An interior scene of a seated Sheikh with guests

مجلس عالم شيخ مع ضيوفه
The cover
وفد م перевод
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وقف خبر...

وفد

1790
1939

في...

وأما من...

1256

The Epic poems of Diwan Hafiz were written in Persian by Shams al Din ibn Ghyath also known as Hafez-e Shirazi, the renowned mystic poet, who is famous for composing ghazals; or lyrical poems.

This manuscript comprises 198 folios adorned with 7 miniatures in the flyleaf style, and it was once part of the collection of Emir Khalil Agha (19th century), which housed next to Shrine of Al Husayn in Cairo. The manuscript commences with a wonderful Shamsa medallion in gold against lapis blue, followed by miniatures illustrating outdoor scenes of royal festivity.

The miniatures display high horizon and circular arrangement of entertainers at an Emir’s party, and gold background; reflecting a fully developed Timurid style of the 1500 AD. Two different types of foliages are depicted, one that shows sporadic buds, while the other shows clusters of vegetation covering the ground. Yet what is peculiar about this manuscript is that it is written in one of the Turkic languages with margin and in-border translations.
An Emir seated under a canopy in the garden

الأمير جالس في جوسوق بالخديقة
The outstandingly illuminated and illustrated manuscript of Yusuf and Zulaykha presents the story of the prophet Yusuf, composed in a masnavi form by Nur al-Din Abdul Rahman Jami; as part of his poetic Quintet. The work was completed in Herat towards the end of the 9th c. H / 15th c. AD; under the patronage of Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

The manuscript's introduction presents itself in an impressive manner, with gilded and illuminated double Frontispiece depicting an oval medallion within geometric and vegetal designs, followed by a double Unwan page which is also extensively illuminated, and has a double illuminated end page. The manuscript is composed of 174 folios, with 4 miniatures;
all illustrating key events featured in the story of Yusuf and Zuleykha.

The miniatures have great and extensive details showing early 16th century atelier energetic designs, and virtuosity; as developed by the Bihzad School. Three of the miniatures illustrate the story of Yusuf and Zuleykha, while the fourth features the Miraj and has been added following the tradition and the vogue during that era. Similar inclusion of the Miraj within epic stories can be seen in an early example of Nizami Khamsah produced in 1461 in Shiraz, followed by another Nizami Khamsah copied during the reign of Sultan Husayn Mirza in 1494, and later on the Miraj scene appeared in a Shirazi Yusuf and Zulaikha of Jami produced in 1580’s. The exaggerated illuminated boarder seen here can be compared to a Shirazi “Haft Awrang” of Jami housed at the Topkapi Palace Library (R.911); which dates back to the 1580’s.