl. iv, fig. 9); Robinson and Gray (1973, no. 4, p. 6).

Page 323: Mandi' al-Hayawān
Height 23cm, width 17cm
British Library, London, Or. 2784
Mesopotamia (Baghdad), 1250

This manuscript is an Arabic treatise on animals and on the medicinal properties of various parts of their bodies compiled from the works of Aristotle and 'Ubaysūdīllāh b. Jibīl b. Bakhṭīsīhī. The latter came from a family of Syrian Christian doctors who worked for the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad in the 8th century. This manuscript is written in the naskhi script and has its text pages out of order. There is, unfortunately, no colophon to give the date, scribe or place of execution. The paintings illustrate the sections on birds, animals, fishes and crustaceans and there are also portraits of Aristotle and Ibn Bakhtishī (see folios 96r and 101v, respectively). The style of the paintings is old-fashioned, preserving the conventions of the earlier Mesopotamian school. They must have been completed shortly before the sack of Baghdad in 1258 and display considerable sensibility and liveliness in their execution. This miniature (folio 228v) illustrates a bustard and falcon. The text states that the bustard is proverbially the most stupid of birds and there is a saying 'be is more stupid than the bustard.'

Published: Rieu (1894, no. 778, p. 531); Marin (1913, I, figs. 5–6, II, pls. 19–20); Illisch (1942, p. 34, figs. 34–45, 39–41); Eittinhausen (1960, p. 136).
558 a-b. Two volumes of a Koran
Height 55 cm, width 38 cm
National Library, Cairo, no. 77
Persia, Ilkhanid period, 1314-5

This Koran was copied in thirty parts for Ulujayr by 'Abdallah Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Hamadani in 1314-5. Both volumes are in stamped and gilt leather bindings of the period with a decorated flap, the inner faces covered with stamped and Sultani arabesque. The two volumes a-b, are of 37 and 36folios respectively, with five lines of thuluth script in gold with black outlines. The illuminated double-page frontispieces, Sura headings and end-pieces are in blue black, white, and gold. Volume a is part 17 of the Koran and here shows the opening Sura of the text (fol. 3). Volume b is part 21 of the Koran and here shows the illuminated frontispiece in alternating octagons of gold, black, blue and white (folios 35-47). On the medallion illuminated in gold there is further illumination in gilt overlaying the name of the calligrapher 'Abdallah Muhammad b. Mahmud al-Hamadani and the date 1314-5. This frontispiece, like those of the other volumes, bears a dedication muqaf dated 1326 in favour of the dome of the mosque of the Sufi noted mausoleum attached to the famous foundation of Bekimur al-Shaykh in the southern cemetery, Cairo. Ibn Ilyas recounts that Sultan al-Ghuri installed the Koran in his own mausoleum inside Cairo and that Bekimur paid 1,000 dinars for it. See Wiet (1945, p. 66). There are fewer important Koran manuscripts, either historically or aesthetically.

Published: Wiet (1945, pp. 68-73); Ethington (1955, pp. 401-6); Cairo (1969, no. 281).
531 Binding of the al-Risāla al-Sayyiyya, by al-Qurnawi
Height 26.5 cm, width 18.5 cm
Staatliche Kunsthalle, Kunsthalleberzeugung, Berlin, Or. Quart 2008
Syria (Damascus), Mamluk period, 14th century
This manuscript was completed in 1314 and shortly afterwards. It was copied by a pupil of the author who was living in Damascus and who died there in 1315. The binding is decorated with tooled and stamped designs and gilt. There are double border lines with pietra designs. The back and spine have been restored.
Published: Wiesewiller (1964, no. 34, fig. 18, pi. 12)

532 Koran
Height 31 cm, width 23.6 cm
Museums of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 29.58, Helen and Alfred Colburn Fund
Persia (Maragheh), Mongol period, 14th century
This Koran was copied by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ahmad ibn Fadlallāh ibn ‘Abd al-Hamīd and is dated 1338. The title page shown here comes from the thirteenth section of the Koran and is elaborately illuminated. The top and bottom fields have stylised lotus flowers on either side of kufic script. The text in the middle is written in naskhi reserves on a background of stylised wave pattern. There is a triangular area at the side. Contemporary binding is tooled and partly gilt. 13th century Turkish Korans clearly derive from Korans of this type, especially in the designs of the binding and illumination. See Eitgenhofer (1954, p. 467). The Mongol vocabulary of design is still dominant with its use of Far Eastern lotus and pomey and the Chinese wave convention as a background pattern. Another section of this Koran is in the Henry F. Fowle Bequest Library, Dublin.
Published: Pope and Ackerman (1988-9, pl. 93B)

533 Miniature from Shāhāname, by Firdawsi
Height 27 cm, width 31 cm
Musée d’art et d’histoire, Geneva, Peres Collection, formerly in the Domasz Collection
Persia (Tabriz), Ilkhanid period, 14th century
This miniature and no. 534 once formed part of a manuscript of the Shāhāname, the greatest part of which is lost. The sixty known miniatures from it are scattered among public and private collections of Europe and America. They are universally recognised as marking the final evolution of the Mongol style under the Ilkhansids in Persia and as the most dramatic and moving illustrations to the great epic which exists. Although some authorities attribute their production to a period of fifty years or more, it seems best to envisage the sustained impetus of their production as belonging to the single reign of the last effective Ilkhansid ruler, Abi Said (died 1335), at his capital Tabriz. This miniature depicts an encounter between Zal, father of Rustam, and Bahram, son of Fathaliyye, prince of Persia. Zal is always recognisable because of his albino colouring. The composition of the miniature is unusually symmetrical and the rendering of perspective by means of the stepped grassy ridges is skilful. The colour scheme with the gold background in brilliant effect. The special quality of this manuscript, as with other pages of this great series, lies in the pathos of the embrace between the heroes of different generations. The artist would have expected his readers to recall the subsequent rift between the two families here represented. The title of the miniature is inserted in a label above.
Published: Schulte (1942), Beherat (1932, no. 6, pl. IV and 1939, pl. XXVI); Biesanz (1939, no. 18); Stuholteine (1938, pp. 83-90); Robinson (1974, no. 2).

534 Miniature from Domasz Collection, by Firdawsi
Height 27 cm, width 19.6 cm
Worcester Art Museum, no. 1935.24. Teorema Wielich Paddo, formerly in the collection of Dominick Persia (Tabriz), Ilkhanid period, 14th century
See no. 533. This miniature represents Bahram Gūr hunting enagars. The surrounding text describes his ability to shoot the enagars so that the arrow strikes the buttacks and passes through the breast. The miniature, however, does not agree. Stories of pricely or heroic hunting feats long preceded the Islamic period in Persia. Bahram, the historic Vahran V (421-38), the Sassanian monarch who had been brought up in the hard life of the north Arabian court, was still popularly remembered for his bravery in war and chace.
Published: London (1931, no. 218a); Biesanz (1939, pp. 47-51); Schulte (1939, pp. 97-123); Grise (1962a, pp. 13-19, no. 13 and 1966a, p. 119, no. 12).
535

Miniature from Kitāb G
Maʾrifat al-Hiyal al-Handasya, Treatise on Automata, by Ibn al-‘Izz al-Razzāk al-Jazari
Height 31.2cm, width 17.6cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. 3775
Egypt (Cairo), Mamluk period, 14th century

This manuscript was copied in 1354 by Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Ismāʿīl, at the order of the amir Nāṣir al-Dīn Muhammad b. Tūlak al-Harrānī who was in the service of the sultan Salāh al-Dīn Sālih (ruled 1331–4). At least three of the illustrations from this manuscript have inscriptions in the name of this sultan. This page comes from the manuscript once in HəqqaSophia Mosque Library, Istanbul (no. 3606), now in the Süleyman Library, Istanbul, which contains 246 folios and 24 miniatures. This miniature, like others from the same manuscript, is less instructive concerning the operation of the clocks than those depicted in an earlier manuscript dated 1335 and now dispersed but excels in decorative design and monumental quality. See Atl (1975, pp. 102–4), al-Jazzār wrote his work on automata for Nāṣir al-Dīn Mahfīz, the Urfaqār ruler of Dīyarbakir (died 1322). The different clocks are described in the first section.

Published: Munich (1901, no. 577); Martin (1914, pl. 4); Bischler (1953, pp. 210–7); Subirats (1976, p. 40, pl. 21); Farkh (1977, no. 332)

536

Koran
Height 73cm, width 50cm
National Library, Cairo, no. 8
Egypt (Cairo), Mamluk period, mid-14th century

This Koran dated 735 consists of 413 folios and was presented as a donation by Sultan Shāh bīn to the madrasa of his mother, Khwetnā Barakā, in the Khatāt al-Tāhghā in Cairo in 1368. It was probably commissioned for the mosque of Sulṭān Ḥasan, Cairo. There seem to be at least two hands employed in spite of the decoration which names the copier as Yaʿqūb b. Khālid b. Muhammad b. Abūlʿalī al-Hamī. The double-page frontispiece shown here (folio 2) consists of a central twelve pointed star in gold and blue with white outlines and a little green. The inscriptions are in round ended oblong panels with a ground of rich chinoiserie foliage. These panels are the same on all the illuminated pages but the gold leaf, unlike the 7th century Korans of Barqayf is not impressed.

Published: Bourguin (1892, pls. 23–4)

538

537

Koran
Height 72.8cm, width 52cm
National Library, Cairo, no. 79
Egypt, Mamluk period, 1372

This Koran consists of 217 folios of fine Mamluk-thulūf script. The colophon (folio 210) gives the date as 1372 and the name of the copyist ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz al-Muwaffāq as-Salāhī. The Koran was given as a donation by Sultan Shāh bīn in 1376 to his father-in-law, the madrasa in the Khatāt Bīb al-Wāsir near the citadel of Cairo. Compare no. 536. The double-page shown here (folio 3) is inscribed with Suna I and the opening verses of Suna II. The headings are in white kufic on gold grounds but the script, black with gold outlines on chinoiserie clouds, is enclosed by borders of different colours on each of the two pages.

Published: Cairo (1969, no. 290)

539

Koran, first half
Height 50cm, width 35cm
National Museum, Damascus, no. 1365
Syria (Damascus), Mamluk period, 14th century

This Koran was given as a donation by the Mamluk amir Isāʾī b. Mahāmūd al-Sayfī Manjāk. The double-page shown here contains the verses from Suna I in thulūf inset within a decorated frame. Above and below the writing are decorated fields. In the outer margins of each page are three anis. Published: Damascus (1969, p. 225, fig. 179).
540 Koran

Height 9.5 cm, width 78 cm
National Library, Cairo, no. 17
Egypt, Mamluk period, 1417

The Koran in 231 folios is written in black thuluth, varying considerably in dimensions and execution, mostly hung from impressed lines. Decoration is in pressed gold leaf and varying tones of red, pink, mauve, blue, green, white and black. The double-page frontispiece (folios 1-2) shows here consists of square panels filled with polychrome stylised chinoiserie buds arranged in fours with a red central medallion and gold crosses between. Above and below are long panels of highly mannerededic in gold on a blue ground with polychrome flowered scrolls. On the upper margin of folio 21 is a short record of a donation in a later hand stating that this Koran was given to the mosque-madrasa of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh at the Bab Zuwayla in Cairo in 1419. There is no marginal ornament but the crenellated border is particularly sumptuous. The final page bears the scribe's signature Mihit b. Ismail al-Khindi al-Hanafi al-shahib [Kazwini] [AD 717/Hejiri and dated 1417. Published: Cairo (1969, no. 392)

541 Kaffa wa Dimma, Fables by Hafiz with Persian translation

Height 24 cm, width 16 cm
National Library, Cairo, Adab fables
Persia, Timurid period, 15th century

This manuscript consists of 216 folios; the colophon contains the date 1543-4 but no signature. The manuscript is illustrated modestly with miniatures of which only the last two scenes are full-page. The miniatures appear to be rather later in date than the colophon. Though they show some influence from the contemporary Jala'ayrid school they are not unlike those attributed to the school of Shiraz at about the time of Timur's conquest of that city in 1382-8.

542 'Ajlī b. al-Makhlīqi, 'The Wonders of Creation', by an unknown author

Height 33 cm, width 22 cm
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des Manuscrits, Sup. Pers. 332
Baghdad, Jalayrid period, 15th century

This manuscript consists of 34 folios with 95 miniatures and an illuminated frontispiece. It was copied by Ahmad al-Hareefi for the library of the Jalayrid Sultan Ahmad Khân ibn Uways and was completed in 1528. This anonymous work follows in part the tradition of Mamluk illumination of Qurban but also conforms to the new style which was being evolved under the Jalayrid rulers at their capitals in Tabriz and Baghdad. Schlokein has suggested that most of the miniatures in this manuscript were added later but this seems an unnecessary complication for a work produced in a transitional period when efficiencies of style between different artists might be expected. This miniature (folio 160b) depicts the harvesting of peppers. Published: Blochet (1956, p. 79); Massé (1943); Schlokein (1954, pp. 32-35); Paris (1973, no. 337, p. 91)

543 Kaffa wa Dimma, Fables by Hafiz with Persian translation of Nasiruddin b. Muhammud b. 'Abdulhakim

Height 33 cm, width 17 cm
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des Manuscrits, Sup. Pers. 913
Baghdad, Jalayrid period, 14th century

This manuscript consists of 217 folios with 74 miniatures. The colophon states that it was copied by Hafiz with Persian translation of Nasiruddin b. Muhammud b. 'Abdulhakim and completed in 1392. It is bound in a Persian embossed and gilt leather binding and was once in the library of Shah Wali, the son of Ahmad Jalayir. Without a doubt this manuscript is a product of the school promoted by the leading art patron of the day, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir (rules 1382-1410). As with the illumination for a Khamsa of Nasiruddin now in the British Library, London (Or. 13297), produced in 1386-8, the miniatures in this manuscript are, for the most part, somewhat pedestrian. However, they occasionally display a vitality and sensibility. This miniature (folio 54b) shows fishing at night. Published: Schlokein (1954, p. 34); no. V, pls. 2-3; Walter (1966, p. 73); Paris (1973, no. 296)
544 Mathnawi poems by Khwajâ Kirmânî
Height 32 cm, width 24 cm
British Library, London, Add. 18113
Baghdad, Jalâyrid period, 14th century

The three poems in this manuscript were copied for the last Jalâyrid ruler, Ahmad ibn Bayan, by the famous calligrapher Mir 'Ali ibn Ilyâs Tabrīzī at Baghdad in 1396 and illustrated by Juyân ibn al-Sulṭânî. An inscription on folio 45 gives the name of this artist and it is likely that he was responsible for the nine miniatures in this manuscript. The calligrapher is remembered as being the inventor of the nastaliq script. This manuscript is a landmark in the history of Persian painting as the earliest major example of the classic style of the 13th century. Illuminations within the text, whether of headings or of frontispieces, are of arabesque designs and are of superb quality. The compositions take up the entire page with a few lines of poetry enclosed in a frame which is set within the miniature. The miniature shown here (folios 46-47) depicts Humâyûn, son of Shâh Hâshîn, and Humâyûn, the Chinese princess, being entertained with wine and music in a garden. It is a fine example of the romantic and delicate art of Persian miniature painting which evolved at this time. Chinese elements are still strongly visible in the features of the faces and in the ceramic flasks on the table. The landscape, however, is purely Persian in spirit.

Published: Martí (1912, II, 45-50); Baroni (1915, pp. 5-32); Neshbatî (1914, pls. IV-VIII); Gray (1961, pp. 47-49 and 1963, pl. 2); M. Morettí-Owens (1973, pl. 1)

545 Kitâb al-Ithār, Astrological Work, by Abû Ma'shâr al-Bakhtî, Height 34 cm, width 16.9 cm
Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Bodl. Or. 133
Baghdad, Jalâyrid period, end of 14th century

This manuscript consists of 276 folios with 83 miniatures and a modern European binding. It was copied for Mu'ammar of Ibn al-Numân and the illustrations were painted during the reign of the last ruler of the Jalâyrid dynasty, Ahmad ibn Uways (ruled 1382-1440), renowned as a patron of the arts. In the miniatures illustrating the original section of this composite work, conflicting artistic traditions may be seen at work. The international Islamic tradition of scientific illustration is modified here by the artistic sophistication of the Jalâyrid court. Rice believed that Italian influences might have been detected, not unlikely in cosmopolitan Tabriz, but the Western influence is more likely to be Byzantine. 118 of the folios belong to the first period of 1399 and include 78 miniatures, eleven of which are of the Seasons. This miniature (folios 38b) is entitled al-qâ'âl 'al-dhâl ila-râbî', 'speaking of the season of Spring'. Beneath the chapter heading is a figure sitting beneath a tree playing an instrument surrounded by trees, flowers, and birds.

Published: London (1951, pp. 534-5, and 1952, no. 7); Biiyûn, Wilkinson and Gray (1973, nos. 12, p. 34); Biiyûn (1980, pp. 3-7); Robinson and Gray (1972, no. 59)
549 Binding of Zaifurşânis by Humdullah Mustafawi
Height 33cm, width 21cm
British Library, London, Or. 2853
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, 1405
This chronicle was composed in verse as a sequel to the Shuhudâ by Firdawsî which is included in the margins. This copy by Mahmûd al-Hâjînî is dated 1405 in Shiraz and consists of 780 folios bound in strong covers of leather on pasteboard. The dark red doublures are plain apart from the gold roll-touched borders which also decorate the black leather outer covers and fly. These also bear blind-stamped medallions, pendants and spandrels outlined in gold and decorated with an arabesque design. It is reasonable to accept this binding as contemporary with the copying of the manuscript and it may be compared to a binding in the Topkapî Palace Museum, Istanbul (50. H. 970), which is dated 1407 from Yârûd, and which figleaves work on the inside of the covers, similar to nos. 519 and 164, both of which are Herat manuscripts. These bindings are among the earliest to show the use of moulded designs which were to develop during the second half of the 15th century into pictorial designs.
Published: Rieu (1904, pp. 177–8)

550 Miscellany
Height 29cm, width 13cm
British Library, London, Add. 27881
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, 1410–1
This 'pocket encyclopedia' contains poems in addition to works on religious law, astronomy, astrology and geometry. It is written in naskh and nasta'î in the margins as well as in the centre of the pages by two scribes, Muhammad al-Hâjînî al-Jâlîî al-Dukanî and Nâzîr al-Kâtîb ('the scribe'). It was copied for Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaykh, a grandson of Timur at Shiraz in 1410–1 and contains 21 full page miniatures as well as 17 folios of small drawings and some marginal paintings. There are finely illuminated title pages, frontispieces, headings and 'thumb-pieces'. Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaykh was one of the most noted patrons of the arts of the book. He ruled over Fars in the south of Persia with his capital at Shiraz until his deposition and death in 1414. Artists who had formerly worked for Sultan Ahmad in Tabriz and Baghdad (see nos. 542–3) moved to the Shiraz academy after the fall of the Jâyârîd and produced manuscripts there noted for small size and exquisite workmanship. The compositions in this manuscript provided models for artists throughout the 15th century. The first 14 miniatures illustrate the Khamsa of Nâzîrî and others illustrate incidents from the Shûhûdâ and Humâyûn wa Humâyûn. This double page scene (folio 90v) accompanies a poem in praise of 'Ali and depicts the miracle in which he saved a Christian monk who had flung himself from the roof of a monastery.
Published: Rieu (1887, II, pp. 808–73); Schuhardt (1926, p. 41, pls. 16–20); Pinder-Wilson (1954, pls. 3–21); Guzy (1961, pp. 66–73)

552 Anthology
Height 28cm, width 19 cm
Fondazione Cultura Giubilaneo, Lisbon, L. A. 138
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, early 15th century
This anthology includes Manûnî al-Turîn's Language of the Birds by 'Aṭâr l-Ṭabâ'în, The Book of Alexander's Fortune by Niţârî and Rawâdî al-Awzâî, The Garden of Light, by Khwajî Jâmiî. It was copied by Hasan al-Ḥâjîî for Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaykh in 1412–3 probably in Shiraz. The three sections each have an illuminated dedication and an illuminated title page. There are triangular thumbpieces, a feature it shares with no. 350. This manuscript contains no miniatures but illustrates the wonderful quality of illumination achieved by the school of Iskandar (see also nos. 549–50). The calligrapher is the same Hasan al-Ḥâjîî and, no doubt, the illuminators are also the same. But here there are no exercises in calligraphy such as in nos. 548, 550 and 551. At this time, Shiraz was pre-eminent in these arts and a special feature developed at this period was the combination of naturalistic flowers with an almost architectural layout to provide a firm structure. This double illuminated title page is written in naskh and is surrounded by decorated panels with scroll-like motifs. The outer border has anase.
553 Mathnawi-ye Mathnawi, 'The Rhyme of Rhymes'
Height 20.8cm, width 13.7cm
Fondaco Caliente Guinebretière, Libon, L. A. 168
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, 15th century

The titles of many Arabic and Persian books, as here, are not intended to give any clear idea of the contents. This manuscript, with illuminated rosette and double frontispiece, was copied for Ibrahim b. Shahrizâd b. Timur in 1419, the ruler who succeeded Iskandar in power and patronage at Shiraz in 1414. This double-page frontispiece contains the opening of a poem enclosed in panels with scroll-like designs. It is surrounded in the margins by a test written diagonally. The free floral decoration is still prominent here but the framing is more complex and relates rather to carpet design than architecture.

Published: Libon (1963, no. 115).

554 Koran
Height 81.7cm, width 61.7cm
Imam Reza Shrine Library, Mashhad, no. 414
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, 15th century

This Koran was written in thuluth by Ibrahim Sulûk b. Shahrizâd b. Timur in 1424. It was bound in 1886. Only a fragment of 16 folios now survives. Ibrahim Sulûk, like his brother Baysunghur, was a highly trained and skilled calligrapher. He is said to have been a pupil of Mir Muhammed Shirizâd. See Qazi-Ahmad (1959, p. 69).

footnote 150. He designed monumental inscriptions for public buildings in Shiraz of which he was governor, and copied a Koran of great size, two cubits high and one and a half cubits wide. During the lifetime of his cousin Iskandar Sulûk b. Umar Shahrizâd (died 1414), Ibrahim was governor of Isfahan. He then over Shiraz and lived there until his death in 1434. These first two pages of the Koran contain the fâlýâ with illuminated headings in kufic on floral scroll ground. The text is on a grissaille-ornamented background of lotus flowers.

Published: Pope and Aitken (1959-69, pl. 384A); Behrani (1950, no. 61); Ma'ani (1966, no. 61).

555

556 Khurraw and Shirin by Nizami
Height 24cm, width 15.7cm
Staatliche Museum zu Berlin, Islamisches Museum, no. 1. 428
Persia (Shiraz), Timurid period, 15th century

This manuscript with illuminated dedication and frontispiece was copied by 'All Ja'far, in 1431. The most celebrated calligrapher of his time, 'All Ja'far was a pupil of Mir 'All Tabari (see no. 544) and was brought from Tabari by the young prince Baysunghur to Herat where he lived under the protection of his father Shahrizâd who made him warr in order to keep him at his side. In Herat he formed his scriptorium with Ja'far at the head to which he recruited an outstanding team of illuminators, miniaturists and binders. Among the other surviving works of Ja'far is a Nizami of 1420 in the British Library, London (or 1380?), a Buçula of 'Abû'd-dî 1426 in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, the famous Shâhnama of 1430 in the

Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran and the Kâlla va Dimna of 1431 in the Topkapî Palace Library, Istanbul (no. H. 362). All these books exceed in their illumination. Here is displayed the illuminated frontispiece.

Published: Samarkand (1969, no. 53).

557 Humây wa Humâyûn by Khwâja Kirmâni
Height 25.7cm, width 13.6cm
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, cod. NF 382
Shiraz (Herat), Timurid period, 15th century

This manuscript was copied at Herat by Muhammad b. Husûn, called Shams al-Dîn Baysunghur, for Baysunghur in 1427–8. The three miniatures which illustrate this romantic poem are all more or less severely damaged. This one, depicting prince Humâyûn in the palace of the fatimids and beholding for the first time the portrait of princess Humayûn, daughter of the emperor of China. In miniature b. folio 644v, Humâyûn sees for the first time Humâyûn at the window. The use of colourless to conceal much of the opposing arms of miniature a recalls epic poems of 1397, British Library, London (Or. 2796).

Published: Kılıç (1951, pl. 133); Pope and Aitken (1959-69, p. 387, pls. 86a, 86b); Stubbs (1955, p. 62); Goerlitz (1960, p. 91); Enderlein (1961).
558 Two pages from a Koran
Imam Reza Shrine Library, Mashhad, no. 59
Persia, Timurid period, 15th century

These two pages come from eight preserved in the Mashhad Shrine Library; there are also other pages in the Malik Library and in the Iran-e Bastan Museum, Tehran. This Koran was copied by Baysungur Mirzâ, a skilled calligrapher as well as being the greatest patron of his time, especially for the arts of the book. He lived in Herat where he was vizier to his father Shahrukh and died there in 1433 at the age of thirty-eight—woefully out by an excess of wine. He designed two monumental inscriptions for the Gwaharshid mosque and madrasa at Mashhad founded by his mother, but these have not survived. The few remaining pages from this giant Koran were discovered not many years ago in a village near Mashhad. These pages are written in naskhi script.

Published: Ma‘ani (1996, no. 59)

559 Binding of History of Isfandiyar, copied by Ja‘far al-Baybars as-Saltani
British Library, London, Or. 2773, from the Robinson Collection
Khorasan (Herat), Timurid period, 1451

The outside of the cover is decorated with gold roll-tooled frames and have central gold and brown oval medallions and pendants which are stamped with a floral design. The flap has similar gold frames with a central round medallion. The double is decorated with an oval sunk medallion and pendants outlined with gold tooling. The medallions and pendants are inlaid with a design of red-brown leather filigree arabesque tendrils on a blue background. This binding may be compared with others which may be confidently attributed to the library workshop of Baysungur (see no. 556) such as those which enclose two copies of the Kitâb az-Din Dimrû dated 1429 and 1430 in the Topkapi Palace Museum Library, Istanbul (Revan 1922 and Hazine 362).

Unpublished

560 Khamsa, Five Poems, of Nizâmi
State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, no. VP 1000
Khorasan (Herat), Timurid period, 15th century

This manuscript consists of 502 folios with 38 miniatures and was copied by Mu‘inuddin for the library of Shahrukh in 1411. Shahrukh managed to retain control over most of the Persian part of Timur’s empire from his capital at Herat. Like so many princes of his family he was a patron of scholars with an important scriptorium. He was able to re-establish the text of the Firdawsi’s of Rashid al-Din (see no. 530) whose works had been scarred and also commissioned a continuation of this history from Bâhi-e Abru. Most of the works surviving from his scriptorium are historical. This miniature (folio 395a) depicts Iskandar visiting a hermit in the mountains.

Published: Denk决心 (1935); Akramshahi and Foucée (1968, pl. 3); Sauerbrey (1969, no. 10)

561 Anthology written in Persia and Ugîhâr
British Library, London, Or. 1893, presented in 1918 by R. S. Gombrich, formerly in the possession of the Hon. A. Seton-Piersi (Yard), Timurid period, 1431

This manuscript was produced in Yard, an important centre of manuscript illumination in the 15th century, and was commissioned by Jalâl al-Dîn Firuz Shîh (1407–44), a minister of Shâhrukh and a principal protector of Turkish cultural interests. See Hofman (1969, pp. 118–12); Mâni‘î Bahâî, who copied the anthology in 1431, was himself a poet and part of this manuscript was also composed by him. Ugîhâr was abandoned by the Turks when converted to Islam in favour of the Arabic script but was revived and used again during the 15th to 15th centuries. The design of this illumination (folios 140b–150c) includes heads of wolves, dragons and birds as well as those of men. The triangles on each of the three sides are decorated with scrollwork. The outline of the designs seems to be carried out with the aid of stencils and colour stippled on in light shades but including gold and silver. This technique seems to have been a speciality of east Persian work in the mid-15th century. Other examples are in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (nos. P.1232 and P.1272, dated 1432 and 1440).

Published: Clasen (1938, pp. 99–130); E.V. 1927.II, pl. 53–73; VII.71B, VIII.102

562 Shâhnâmeh, by Firdawsi
Royal Asiatic Society, London, no. P. 239
Khorasan (Herat), Timurid period, about 1440

This manuscript bears the seals of the Moghal emperors from Bûbur to Aurangzeb and an autograph note by Shah Jahan. There are 31 miniatures in the manuscript and this one (folio 296) depicts the shooting of Isfandiyar by the rival hero Rustam. The painting overlaps the edge and in the top left hand corner are followers carrying a banner on which is written al-Salih al-A’lam, [the most mighty sultan] Muhammad Jâkû. Muhammad Jâkû was a son of Shahrukh and died in 1445. Compared with the work of the Herat school in the lifetime of Baysungur, the miniatures in this manuscript give a greater importance to landscape and heighten the romantic feeling. In this miniature the many small mountain peaks, which conceal the greater part of the two armies awaiting the result of the duel, recall the use of the same decorative device in Shiraz miniatures some forty years earlier. Both Robinson and Wilkinson have dated the inscription of Shiraz of the period of Ibrâhim. Here in Herat, however, there is a more brilliant and colourful employment and, above all, a more imaginative vision as witness the other miniatures from this manuscript.

Published: Morley (1854, no. 18); Baynon and Wilkinson (1931, pl. 85); Baynon, Wilkinson and Gray (1933, no. 67, p. 35); Robinson (1911, pp. 17–23); Sitchottkine (1934, no. XXXVI, pp. 55–6)
564. Binding of Shahnâma of Firdawsi
Height 35.5cm, width 35.5cm
Boîte à Livres, Oxford, MS. Pers. C.4
Khusraw (Hesir), Timurid period, 15th century

After the death of Shahrukh in 1447, Hesir remained in the hands of the Timurid family although its possession was disputed among several of the princes. This binding encloses a manuscript copied in 1448 by 'Abd Allah b. Shâhshân b. Haydar al-Ashrafâ in which may have been left unfinished at that time. The outside of the binding is black and contains a central medallion tooled with designs of animals with quarter medallions in the four corners. The interior and flap are maroon and decorated with medallions of silver that work on a blue and gilt background.
Published: Arndt (1937, p. 8, no. 10).

Height 38.5cm, width 19.5cm
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, no. A.P. 70, acquired in Cairo in 1749
Turkey, Ottoman period, 15th century

This manuscript is from the library of Sultan Bayezid II (ruled 1481–1512). This binding is in leather with the decoration entirely blind and partly gilt. The border is an intertwined geometrical pattern. In the centre is a fine medallion formed of a central blind decorated area and surrounded by a tooled and gilt decoration. Although twice attributed to Samarqand, whether before or after 1455, this binding is not in the Herat style. The Mamluk influence is very strong, thus suggesting that it is more probably a Turkish than a Persian binding. The inner covers are similarly decorated.
Published: Pâgâlî (1865, no. 917); Gerghîk (1913, no. 30).

566. Binding of Leather
Height 38.5cm, width 31.6cm
Cleveland Museum of Art, no. 44.455, purchased from the H. Wadsworth fund; Khusrav (Hesir), Timurid period, about 1460

This binding is of reddish-brown hand tooled leather, gilt and painted blue and green. It is decorated with a central medallion on each side of the cover. These medallions are decorated with scroll-like designs as are the borders, corners and the flap. The finest example of this type of binding encloses a manuscript of the poems of Farid al-Din'Atâr copied in Hesir in 1438 and now in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Istanbul (A 33 350). See Staedel-Thomine and Spuler (1973, pl. LIV).
Published: Munich (1910, I, no. 631); Cleveland (1964, no. 40); Pâgâlî (1961, no. 1087; p. 194).

567. Binding of Leather
Height 18.8cm, width 12cm
Staatbibliothek Preussicher Kulturbesitz Orientabteilung, Berlin, Or. Oct. 3285
Turkey (Karaman), Ottoman period, 15th century

This binding contains a collection of Persian mystical poems which has a colophon dated 1460. The binding was probably made for the manuscript and is decorated with hand tooled scroll-like vegetal motifs and highly stylised and symmetrical stamped floral motifs in panels above and below. The back edges and spine have been renewed.
Published: Grazzi (1928, p6, VIII-IX); Wieseler (1960, no. 52, fig. 24, pl. 15).

568. Kalila wa Dimna translated into Persian by Nasrallah Abî al-Ma‘allî
Height 29cm, width 20cm
Imperial Library, Tehran, Persia (Tabriz), Timurid period, about 1450

This manuscript consists of a double frontispiece and 30 miniatures and is illustrated with titles headings. No date is given. Ever since its first disclosure to the world in 1917 this manuscript has been saluted for the beauty of its miniatures, especially for the sensitivity of its animal drawings. Recognised as a 15th century manuscript in the Herat tradition, Robinson has convincingly shown its true date to be about 1450. It now falls into place as one of the masterpieces of the library of the 'Black Sheep' Turkman Jalâlah Shah (died 1467) established in Tabriz. It shows the survival and even development of the Herat school of the first half of the century. This miniature depicts the four friends; the crow, the morn, the tortoise and the deer.
Published: London (1917, no. 541); Binyon, Wilkinson and Gray (1933, no. 44, p. 62); Popple and Ackerman (1938–39, p. 86–8); Bâhani (1944a, no. 63, p. 26); Gray and Godard (1956, pl. X–XV); Robinson (1958, pp. 3–10).