The exterior cover of brown leather with gold tooling
The doublur with gold block stamped with paper filigree work against color ground
Access no.: 144 M. Adab Farsi
Calligrapher: Hassan al Husayni Al Yazdi
Date: 895 H / 1490 AD
Style: Herat Iran
Size: 16 x 24 cm

Emir Nasir al-Din Abu al-Hassan Khusrow ibn Amir Saif al-Din Mahmud Dihlavi (d. 725 H / 1325 AD) is India’s most admired Sufi poet of the 14th century. He composed several multi-voluminous works in Farsi among which is Samaniyyah Khusrawiyah (eight Khusrawi masnavi).

This copy is a selection of five sections from the Eight masnavi thus acquired the title: Khamseh (five). The manuscript has 410 folios, with 16 miniatures that display the characteristics of a provincial Aqqoyunlu Turkman painting style. The female hair style, the head dress of the male figures and the manner in which the vegetation and mountains are rendered all indicate a provincial atelier and patron.

The manuscript is signed and dated by Hasan ibn Husayn ibn Mohammed Alhadi al Husayni Alyazdi. Similar Khamsah Dihlavi copied in 903H / 1498 AD, produced around Herat, is now at the Topkapı Palace Library (H.799) in Istanbul.

Khusrow and Shirin entertained by attendants in an encampment

خسرو وشیرین، پیده‌بر در حضور هم‌استواران در مأموری
کره بافت بر آواز شمسی،
دوکی می‌پوشد، کنار کلاه،
سوارش جنگی، زرده آمده,
خسته باش و به‌دیده کیست.
کنار دو کشا در این پیام.
کارم بر ای در بستن کار،
کوچک کوچک شد، همراه ما،
شهبازها در کنار ما هستند.
Mihr and Mushtari (Sun and Jupiter) is a masnavi poem about love and infatuation between the two heroes. The epic poem was composed by Mohamed ‘Assar of Tabriz in 748 H / 1347 AD, in 5120 couplets.

This manuscript contains 169 folios with 1 miniature and a colophon. The manuscript displays a beautiful illuminated title double pages, and a miniature that is rendered in a simple Turkman style. Light brown Leather binding with a central medallion and corners, decorated in floral scrolls, and embossed in gold with a flap. The colophon recalls the name of the scribe/illuminator as Yari, perhaps the famed illuminator of Herat who worked under Sultan Husayn Mirza Bayqarah.
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The Poems composed by Mohamed ‘Assar of Tabriz (died 1359), are inscribed in this manuscript in 197 folios copied by the hand of the master calligrapher Mir Husayn al Katib (a student of Mir Ali al Katib and the apprentice of Mir Imad al Husayni) in Nasta’liq script style, in two columns to the page. The manuscript is missing the right side of a double frontispiece. The left side shows members of the Diwan of Sulayman; standing in the garden, elegantly dressed, with animals and fantastic birds surrounding them. The missing right image would have depicted Sulayman and Bilqis, the Queen of Sheba, enthroned under a canopy in a typical late 15th century composition.

Similar composition may be seen at a Khamsh produced in Shiraz in 1495 now housed at the Topkapi Palace Library (H. 1508). The prophet Sulayman, was an important character in Islamic culture during the Turkmen period; thus occupied the frontispiece of illustrated manuscripts, regardless of their subject matter.

The Mihr & Mushtari (the Sun and Jupiter) miniatures reflect the Timurid School style developed during the 15th century; and characterized by its gold sky, classically queued elegant attendants, and lavish vegetation. The double title page is exquisitely illuminated in gold and blue depicting two cartouches that record the name of the book and its author.