THE TOPKAPI SARAY MANUSCRIPT OF THE PERSIAN KALILA WA-DIMNA
(dated A.D. 1413)

by

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The Topkapı Saray Library in Istanbul possesses a manuscript of the Persian translation of Kalila wa-Dimna, dated 816/1413 (from the Revan collection no. 1023). In this article I hope to show that the manuscript was produced in Shiraz and is related to the Mu'azzafarid school of the preceding decades and is, on the other hand, a precursor of manuscripts made in Shiraz, such as the famous Shah-nama in the Bodleian Library (MS. Ouseley Add. 176), copied for İbrahim Sultan ibn Shâh Rukh.

Shiraz itself was a creation of the Sa'darids (867–900) and Buwayhid (932–1056) dynasties and under the Mongols a prosperous city with a great cultural tradition. It was the home of the poet Sa'di who died there in 1229 and of Hūfa who survived the conquest of the city by Timur and died in 1398. It suffered many violent political changes during the 14th and 15th centuries.

The House of Isfahân was descended from the last governor of the Ilkhâns, and achieved independence on the death of Abü Sa'id in 1339. From then until 1353 they ruled Fars, when they were ousted by the house of Mu'azzafar who had already become the ruler of Yazd. They held sway over all South West Persia until they were finally extirpated by Timur in 1393. The manuscript miniatures produced in Shiraz in the Mu'azzafarid period are characterized by a certain gaucherie which is even a feature of those produced in the period of their Timurid successors, such as Bāsungihr's Anthology of 1420 (Berlin) and the Bodleian Shah-nama copied for İbrahim Sultan. The superb manuscripts made for Iskandar in the first decade of the century do not seem to me to belong

1 Iskandar ibn 'Umar Shaykh was a great patron of the arts. Among the manuscripts made for Iskandar is an anthology of poetry and prose copied in 1410/11. Its miniatures are a worthy prelude to Timurid painting, having a harmoniously balanced composition, a satisfactory relationship between the protagonists and their setting and meticulous attention to detail. Although they are executed in Shiraz, they do not reflect the style of painting current in that city on the eve of the Timurid invasion, but are rather connected with the style of painting which has developed at the Jalâ'îrid court in Baghdad towards the close of the preceding century. (For illustrations cf. R. Pinder-Wilson, Persian Painting in the 15th century, Faber Gallery of Art, Plates 1 and 2; also Jean Aubin, "La Mecqu'a Timouride à Chiraz.", Studia Islamica, 8, 1957, pp. 78–93.)
It is now appropriate to give the contents of the miniatures represented in our manuscript and then to provide, as far as possible, a stylistic analysis.

Fig. 16: Folios 1–2 are the opening pages with illuminated framing bands.

The first story of the book, the long story about the Lion and the Ox and the intrigues of the jackal Dinna (who did not heed the advice of his friend Kālīla) which led to the death of the Ox by the hand of the Lion, but also to the ultimate fall of Dinna, is illustrated by nine pictures (figs. 17–25).

Fig. 17: Folio 33 v. The two jackals Kālīla and Dinna come to the lion. Very typical of the miniatures of our manuscript is the high horizon, which offers a marked difference to the manuscripts both of the Mesopotamian and of the Injū schools where the figures are placed in a single plane in the foreground. The ground on the horizon is craggy, although this is not as pronounced as in later Timūrid manuscripts; it already appears in the Anthology of Iskandar Sultān in the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, made in Shiraz, in 1410 (for an illustration cf. e.g. Basil Gray, Persian Painting, p. 76). The ground is strewn with tufts of flowers which suggest bouquets of flowers placed on the ground rather than natural growth. On top of this the ground is ornamented with little scallops not unlike those used to indicate water. The ground on which the lion sits is slightly elevated. The sky is filled with blossoming trees which are reminiscent of Chinese drawings. The drawing of the animals reminds one slightly of the Mesopotamian or Mamlūk schools. The tail of the lion slightly overlaps the double border with which all the miniatures are provided. The mane of the lion is given in the form of a comb or a brush. It should be noted that all the miniatures have the oblong format in which the width is greater than the height. Most of the miniatures are placed on the lower part of the page.

Fig. 18: Folio 34 v. The carpenter and the monkey, who tries to interfere with his master’s work and is caught in the wood and mercilessly
17. Kalila and Dimna come to the Lion

18. The Carpenter and the Monkey

19. Two Rams fighting
hit by the carpenter. The landscape-details resemble those of the first miniature. The drawing of the monkey is very naturalistic. The raised stick of the carpenter again cuts into the border. The man is short and stocky, with wide-set eyes and a beard. His physiognomy is rather Mongolian. He wears short trousers and a sort of tunic.

Fig. 19: Folio 41 r.* Two rams fighting while a fox licks their blood. A man looks on at the scene. The sky is blue and on the horizon are flowers. This is a subject very often represented in Kalila wa-Dimna manuscripts. The ground is again covered with the scallop pattern. Typical of our manuscript is the way in which both animals are cut into half, one by the border, the other by the man. The man has a long gown or mantle with lighter borders and a round turban with the kalila inside and a piece hanging down from it, all typical of the figures in this manuscript. In his hand he holds a staff.

Fig. 20: Folio 44 v.* A snake attacks the crows. A snake is coiled around a tree trunk attacking crows. The horizon here is low. The sky is gold with flowers on the horizon. Near the trunk of the tree are flowers which here have a more naturalistic aspect than the flower tufts of the other miniatures. The tree has a shape typical of the trees occurring in our manuscript. The trunk is completely bare, then comes the foliage which has a rather handsome pattern, rather like a lot of palm trees put together. Typical again, how the foliage of the tree is cut off by the border, leaving only one third visible. The birds which are finely drawn in a naturalistic way, occur several times in our manuscript.

Fig. 21: Folio 54 v.* A goose seeing the reflection of the stars in the water thinks they are fish but cannot catch them, and then, when there are in fact fish, he thinks they are stars. The water is rendered in blue: moon and fishes in gold. Against the blue sky to the right and left are blossoms. At the edge of the pool are blossoms and rocks behind them. The water is depicted by a slight whirly pattern. The miniature in this case is put in the middle of the page. The drawing of the goose is good and naturalistic and so are the fishes; the composition is very well balanced, and the whole has a dreamlike atmosphere.

Fig. 22: Folio 57 r* represents the lion and the elephant fighting. The elephant stands quite still, while the lion bites him furiously; his action is represented in a very lively way; it almost looks as if, in his great

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* P. 67 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 104.
* P. 72 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 113.
* P. 89 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 133.
* P. 93 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 139.
22. The Lion and the Elephant fighting

23. Two Geese carry the Tortoise

24. The Lion and the Bull fighting

effort, the end of his leg and tail have moved out of the picture. The horizon fills the whole picture.

Fig. 23: Folio 60r." The geese which carry the tortoise on condition that she refrains from talking, but she forgets all about it, and, opening her mouth to speak, falls to her death. In representations of the subject in other manuscripts people are watching the drama. It is characteristic of our manuscript, that the representation is reduced to essentials only. The geese are quite naturalistic, while the tortoise has a regular pattern like that of the tortoise in a Mamlık manuscript.

Fig. 24: Folio 60r." The lion and the bull fighting. This miniature has no sky at all, but the ground is gold with groups of flowers. Almost the entire miniature-space is taken up by the bull and the lion, while at the side the two jackals watch the fight with eager eyes. The drawing of the animals is very lively, the tail of the lion and the foot of the bull again come slightly out of the picture. Of the two jackals we see only about one third of the body, the rest is cut off by the margin.
Fig. 25: Folio 74 r. This miniature does not belong to this story, but to the eighth story (the Lion and the Jackal), and was inserted here by a binder’s error. It shows the lion talking to his mother with two jackals looking on. The ground is golden, the sky blue with flowers on the horizon. The tails of the animals on the right come out of the picture. The two lions sit so high that their heads are shown against the sky. The decoration of the ground is very nearly reduced to one flower-tuft between the two jackals.

The next two miniatures belong to the second story of the book, that of the ring dove.

Fig. 26: Folio 81r represents the doves who are caught in a net and are freed by a rat, while a raven is watching from a tree. The miniature is set in the highest part of the page with the tree overlapping the border. Only on the left-hand side of the miniature is there a little bit of sky against which a bare tree is growing and a very few flowers and leaves. The little flowers on the ground, although disposed very regularly, are in themselves here more naturalistic than in some other miniatures. The tree is again reminiscent of cherry blossom seen in Chinese paintings. The raven is always a stork type with a long tail and long slim legs. The whole scene again tells very lively and excellently the story under consideration. At the bottom of the tree are a few plants, also these very natural.

Fig. 27: Folio 86r. A hunter kills a pig which wounds him with its horn. A wolf comes to eat the bow of the hunter. The bow, however, flies back and kills him. Only on the left-hand side is there a little bit of sky against which one of the usual cherry blossom trees grows. The horizon is formed of a flower border, similar to those depicted in other miniatures. The hunter wears a round cap (a feature which we will find later on again on figures of the Shah-nama manuscript made for Sultan Tahāhām and now in the Bodleian Library). The hunter is lying on the ground with his weapons by his side. Behind him the dead bear lies bleeding and on his left the wolf, again cut into half by the border. On the ground another species of small flowers will be noted.

The third story, that of the Owls and the Crows, is also illustrated by two pictures.

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18 P. 244 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 308.
19 P. 159 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 195.
20 P. 147 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 203.
27. The Hunter, the Pig and the Wolf

28. The Elephant and the Hare

29. The Hare consults the Cat

Fig. 28: Folio 102 v. This illustrates the charming scene in which the elephant is taken to a well by a hare, where he sees the reflection of the moon. Only the right and left corners show a little bit of sky. In the foreground is the well depicted by a wavy pattern; the elephant, here and throughout this manuscript, is fully caparisoned with an ornamental girth, a halter with little bells on it and a beautiful saddle cloth. The well is bordered with flowers. The legs of the hare again extend beyond the framing band of the picture. The story is eloquently depicted. This small miniature is again set at the top of the page.

Fig. 29: Folio 104 r. This depicts a hare consulting a cat, while a nightingale is clawed by the cat. The miniature is curiously devoid of detail. Both the hare and the cat are in an erect position, a characteristic attitude of our manuscript. The horizon is high, with only a small area of sky in the top left corner; the ground is strewn with stones and tiny tufts of grass and three large flowering plants and flowers on a tree on the horizon; as in the first miniature trees, flowers and leaves are outlined against the horizon.

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30. The Monkey rides on the Tortoise

The following miniature illustrates the fourth story, that of the Monkey and the Tortoise.

*Fig. 30.* Folio 121 v. The monkey riding on the tortoise. This is a charming story in which a monkey is nearly trapped into being killed by a tortoise. The story lends itself so much to illustration that it occurs in nearly all *Kalila wa-Dimna* manuscripts, both Persian and Arabic. Again, as compared to other representations of the same subject, the details are here reduced to the absolute minimum; the two actors, the monkey and the tortoise in the middle of the water, bordered by a few flowers and rendered by a scallop pattern. The old monkey is again in a very upright posture and almost conceals the tortoise.

The seventh story, The King and the Bird, is illustrated by two miniatures.

*Fig. 31.* Folio 127 r. The King’s son killing the young of the bird. Three figures fill very nearly the whole picture which has no horizon. The pattern on the ground seems to suggest tiny hillocks on which a little grass is growing. The three figures are quite symmetrically arranged.

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31. The King’s son kills the Young of the Bird

Again they all wear the long belted garment, the figure on the left wears the small turban which we have already noticed, while the king’s son wears a crown and the figure on the right wears a hat of decidedly Mongolian type. The prince holds the bird by his legs above his head and is about to dash it to the ground. The figures have pointed shoes and wear an undergarment which is apparent from the sleeves which protrude from the upper garment.

*Fig. 32.* Folio 140 r. This shows a woman lying on a bed, another woman standing at her head and a black cow with a bucket over its head at her feet. It illustrates the story of the old woman whose daughter falls ill, and who prays that her own life might be taken in return of her daughter's. One day, when she was absent, a cow strayed into her house and put her head into a cauldron without being able to withdraw it. The woman returned and thought it was the angel of death, who had

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32. The sick Daughter and the Cow with the Cauldron

33. The Four Jackals

come for the soul of her daughter; she calls out in terror, that he might take her daughter's soul and not her own. The drawing of the bed is rather clumsy; half of the cow is cut off by the margin again, the background with a little flowery pattern is perhaps intended to indicate the area outside the house. The old woman also wears a long garment which covers her completely.

The following miniature illustrates the eighth story, that of the Lion and the Jackal. I have pointed out that Fig. 23 also belongs to this story and should have come here.

Fig. 33. Folio 147. This is a very simple miniature. Four jackals, three of them in identical postures stand in a field, where there are tiny flowers and blades of grass.

The story of the Monk and his Guest (eleventh in the book) is also illustrated by a single picture.

Fig. 34. Folio 166 r. The crow which wants to learn to walk like a partridge. To the right and left are beautifully drawn fernlike plants outlined against the sky, of which rather more is shown here than in the

18 P. 237 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 299.
19 P. 268 of the edition; Knatchbull, p. 345.
35. The King’s son enthroned

other miniatures. The field is bordered in the background by a small version of the Timurid craggy rocks. On the field are the usual flower-bouquets. The two animals are beautifully drawn and illustrate the story with great naturalness and sense of humour.

Fig. 35: Folio 204 v. It illustrates the story of the son of a king who comes with his friends to a city and is there made king himself. In the middle is the throne set on the ground which is depicted with grass and flower patterns similar to those in the other miniatures. The king sits on the throne in the well-known posture of both legs in a horizontal position. To his right and left two figures are standing, the outer figures show very little, they are nearly completely cut off by the side of the page. The shape of the throne, the crown and the headgear of two of the men remind one strongly of the miniatures in the Fāmi‘ al-Tawārīḥh of Rashīd al-Dīn (cf. Binyon-Wilkinson-Gray, Persian Painting, pl. XXb).

ERRATUM

The discussion of the Injū style on p. 67 [first paragraph] and the description and discussion of the Bodleian Shah-nāma MS on pp. 76 and 77 contain quotations from B. W. Robinson, Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library (Oxford 1950) pp. 1, 13-16, acknowledgement of which was inadvertently omitted.

It seems to have vanished without a trace on the extinction of the Injū family by the Muẓaffarids in 1356.

Typical of the Muẓaffarid style are the squat figures with overlarge heads. On the whole it is an autochthonous style but it also contains Mongolian elements, especially the form of hats. The manuscripts lack the finesse of the great masterpieces of Tabriz and Baghdad. The drawing is naive and the palette simple and crude. These miniatures seem to be the work of a provincial school.

Of these Muẓaffarid manuscripts three are especially well known. The first is the Shah-nāma copied in 772/1370-71 in Shiraz by Muḥammad ibn Ma‘ṣrīr ibn Aḥmad, and preserved in the Topkapı Saray Library in Istanbul. It contains 12 miniatures. The naturalistic way of landscape rendering of the first half of the century has been completely superseded by a conceptual approach. A few naturalistic trees make an incongruous appearance among the formal tafts and stumps. Introduced as stage properties, such details are treated as symbols rather than natural features. An army is suggested by three soldiers etc. For examples see Basil Gray, Persian Painting, p. 63.

Next I would like to discuss the Shah-nāma in the Egyptian Library in Cairo, copied in 796/1393-94 in Shiraz by Lutf Allah ibn Yahya ibn Muḥammad, which contains 67 miniatures. According to Stéhoulé (Les peintures des manuscrits timurides) the miniatures belong perhaps to two different artists. Those by one of the artists recall, by their horsemen mounted on little steppe horses and by their landscape, the Shah-nāma achieved in Shiraz in 1370-71 (cf. Binyon-Wilkinson-Gray, Persian Painting, pls. XXIX-XXX). The other miniatures have a particular character; Binyon-Wilkinson-Gray find similarities to the ‘Aṣīr al-MAḥbūb of 1388.
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Having examined the manuscript in detail we may now compare it with its associated manuscripts, i.e. those from Shiraz. As mentioned above the Muzaffarids ruled in Shiraz from 1353 to 1393; they, in turn, had taken over from the Injīl dynasty, who had become independent of the Ilkhan in Shiraz and Isfahan under Māmannū Shāh in about 1325. In the Injīl miniatures we find Far Eastern elements introduced into an essentially Iranian style. But they also contain faint echoes of the Baghdad style, which was still practised in a rather sterile form under the Mamlūks of Syria and Egypt, for we find in many Injīl miniatures a band of conventional vegetation running across the foreground of a miniature or bordering a stream or pool. The treatment of water also recalls miniatures of Kalīla wa-Dimna from the Mamlūk period. As pointed out, by both Barrett and Stchoukine, the style was essentially provincial. It seems to have vanished without a trace on the extinction of the Injīl family by the Muzaffarids in 1356.

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Of special interest for us, because the work is the same as our MS., is a manuscript of the Persian version of *Kalila wa-Dimna* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fond persan 377), without indication of scribe or date. It contains a frontispiece on two pages and 29 miniatures. The date of the manuscript has been much discussed. Binyon-Wilkinson-Gray base themselves on the similarity with the *Shah-nama* executed in Shiraz in 1303 and conclude that the manuscript must be roughly the same period and from the same artistic centre. There are in fact many similarities in the two volumes, so that their conclusion is acceptable and the execution of the manuscript can be given with great probability to Shiraz about 1390, an epoch of intense artistic production under the auspices of the last Mu'izzirids. The manuscript is of great beauty and this induces Barrett (Persian Painting of the 14th century, p. 22) to opt for a Jal'irid provenience for this book (and also for an anthology in Istanbul dated 1398–99), since according to his argument, the other work of the Mu'izzirid artists does not rise beyond mediocrity. It seems, however, to the present writer that the similarities with the *Shah-nama* of 1393–4 are so striking that a Shirazi provenience seems more likely. Also, if we want to compare this Paris *Kalila wa-Dimna* to our manuscript, the high quality
lively than in our manuscript. In both manuscripts the story of the carpenter and the monkey is depicted (fig. 38). In both mss. the monkey, a very slim figure with his forearm raised and his mouth open, as if imploring the carpenter not to hit him, is similar. In the Muṣafarid manuscript we have, however, a miniature of vertical format and one which occupies much more space, the carpenter has in the Muṣafarid manuscript a long mantle laced up in front, the usual garment depicted in this manuscript. In the fight between the lion and the bull which also occurs in both manuscripts, the attitude of both animals is also very similar; in the Muṣafarid manuscript the head of the lion is rather roundish and the ground has again the typically small pattern and only flowers in the foreground between the typically bare trees (fig. 39). Also the scene where the rat frees the doves from their net occurs in both manuscripts (fig. 40). In the Muṣafarid manuscript the raven on the tree is missing. In both cases the format is horizontal. The rat is in exactly the same position, even an identical part of its tail comes out of the picture; the representation of the pigeons in the net is much clearer in the Muṣafarid manuscript. It is not possible here to compare other miniatures of the two manuscripts, but it seems to me that there is certainly a similarity in style in the way in which the miniature is put on the page, the reduction of the narrative to a very few essential figures, the treatment of the ground and the flowers and trees, although they in themselves are not so very similar. Strikingly lacking, however, in the Muṣafarid manuscript is the high horizon.

The question is, where this style originated. Barrett in his Persian Painting of the 14th Century has urged that it originated at Baghdad to which he assigns the Paris Kalila wa-Dimna (Paris 377), and that the two
by a small pattern, and on top of it there are the small flower-tufts which we have found so typical of our manuscript. Usually we find the high horizon. The trees are represented by a long bare trunk surmounted by a dense mass of foliage in which there is no space between the leaves. In the miniature depicting the two lions conversing, the animals are given the same upright posture which we find in our manuscript (fig. 41). Where the lion and the jackal appear, both animals have an unusually long tail; the lion has the rather small, thin head in both manuscripts, which gives him the appearance of a fox in contrast to the other Paris *Kalīla wa-Dīmna* (377), where the lion has a much rounder and more natural head (fig. 42). The monkey riding on the tortoise (fig. 43) is reduced in very much the same way, riding in an upright posture and almost completely covering the tortoise, which makes it difficult to see exactly, what is going on. The men have the same relatively small, round turban and a long belt.
mantle over an undergarment of which only the sleeves are visible (fig. 44). The drawing is finer than that of our manuscript, just as generally the painting of the Baghdad school is of higher order. Despite this there are striking similarities.

I hope that I have elucidated the background and the connections of our manuscript. The period is a critical one in the development of the Persian canon which was to prevail in the 15th century. It is generally thought that Shiraz was the cradle of Timurid art. Barrett thinks—since painting in Persia was a court art in which style and painting were handed over from master to pupil, and fine painting presupposed a generous court patronage—that such a patronage was unlikely to have existed at Shiraz, whose history during these troubled years is obscure. It seems to me that much is to be said for Shiraz as the origin of the above mentioned manu-

scripts, although the Jalā'īrid style had, as we have seen, great similarities. Perhaps the most acceptable interpretation of this difficult time is given by Eric Schroeder.81

It was to Shiraz that Baysunghur seems to have turned for supplying

81 Eric Schroeder, Persian Miniatures in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard 1942, p. 57. S. describes the development of art in the 14th and 15th centuries, which he characterizes as very intricate, the time critical for the formation of the Persian canon which prevailed in the 15th century. He adds that it is difficult to distinguish between different schools in times in which sovereign princes were numerous and the importance of the various capitals shifted.
44. The King and the Sage

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the first book illuminated for him; this is the Berlin Anthology of 1420. It has the simple but vigorous manner of composition as the Cairo Shāh-nāma and the volume of Epop of 1357.

The last of this group of Shirazi manuscripts is probably the Oxford Shāh-nāma dedicated to Ibrāhīm Sultān (the illustrated dedication is on fol. 12a). Ever since its first appearance at Burlington House this manuscript of the Shāh-nāma had been dated about 1420, until Schoukine advanced it to 1425 (Les peintures des manuscrits timurides, p. 43). But apart from the fact that its miniatures show a considerable advance over the work of the Berlin Anthology of 1420, it contains the Baysunghur preface and can thus hardly antedate the Baysunghur preface of the Gulistan Shāh-nāma of 833/1430 which, as Schroeder has pointed out (Ars Isl., vi, p. 129 note 74), was probably the first official copy of Prince Baysunghur’s recension of the text. It must therefore be dated about 1430–5.

After the appointment of Ibrāhīm Sultān and his brother Baysunghur as governors of Shiraz and Herat respectively the style of painting in the former city diverges completely from the painting of the court style carried on at Herat under Baysunghur. The reason seems to be that Baysunghur drew off all the most gifted artists from Shiraz and other Persian cities, when he set up his school in Herat. At any rate the work of the Shirazi artists under Ibrāhīm Sultān shows traces of the Muẓaffarid work of the previous century. (For the Berlin Anthology cf. E. Kuechel’s article in Jhrb. Prs. Kdl., lii, pp. 135 ff.). Undoubtedly some of the artists who had worked under the Muẓaffarids in Shiraz were still alive and a few perhaps escaped the mass deportations carried out by Timūr, or perhaps they made their way back to their home town after his death. It is quite likely that by the time Ibrāhīm Sultān arrived in Shiraz, they had seen the type of work produced in the early Timūrid court style by artists imported by Iskandar Sultān and others. They must have realized the superiority of this other style, and tried to assimilate it. Their hopes were not disappointed, because Ibrāhīm Sultān was himself an accomplished calligrapher and one, who had a very fine understanding of the art of the book (figs. 45–49 and Binoy – Wilkinson – Grey, pl. 38 and frontispiece).

When the Berlin Anthology was produced, the painters had not yet evolved a homogeneous style. But they had certainly done so by the time of the production of the Shāh-nāma in the Bodleian Library, probably a little over a decade later. In this manuscript the Shirazi style is at its height. It retains many of the features of earlier books, such as the high horizon, the simple landscape background and the vigorous action. The colouring remains in a low key. Compared with the Baysunghur Shāh-nāma it is rough and homely, but it is just this which gives it its particular charm, which some may find more attractive than the highly polished Herat style. Many pages show an inclination for symmetry and some achieve a grandeur just because of the simplicity of the composition. (A few points about this manuscript are discussed by B. W. Robinson, Apollo Misc., 1951, pp. 17 ff.) By about 1440 the style had lost some of its boldness and vigour; and both the miniatures and the figures in them have become smaller. By the middle of the century the “Turkman” style had begun to be evolved in Shiraz manuscripts, and by about 1460 it had completely ousted the older style.

I hope to have established the connection between the style of our manuscript and that of Ibrāhīm’s Shāh-nāma, so that our manuscript may help to fill the gap between the Muẓaffarid MSS. and Baysunghur’s Anthology of 1420 (cf. above pp. 48/9, 67 ff., 70).

The advance in style represented by the Shāh-nāma manuscript is, of course, quite considerable. There the stocky figures have become more elongated and elegant. The miniatures of Ibrāhīm’s Shāh-nāma are much more effective than anything in our manuscript. To start with the number
45. King enthroned

Ibrāhīm’s Shāh-nāma

of persons depicted in a scene is now considerably greater. The complete interior of a room in perspective is attempted. Nevertheless, the shape of the four-cornered throne, whose lower part is draped by a curtain, is similar to our manuscript; and the way in which two of the figures are cut off by the margin, leaving only the heads visible (fig. 45). In the frontispiece we find again the cherry blossom of our manuscript, the tufts on the ground and the strange way in which a hill is bordered: it is almost, as if some flowery material has been put over the border of the little plot of garden, where the man is digging.

In some of the miniatures we see the high horizon of our manuscript
47. Bizhan hunting the boar
*Ibrâhîm’s Shâh-nâma*

and of the Cairo *Shâh-nâma*, where it is the general rule. As in our manuscript the eye is not distracted by excessive detail, but is allowed to concentrate on the main features. There is a certain stiffness in the drawing as in the *Kalila wa-Dimna* manuscript. The feeling of harmony and tranquility is achieved with an extraordinary economy of means.

Of special interest for comparison are four photographs reproduced here (figs. 49-49). Firstly, in *Zal* before Minichir (fol. 52), the shape of the four cornered throne with a curtain at the lower part is exactly the same as in our manuscript. The elongated figures with finely drawn faces are, however, much beyond the powers of our artist, as also is the elaborate room, in which the scene is set, with the window at the back looking on to the garden, a device often used to give some perspective.

48. Alexander and the Talking Tree
*Ibrâhîm’s Shâh-nâma*

The second (fol. 175) represents Bizhan hunting the boar. The boar is almost identical with the one in our manuscript. The Chinese clouds in the blue sky, the horse with the fierce look are very different; while the tree stump flanked by shoots recall those often found in miniatures of the Muzaffarid style.

The third miniature I want to compare, is on fol. 311. It shows Alexander and the talking tree. The very high horizon and the pattern
49. Bahram Gur hunting with Azada
Ibrahim’s Shahnama

on the ground are again comparable, also the flowering plants at the foot of the tree. The tree, however, and the human figures are very different.

The last miniature is Bahram Gur hunting with the slave girl Azada. Again we have the high horizon and the golden sky. The trees and plants are completely outside the frame of the miniature. The pattern which covers the whole ground is very similar to our manuscript. The elongated figures and animals are, however, quite different.

It may be mentioned that some similarity can be detected between our manuscript and a copy of a Majma’ al-Tawarikh, produced by a studio working for Shah Rukh, ca. 1425 (cf. the very interesting article by R. Ettinghausen, Kunst des Orients, ii, 1936). In particular the throne scene in our manuscript can be compared to the miniature of Sultan Sanjar enthroned (Journ. of Walters Art Gallery, No. 10, 696 ff.). The shape of the throne is similar in both MSS., and in both the ruler is seated with one leg under his body, the other sticking out. In the Sultan Sanjar scene we have the high horizon, the ground covered with a small pattern and on top of it with our small evenly distributed flower tufts; the courtiers have the small round turban, and in the case of two of them barely more than a third of their figure is visible, the rest being cut off by the page. This rather dry style, which Ettinghausen thinks must have been practised in a great many studios, has produced manuscripts with hundreds of miniatures, so that “it came to pass that, depending on the artists’ ability and that of their assistants, some of these follow the Mongol prototype rather closely, while others are more independent.” He calls this style very aptly the historical style of Shah Rukh.

We may now put forward some conclusions from our investigations. The break between the Mongol and Timurid style was complete. In particular the new style developed the technique of the high horizon. Only in a few manuscripts is one still reminded of the convention of the single plane which was a legacy of the ‘Abbasiid style of Baghdad and the Mongol period. The earliest known examples of the new style is a Shahnama of 772/1370, the first of a small group of manuscripts apparently executed under the Muzaffarids in Shiraz and it is, with this group, that our manuscript is related. By about 1390 the new style has reached maturity under the Jalairids of Baghdad and between these manuscripts and our manuscript we have established certain similarities. But the Jalairid style is much more refined.

In general it is difficult at this period to think in terms of local styles. Only after the appointment of Ibrahim Sultan and his brother Bayaunghar to Herat and Shiraz respectively does the style of painting practised in Shiraz diverge considerably from the court style of Herat. Perhaps Bayaunghar drew off the best talents from Shiraz and other cities, when he established his school in Herat. Our MS. looks forward to the style of Ibrahim, which shows traces of the earlier Muzaffarid style, of the previous style, since we observe a very strong progress from our manuscript to the Bodleian Shaw-nama for Ibrahim. That there should be such a
connection is perhaps not surprising, because some of the artists, who have worked for the Muṣṭafarids were probably still alive. From a blending of the Muṣṭafarid and early Timūrid court style sprang the court style of Ḥājj. In the Bollean Shāh-nāma the treatment is broad and vigorous. The eye is not distracted by excessive detail, but is allowed to concentrate on the main action. A certain stiffness in the drawing is noticeable in all Shirazi manuscripts of the period. Finally the throne scene has suggested a connection with the studios which worked for Shāh Rukh about 1425, a style which, first described by Ettinghausen, is rather stereotyped and archaic in character.

HERAT, TABRIZ, ISTANBUL
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PICTORIAL STYLE

by

E. Grube

Painting in the Muslim world has always been associated with the main centres of political power and was largely dependent on the personal patronage of the ruler or the dignitaries of the state. It was at the courts of the Shahs of Iran and India and the Sultans of the western lands and of Turkey that the great schools of painting flourished. Painting seems almost always to have suffered when royal support was either lacking or withdrawn and to have flourished when the ruler took a personal interest in the development of the art of the book.

The history of Muslim painting is therefore closely related to the political history of the Muslim world and to the fates of dynasties, courts and cities. Styles develop and disappear with the development and decline of a school, and only rarely does a tradition survive in any one place even more rarely is it transmitted from one school to another. This makes for a striking variety in Muslim painting of which the history appears to be a succession of clearly defined schools identifiable with particular periods and limited to particular periods.

Recognizing the special position of painting in the Muslim world, scholars have devoted themselves mostly to classifying the surviving material, to identifying the various court schools and to establishing their chronology.

A great many paintings have survived that cannot be readily associated with any of the known schools. Detailed study of a large body of material, hitherto unidentified, suggests that a style did not in all instances originate, develop and decline in a single place and at one particular court. In other words a particular style was not always the creation of one school, but rather the result of such circumstances as a shift of political power involving the transplantation of artists from one city to another, often far removed and where entirely different circumstances prevailed. There have been many such upheavals which have usually resulted in the destruction of another. In certain instances, however, the very fact of