
Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, 68 leaves, 25 lines per page written in cursive script, headings and significant words picked out in border red thuluth, margins ruled in red, occasional marginal glosses in black or red, opening page with title written in fine Eastern Kufic script in white, the title page fully illuminated in colours and gold, final page with two illuminated palmettes, later brown morocco with central medallions of stamped paper only 31.6 x 21cm.

This is an important autograph manuscript written for the Bey of the Ottoman Sultan al-Malik al-Zahir Khusamad (reigned 1461-87). It was completed at the Haram in Mecca on the 1st Rajab A.H.870 (27th March 1466). Although the subject is typical of a genre of writing which was popular and widespread in the medieval Islamic world, that of advice to kings, princes and rulers on how to exercise and maintain power, the present manuscript appears to be a unique copy of an otherwise unknown text, since neither Brocklmann nor Sezgin mention the author or title.

The author has collected a variety of pertinent and useful notices from Islamic religious sources and presented them as a guide for rulers. He has dedicated his manuscript to Sultan al-Malik al-Zahir, and he was obviously a client of the sultan; since he suffixed his name Tughran Shahrif al-Muhammad with the titles al-Malik al-Zahir. Like his patron, his family must originally have been of Turkic stock, since his first name, Tughran, derives from the word meaning yak or horse's tail in various Turkic tongues. (The term tughr, denoting such an emblem, was used as a badge of rank in the Ottoman Janissaries up until the time of Sultan Mehmed II (1444-83).

The first word of the title of the text, 'Sayf', meaning sword (in protection) may have been intended by the author as a pun, since the Sultan for whom it was written had the title 'Sayf al-Dir'. It is also worth noting that the manuscript was written at Mecca, a very unusual occurrence, for although many medieval scholars travelled to Mecca to perform the Hajj, and many stayed for considerable periods of time, surviving examples of manuscripts produced there are rare. During the Mamluk period, the Sultans, although based in Cairo, claimed sovereignty over the Two Holy Cities, and in the dedication on the opening page of text in the present manuscript, the author refers to his patron as Mawla al-Sultan al-Imam al-Amir Sultan al-Islam wa-l-Mudarris Malik al-Husain al-Bayri and Bahrain Khidim al-Haramai al-Shaftian (a term now translated as 'Custodian of the Two Holy Places').

£40,000-60,000
£48,000-75,000
A ROYAL MAHMUK MANUSCRIPT OF WISE SAYINGS, DEDICATED TO THE MAHMUK SULTAN QANUNI-GHAWRI, EGYPT, EARLY 16TH CENTURY

Illustrated Arabic manuscript on paper entitled “Kitab yahzam al-edlun ma alad”. 28 leaves, 3 rows per page written in thuluth, naskh, naskh al-tusi, and naskh scripts in black, red, gold, blue, and green inks. Gold and silver decorations and borders, with illuminated floral designs on the opening pages and gilded edges. The manuscript ends with an illuminated title page with naskh and thuluth calligraphy, dated 883 AH (1476 AD).

LITERATURE
Published in 1890 by the Egyptian government. The manuscript was presented to Sultan Qanuni-Ghawi, a noted scholar and poet, in 1476 AD.

300,000-500,000 € 240,000-360,000
AN IMPORTANT GENEALOGY OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD, PROBABLY LEVANT, MALIUK PERIOD, CIRCA 14TH CENTURY

Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper. 35 leaves, folio 1a illuminated with a full-page panel containing three wide and three narrow horizontal registers of scrolling floral motifs (probably the left-half of an original double-page frontispiece), opening double-page of text (fols 2b-2c) with three lines per page of large, bold muhaqqaq script in gold with interstices of letters filled with black, text pages with a central horizontal line of large gold script extending across double pages, surrounded by smaller text written vertically, diagonally and horizontally in red and brown ink in a neat scholar’s naskh hand, small rosettes between phrases. Folio 3a with a fictitious attribution to Ali ibn Hisham (brother-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad), inscribed with red ink, text pages with 40 lines per page of neat, small script written horizontally in brown ink. Final page of text (fols 33b-c) inscribed with a different but still medieval scholar’s naskh hand, folio 3a with a large rectangular panel of illumination, contemporary mamluk brown morocco cover stamped and tooled in blind and gold, repaired at end, in modern brown leather, with flap 37.4 by 26.7 cm.

This is an interesting, rare and important copy of the genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad.

The exact origins of the manuscript are puzzling and intriguing. The calligraphic display of large, gold script and the illumination are of a distinctly Mamluk type, perhaps owing towards the Syrian Mamluk style of the Mamluk period, employing an essentially Syrian Mamluk type of decoration, for a Shi'a patron.

The ascription on folio 3a to Ali ibn Hisham (brother-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad) is entirely fictitious and added later.

£ 60,000–80,000  $ 75,000–100,000
KAILA VA DIMA. ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT ON PAPER WITH THIRTY-NINE MINIATURES,
NORTHERN INDIA: SULTANATE, 15TH CENTURY

Illustrated and Illustrated Persian manuscript on paper. 197 folios. Main text written in black nasta’īq script, headings and occasional phrases written in copper-clutli and naskhi scripts in black or red. Margins ruled in blue and gold. Spacing folios with an illluminated cornet decoration: the central area with white scrolling foliate motifs on a gold ground and with an inscription in black worn and new illegible, folio 1b with a finely illuminated headpiece in colours and gold. 39 miniatures painted in a Timurid-influenced Sultanate style. Modern cloth binding.
24.2 by 14.6cm.

LITERATURE
Published in: A Century of Islamic Art, 1981, no. 15

This is a highly important and very rare manuscript of the well-known text Kaila va Dima, illustrated with thirty-nine miniatures painted in Sultanate Indian style.

Kaila va Dima or the Fables of Bilquis was based on a third-century Sanskrit work called the Panchatantra, a collection of animal fables with didactic overtones designed to illustrate wise conduct. The text was translated into Middle Persian in the late Sassanian period under King Khosrau Anushirvan (531-79), into Syriac in the 6th century and into Arabic around 760 AD by a court author called Ibn al-Muqaffa, who also edited certain tales to the original Sanskrit groups. In Arabic, it was named after the two main protagonists of the tale, the crafty jackal Kaila and the Dimma. It was subsequently translated into Persian by (among others) Abu'l-Mu'ayyad Na'r Allah for his patron the Ghurid Shah Timur Shah (1309-1113).

The popularity of the tales spread further west and they were translated into Greek, Latin, and Castilian. The text has numerous variants (such as Amur Sharif or The Lights of Connoisseur), and has influenced other literary works as diverse as One Thousand and One Nights (A'li Layla wa Layla) and Sir Thomas More's The New Philosopher.

It was a very popular text for illustration among patron in Iraq and Iran in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and several arthistorical important manuscripts exist from that period; see O'Kane 2001, Eltinkoff 2002, p. 62, 65, 154, 155, Cowen 1999, Grohe 1995.

The present copy uses the text of Na'r Allah's Persian translation, and is conventionally divided into sixteen books (chapters) with prose and verse quotations from classical Arabic literature and occasionally from the Qur'an, which are used as headings in this particular copy. It begins with Na'r Allah's preface, then the preface of Ibn al-Muqaffa, followed by headings in Arabic, and closes with Na'r Allah's epilogue.

The miniatures are as follows:

14b: The court of Sultan Abu'l-Mu'ayyad Bahram Shah (107 x 165 mm.)
14b: Two men in discussion within a chamber (78 x 105 mm.)
16b: A long seated upon a throne with four sages before him. (92 x 125 mm.)
3a. A thief discovered in a bedchamber (70 x 104 mm.)
3b. A male harpiya playing to a seated man (65 x 105 mm.)
3c. A man in a well beset by a camel, wasps, rats and a dragon (109 x 120 mm.)
3d. Two scamps in discussion (20 x 106 mm.)
3e. Shanibah the bull grazing in a lush meadow (82 x 65 mm.)
3f. The carpenter and the monkey (86 x 105 mm.)
3g. Dimnah introducing Shanibah to the lion (86 x 102 mm.)
3h. A couple in bed (90 x 104 mm.)
3i. A woman accosting a man before a judge (91 x 107 mm.)
3j. Dudo carping the tortoise into the air (60 x 62 mm.)
3k. Astonished villagers watching the scene (71 x 67 mm.)
3l. The lion, Kallih, Dimnah and other animals in discussion (86 x 105 mm.)
3m. The fowler, and the pigeons flying away in his net (82 x 105 mm.)
3n. The crow and the mouse coming out of its hole (58 x 105 mm.)
3o. The crow carrying the mouse by the tail, the tortoise entering the water (76 x 103 mm.)
3p. The wolf comes across the dead hare, boar and deer (55 x 104 mm.)
3q. The deer, tortoise, mouse and crow in landscape (91 x 107 mm.)
3r. A sage before a prince (70 x 105 mm.)
3s. Tha-hare and elephant conversing (100 x 105 mm.)
3t. A cat sitting a partridge and a hare (48 x 105 mm.)

9a. A demon and a robber entering the house of a Sayyid, on ox in a vaulted chamber beneath (155 x 105 mm.)
11a. The monkey crossing the sea on the tortoise's back (80 x 102 mm.)
11b. A man breaking a jar suspended above him (81 x 105 mm.)
12a. A man finding the baby and beheaded snake after killing the weasel (95 x 105 mm.)
12b. An owl in a tree (91 x 115 mm.)
13a. A mounted king pointing up towards a bird perched on a rock (117 x 130 mm.)
14a. The jallal and the sick lion (91 x 102 mm.)
14b. The jallal standing before the sick lion (72 x 132 mm.)
16a. The jallal showing the lion his two sliced sausages (71 x 100 mm.)
15b. A man eating with a dervish (95 x 102 mm.)
16c. A king interviewing three sages (115 x 102 mm.)
17a. A man washing a rider before a stone house (71 x 132 mm.)
17b. A princess upholding a bowl of rice over a prince (102 x 102 mm.)
18a. The goldsmith in a well, observed by a hunter above (77 x 135 mm.)
18b. A prince interviewing a sage (91 x 105 mm.)

The style of the miniatures is manifestly influenced by 15th century Persian work, but certain details, such as architectural features, dervishes, thrones and the palette point to a Subterranean origin in India, a school of painting that was strongly linked to and influenced by Persian painting. For discussions on the subject of Subterranean Indian and Persian painting see Ilia and Eslahghian in 1969. Robinson 1991.

£ 20.000-120.000  870000-345000