THE GOLDEN AGE OF
PERSIAN LITERATURE
1000 - 1500 A.D.

Miniatures, Illuminations,
Manuscripts in Persian and Arabic,
From the Robert Garrett Collection

An Exhibition in Honor of the Visit to
Princeton of his Imperial Majesty

MUHAMMAD REZA SHAH PAHLAVI

Exhibition Gallery, Princeton University Library
November 15, 1949 - January 7, 1950
[Case I] 1. Firdawsi of Tus. (A.H. 321-416 [A.D. 933/4-1025])

Shāh-nāma (Book of Kings)

Copied A.H. 951 [A.D. 1544-5]

This is the great national epic of Iran, beginning with the first legendary king and ending with the fall of the Sasanian empire in the middle of the VII century of the Christian Era.

This copy contains thirty-three Persian miniatures of probably the same period as the MS.

P.T.I. no. 1

*P.T.I.: Descriptive Catalog of the Garrett Collection of Persian, Turkish and India Manuscripts including some Miniatures in the Princeton University Library by Mohamad I. Moghadam, Yahya Armajani, under the supervision of Philip K. Hitti; Princeton University Press: 1939.
[Case I] 2. Al-Qur‘ān (The Koran)


This copy of the Koran was presented to the
Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd- al-Ḥāmid II, 1876–1909.

Ar. MSS. Supplement no. 3*

Omam Khayyam is not the only Persian poet known and appreciated in the West. Hafiz has likewise had a share, though more modest, in influencing western poetry. This is a specially bound edition of the lyrics of the Bard of Shiraz translated into German verse by C. Fr. Daumer and published by Eugen Diederichs at Jena in 1912.
[Case II] 4. Khwājah Hāfiz Shīrāzī (died A.H. 791 [A.D. 1389])

Dīvān-i-Hāfiz (The Collected Poems of Hāfiz)

This is a more modern MS, probably from the late 19th century; the calligraphy, miniatures, and illuminations were done in India, the tooled and gilt binding in Europe. There are thirty-seven miniatures in the MS.

P.T.I. no. 18
(Case II) 5. Khwājah Hāfīz-ı-Shirāzi (died A.H. 791 [A.D. 1389])

Dīvān-ı-Hāfīz (The Collected Poems of Hāfīz)

This copy of the Dīvān of Hāfīz has the last verse of every shahād written in a rectangular frame in the middle, and on the two sides of the rectangle flowers are painted in bright colors on a gold background. Here is shown the illumination at the beginning of the Nū.

P.T.I. no. 17
[Case II] 6. Khwājah Hāfiz-ı-Shīrāzī (died A.H. 791 [A.D. 1389])

Divān-ı-Hāfiz (The Collected Poems of Hāfiz)
Copied A.H. 926 [A.D. 1520].

This copy of the well-known odes of love and mysticism of Hāfiz, the most famous of Persia's lyric poets, contains also his maqāa'ī, sūfī-nāmah, muqaddas and rubā'īyat at the end. There are six full-page miniatures, the second of which bears the date A.H. 926 (same as the colophon).

P.T.I. no. 15
7. Shoushan Hafiz-i-Shirazi (died A.H. 791 [A.D. 1389])

Dīvān-i-Hafiz (The Collected Poems of Hafiz)
Copied A.H. 1094 [A.D. 1683]

The first fifteen folios (some, unfortunately, missing) of this copy of the Dīvān of Hafiz contain scattered odes, pentaclipsis, and an introduction; the odes, or shanzala, proper begin with the sixteenth folio. The MS contains four miniatures of the late XVII century.

P.T.I. no. 16

This is an eighth-century manuscript fragment in Kufi, on vellum, of the Koran.

P.T.I. no. 1149

Zafar-nāmah (The Book of Victory)

Copied A.H. 872 [A.D. 1467-8] by Shir Ali

The MS is well executed but it is most famous for its twelve full-page miniatures from the beginning of the XVI century by the master Persian painter Bihzād. Its value is also enhanced by the entries in the handwriting of the Mogul emperors Jahāngīr and Shāhjahān and one word from the pen of the Emperor Akbar, perhaps the only specimen of the writing of the great monarch.

[Lent, by John York Garrett Library, Baltimore]
This manuscript, known as "The Golden Koran," comprising Surah I-XVIII, is unique and perhaps the finest in this country. The full text is in gold, the first four folios elaborately illuminated, the ruled marginal lines with decorations in gold and color.

The manuscript is probably from the eleventh century, although the diacritical marks and vowel signs are probably a later addition.

[Lent by John York Garrett Library, Baltimore]
(m. A.H. 690 [A.D. 1291])

Bustān (Rose-Garden)

Copied A.H. 960 [A.D. 1552/3] by Sultan Muhammad
of Herat, a famous copyist of the 16th century A.H. The
date in the colophon of this copy has been altered by
a former owner from 960 to 460. On the margins
appears Sa‘di’s Bustān.

The binding is late, probably of the nineteenth
century.

P.T.I. no. 39
[Case IV] 12. Sayyid Muhammad Nūr-Allāh Aḥrārī (later XVII century A.D. —?)

Khāna-i-Sullātān (Commentary on the Sullātān); bound with it are a glossary and indices for the Sullātān by the same author.

Copied in a.H. 1168 [A.D. 1755]

This commentary, with the glossary and indices, well illustrates the devoted and scholarly study which the Iranians have always dedicated to Sa‘īd’s world-famous Sullātān.

58 W is P.T.I. no. 41
59 W is P.T.I. no. 40
[Case IV] 13. An anthology of Persian Poetry

Copied in A.H. 815 [A.D. 1412/3]


Five other authors are represented by the works written in the margins.

P.T.I. no. 38
XI to XII century

AM 13658

P.T.I. no. 197
16. Portrait of a painter, perhaps that of Rida 'Abbasi, with spectacles on the nose and holding a picture of a European which he is painting, with the implements of his craft spread around him; in the style of Rida 'Abbasi from late XVII century.

An inscription on the portrait signed by Mu'In Muqawwir, a pupil of Rida 'Abbasi, and dated A.H. 1084 [A.D. 1673], indicates that the portrait is that of the painter's master, but the genuineness of the inscription is not absolutely certain. The portrait is set in an illuminated frame 3.3 cm. wide and mounted on a cardboard.

P.T.I. no. 200
[Case V] 17. A leaf from the Shah-Nama with a small miniature portraying the Sassanian King Bahram as guest of the water carrier Lakhâk; XIV century Persian miniature.

P.T.I. no. 194

Ihsan Ulma al-Din (The Revivification of the Sciences of Religion).

This well known work on religion, philosophy and morals was copied for the library of Mahmud al-Qasawi, a member of the famous ruling family under whom Iran emerged as one of the great Moslem states of modern times.

F.T.I. no. 1481

Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din (The Revivification of the Holiness of Religion).

The fourth volume of the well-known work on religion, philosophy and morals, probably fourteenth century. The author, called Al-Gazel by medieval Europe, was "unquestionably the greatest theologian of Islam and one of its noblest and most original thinkers... 'The father of the church in Islam.'" In his work, orthodox speculation reaches its culminating point.

Ar. Miss Supplement no. 1479

Collection of Letters

Copied A.H. 1094 [A.D. 1683]

Eighteen letters on various phases of Sufism

by the famous Sufi leader and founder of the important Qādiri order of Muslim mystics.

P.T.I. no. 91
[Case VII] 21. A Fragment of a Persian Manuscript
XVI century

AM 13650
[Case VII] 23. Three panels of illustrations: two panels representing armor and one panel of fruit trees. XIV century Persian miniatures.

P.T.I. no. 198

Jami' al-Tawarih

P.T.I. no. 192

Tabīr Kitāb Qālīdāt i l̲īm al-Maṣādah (A
Refutation of the Book of Euclid on Geometry)

Copied A.H. 730 [A.D. 1329] by Muḥammad ibn-
abi-al-Ṭayyib al-Turkmānī.

A redaction of Euclid's Elements of Geometry,
together with additions by al-Maṭrār ibn-Yusef
ibn-Maṭrār (d. after 830 A.D.) and Thābit ibn-
Qorra (d. 901 A.D.). Euclid was well known to
Muslim mathematicians and provided a starting
point from which they advanced to their spectacular
discoveries in several fields of higher mathematics.

The section on botany from 'Alīh Ab al-Nakhlīqāt wa-Shāhāb al-Yawmāhā (The Vendors of Creation and Additives of Existence).

This Ms has the seal of Ibrahim 'Abd Shāh on folio one verse, dated A.H. 950, but this is not considered to be genuine. There are over a hundred small miniatures and two leaves from the Shāh-nāmah posted on the interior of the binding.

P.T.I. no. 66

Ahkām al-Darb al-Hasālîa (The Influence of the Degrees of the Zodiac on Births)

Copied before A.H. 639 (A.D. 1261)

This thirteenth-century manuscript contains on the title-page the following inscription: "For the library of our lord the sultan, the king, al-Nāṣir Salām-al-Dunya w-al-'In abu-al-Muzaffar Yūsuf ibn-al-Malik al-'Azīz, may God perpetuate his reign!" This is familiarly known in the West as Saladin.

Ar, Mss. Supplement no. 968

Kāmil al-Sinā 'ah al-Tibbīyah, known as al-Maliki (The Perfect Work on the Art of Medicine, known as the Royal Book)

Copied in Harrān, A.H. 586 [A.D. 1190]

A complete copy of the famous Liber regius of Haly Abbas, this work was composed for the Buwayhid 'Adud-al-Dawlah Fama Khusraw, reigned A.D. 949-83. It treats dietetics and materia medica. In 1127 it was translated into Latin by Stephen of Antioch.

This is one of two complete copies, the other being in the possession of Dr. Sami Haddad, American University of Beirut.

R. Mus Supplement no. 1

Al-Fugūl fi al-Tābb ( Aphorisms of Medicine)
Copied A.H. 681 [A.D. 1282]

A medical work modelled after the Aphorisms attributed to Hipppocrates. This work was eventually translated into Hebrew, and a Latin version was printed at Bologna in 1489, again at Lyons in 1510.

Al-Rāzi, commonly called "Rhazes" in European languages, is regarded as "the greatest and most original of all the Muslim physicians, and one of the most prolific as an author." The Latin version of his Kīthāb al-Aqīb was for centuries the standard European handbook of medical knowledge. Illustrative of the original character of much of his work is the fact that the first known clinical account of smallpox in medical literature comes from his pen.

Ar. Mes. Supplement no. 1076
Kitāb al-Shifāʾ (The Book of Healing).
Copied A.H. 972 [A.D. 1564/5]

A section of the second part, of Physica, of
the Kitab al-Shifa, a great philosophical encyclo-
pedia. In the world-renowned Ibn-Sina — physician,
philosopher, philologist, and poet, Islamic science
reached its culminating point.

Ar. Mus. Supplement no. 361

Nafh at-Tahāwī fi-nn-Tadhkīrāt d-Muntahīn fi al-Jadāl (An Aid for Beginners and a Reminder to those Accomplished in Dialectics).

Copied A.H. 485 [A.D. 1092]

This treatise on dialectics is the oldest manuscript on paper in the Princeton Collection. It was copied in 1092 by al-Hasan ibn-Yahya ibn-Ubayd-Allāh al-Kirmānī Al-Jīraftī.

AR. Maj Supplement no. 367

Divān-i-Shams-i-Faurīs (The Collected Poems of Shams of Tabrīz)

Copied A.H. 1249 [A.D. 1833-4]

This collection of odes on God, mystic love and kindred subjects was named after the author's spiritual master, who died A.H. 645 (A.D. 1247-8); it is also known as Divān-i-Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. Together with this author's more extensive Masnavī, it constitutes a high point in Persian mysticism.

P.T.I. no. 13
33. Mawlāna Ashraf of Naqshband (died A.H. 854 [A.D. 1450-51])

**Khamshah-i-Ashraf (The Five Titles of Ashraf)**

Copied A.H. 1054 (A.D. 1644)

The two prefaces of this MS, composed in A.H. 1054 [A.D. 1644], were written specially for this copy of the **Khamshah** made for a certain nobleman called Murtaza-ullā Khān Shāhlu.

F.T.I. no. 20
Hilvat al-Auliya’ (The Ornament of the Saints)

This is a biographical dictionary of eminent Moslem saints, beginning with the time of ‘Umar ibn-al-Khattab, the second caliph, who reigned A.H. 13-23 [A.D. 634-644] and concluding with the life of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn-‘Abd al-Malik ibn-al-Jumahi.

Ar. Mus Supplement no. 669
35. [Sharaf-al-Dīn abu-‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn-Sa‘īd al-Sāfīrī] (A.H. 688-692 [A.D. 1212-1234/5])

Sajīdat al-Surūdah (The Ode of the Surūdah)

This seventeenth-century manuscript is the famous Ode of Surūdah in praise of the prophet.

Oriental binding with medallion stamped on the outside and inside covers.

Ar. Man Supplement no. 61
36. ʿAʾishah bint-ʿĀmir ibn-ʿAbd Allāh bint-ʿĀmir al-ḥāṭimī [M. A. H. 929 [A. D. 1522/3]]

Sharḥ al-hādiʿīyeh al-hādīʿīyeh wa-ḥādiʿīyeh min biʿrīāha (A Commentary on the Hādiʿīyah of al-Hādīʿīyah and Some of Her Poems)

Composed A. H. 921 [A. D. 1515]

A commentary on al-hādiʿīyeh, an ode in praise of the Prophet as well as several eulogies, particularly interesting as the work of a Moslem woman writer.

Ar. Mas Supplement no. 109
37. Eighteenth-century Koran

P.T.I. no. 1164
Page from the Koran
A fragment of the Koran containing Surah LVII:2 (in part) -- 14 (in part).

The *hadīr* is an old oriental paper and is probably from the early part of the XI century; each page of *hadīr* is transcribed in thuluth on the opposite folio; the *thuluth* is probably from the early part of the XVIII century.

Ar. MS Supplement no. 1179D
Muhammad Shirin Naqshbandi Na'ini, (died A.H. 889 [A.D. 1486-7])

Divan-i-Naqshbandi (The Collected Poems of Naqshbandi)

Copied A.H. 880 [A.D. 1475-6]

The first eight folios contain odes in Arabic, the remainder love and mystical shamsa and quatrains in Persian. The binding is of oriental leather, gilt stamped with medallion and pendants, and borders decorated in gold.
Page from a Persian Manuscript of the XVI century

Nasuki script on paper

AM 13658
Page from a Persian manuscript of the XVI century

Nastaliq script

AM 13658
Page from a Persian manuscript of the XVI century

Calligraphy of Mir 'Ali

AM 13658
[Case XIII] 41. Nizami Canja'i (A.H. 535-598 or 599 [A.D. 1140/41-1202/3])

Khamsh-i-Nizami (The Five Titles of Nizami)


This manuscript contains the Makhzan al-Aarar, Khoosar-u-Shirin, Layla-u-Majnun, Haft Paykar, Sharaf-nama, Iqbal-nama-i-Iskandari. These are ethical, religious and erotic nasmavi poems. There are nine miniatures, of good quality of the X century A'muriid school.

P.T.I. no. 8
Khamseh-i-Nasiri (The Five Titles of Nasiri)

Copied A.H. 898 [A.D. 1492/3]

The entries and portions of some of the folios of this copy are decorated with floral designs in gold with touches of color. There are six miniatures probably from the XIX century.

P.T.I. no. 7
Khamasa-i Nisami (The Five Titles of Nisami)

Copied A.H. 970 (A.D. 1562-3) by Mawlana al-Kutub al-3-Mirza.

This complete copy of Nisami's Khamasa contains twenty-five miniatures, two of them full page size, probably from the late XVI and early XVII centuries by different artists. This binding is early XIX century lacquered with a hunting scene on the front cover and a party of dervishes on the back cover.

P.T.I. no. 9
[Case XIX] 40. Miniature, representing two camelers, ascribed to the great artist Shihab, who died in 1525 A.D.

The drawing is dated A.H. 930. The colored border and gilt mat are later additions.

F.T.I. no. 190
To the left:

(a) recto: central ruq‘ah and border panels all in shikastah by Tajalli ‘Ali Shāh; dated A.H. 1189 [A.D. 1775-6].

(b) verso: Indian miniature; Solomon seated on the throne, surrounded by men, angels, beasts and insects.

P.T.I., no. 206
To the right:

(a) recto: ranṭah in naskhi and thuluth by the same calligraphist as that of 1 verse.

(b) verse: Indian miniature; probably a scene from Šāh-nāma; a king seated on the throne offering a cup of wine to a chieftain, probably Aştam; border panels in thuluth.

P.T.I. no. 37
[Case XV] 30. To the left:

(a) recto: ruq'ah in Fārisi by Zayn-al-Raqq; dated A.H. 1133 (A.D. 1720-21); border panels in Fārisi.

(b) verso: Indian miniature; a lady attended by her maids and a musician; border panels in Fārisi.

P.T.I. no. 206
To the right:

(a) recto: ruq'ah in shikaetah by Shāh Muhammad Mu‘īn ‘Ali Tajaggi Chishti; dated A.H. 1189 [A.D. 1775]; border panels in Fārisī.

(b) verso: Indian miniature; portrait of the Emperor Shāh Jahān seated; two of his sons, Dārā Shukhā and Shuja‘, standing before him and the other two sons, Murād Sakhsh and Awrangźīb, behind him; border panels in thulūth.

P.T.I. no. 206

Khasāsh-ī-Amīr Khurāv (The Five Titles of Amīr Khurāv)


This MS has eight full-page miniatures of high quality by Turābī Bey Khurāsānī, a pair marking the beginning of each of the four poems; one of the five titles is missing. On the back of the cover is a gilt stamped inscription with the name of abu-al-Muṣaffar Sultan Rustam Bahādur Khān.

P.T.I. no. 14
[Case XVI] 53. Ahli Shirazi (A.H. 942 [A.D. 1535])

Divan-i-Ahli Shirazi (The Collected Poems of Ahli)

Copied A.D. 1619

These poems comprise panegyric odes, mystical and love ghazals as well as ethical precepts and riddles.

P.T.I., no. 28
Nur al-Din 'Abd al-Mannan Jami (A.H. 917-998 [A.D. 1514-1492])

Nafaṣāt al-ʿINā min Nafaṣat al-ʾINā (Zephyrs of Fellowship from the Presence of Holy Men)

Copied A.H. 962 [A.D. 1554/5]

A hagiography containing notices of celebrated Sufis and saints from the 11th century A.H. down to the author's own time and based on the Ṭabarqāt al-Sūfarīyah of Muḥammad ibn-Muḥayn al-Jalālī.

P.T.I. no. 21
[Case XVII] 55. 'Abd al-Rahman Jami (A.H. 917-998 [A.D. 1414-1492])

Haft Avarang (The Constellation of the Seven Stars [The Great Bear])

Copied A.H. 1067 [A.D. 1657] by Hayāl

The MS is incomplete and contains three miniatures which probably come from the XIX century.

P.T.I. no. 22

Ḥaft Aʿvrang (The Constellation of the Seven Stars [The Great Bear])

Copied A.H. 1217 [A.D. 1802]

This MS contains only Ḥusnūl-Mulkhā, the fifth maganavī of the Ḥaft Aʿvrang, completed by Jāmī A.H. 888 [A.D. 1481]. The twenty miniatures are probably from the XIX century. Calligraphy, miniatures, and binding are all Indian.

F.T.I. no. 28

Lavāʾīḥ (Flashes of Light)

Copied A.H. 1232 [A.D. 1823]

A collection of Sufi aphorisms from the XV century A.D.

P.T.I. no. 101
Case XVII 58. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (A.H. 817-878 [A.D. 1414-1472])

Haft Ayrane: (The Constellation of the Seven Stars [The Great Bear])

Probably from the late XVIII century

This MS of Mīrāj-e-Zulaykhah contains sixty-nine miniatures probably from the late XIX century. They and the calligraphy are Indian.

P.T.I. no. 25
Omar Khayyam was more famous in his time as a mathematician, astronomer and free-thinker than as a poet. The poetry of his *Rubā‘īyat*, or quatrains, is pessimistic scepticism and was immortalized in the west by Edward Fitzgerald's translation into English, first published in 1859. It is the most widely translated work of Persian poetry.

The copy of the *Rubā‘īyat* in the Robert Garrett Collection and on exhibition for the Shah is the fourth oldest in existence, only seven years younger than the oldest in Istanbul. Along with it is a facsimile of the third oldest in the Bodleian library at Oxford, a facsimile of Fitzgerald's first edition, and some later sumptuous editions of this translation.

[Since publication of *The Rubā‘īyat of Omar Khayyam*, edited from a newly discovered manuscript dated 658 (1259-60) in the possession of A. Chester Beatty, Esq., by A. J. Arberry (London, 1949) this has become the fifth oldest]
[Case XVIII] 50. ʿOmar Khayyām (died about A.H. 517 [A.D. 1123])

'Abd al-Iwāt (Quatrains)


This manuscript is the fourth oldest known copy of the quatrains, and only seven years younger than the oldest, which is in Istanbul.

F.I.I. no. 6 (600)
no. 43 (610)
Omar Khayyām, the astronomer-poet of Iran, is the best known of the Persian poets in the West, mainly because of the incomparable translation of Edward Fitzgerald, first published in 1859.

The original edition, of which this is a reproduction, was printed under Fitzgerald's own supervision and shows all of his peculiar ideas and inconsistencies in the use of capitals, italics, accents, punctuation and spelling. In this form it first delighted those knights of the literary Round Table, Thackeray, Carlyle, Tennyson, Buxton, Rossetti and Swinburne, and in this form should prove attractive to readers of discriminating tastes.
[Case XVIII] 61. THE RUBĀʿĪYĀT OF OMAR KHAYYĀM

Being a facsimile of the Manuscript in
the Bodleian Library at Oxford, with a
Transcript into modern Persian characters,
Translated, with an introduction and notes,
and a bibliography,

by
Edward Heron-Allen

The page shown here is the last of the
facsimile. The original in the Bodleian
Library at Oxford is the oldest* of the
extant manuscripts of the Rubāʿīyat.

MS 2472, 377.

[* See note on introductory card for this
case]
This is a copy of the second book to be published by the Grolier Club and is number 26 of one-hundred and fifty copies on Japan paper. The binding of dark blue levent morocco inlaid in a mosaic of olive, yellow, brown, maroon and white morocco in Persian design, gold-tooled, was made by the Club Bindery, a hand-bindery established in New York in 1895 by Robert Hoe and several Grolier Club members.

At the end of the nineteenth century it was customary for book collectors to remove contemporary bindings and rebind books in sumptuous bindings of a modern style. A number of bindings of this type are included among the collection of books from the Library of Cyrus W. McCormick '79 which are now in the Princeton University Library.

Uncat. from McCormick Collection
This 1900 edition by Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, printed by Vincent Brooks Day and Son, Ltd., lithographers of London, features the illustrative art of Billy Fogany. It is introduced by Lowell's couplet:

"These pearls of thought in Persian gulfs were bred,
Each softly lucent as a rounded moon;
The diver Omur plucked them from their bed,
Fitzgerald strung them on an English thread."

EX 2472.379.6.11
This sumptuous edition of the *Rubā‘iyāt*
was designed and bound by F. Sangorski and S. 
Custcliffe of London, illustrated by E. Giddes,
engraved and printed by Andre and Bleigh. It
bears no date.

EX 2472.379.6.134
Firdowsi of Persia (A.H. 321-416 [A.D. 933/4-1025])

Shāh-nāma (The Book of Kings)

Copied A.H. 1000 [A.D. 1600] in Samarkand by Mir Māh ibn-Mīr ‘Arab

There are thirty-seven miniatures by different artists of probably the later XVIII century.

P.T.I. no. 4
[Case XIX] 66. Firdawsī of Tūs (A.H. 321-416 [A.D. 933/4-1025])

Shāh-nāma (Book of Kings)

Copied A.H. 1085 [A.D. 1674]

The former owner's note on the title page of this manuscript of the Shāh-nāma states that it was bought in A.H. 1202 [A.D. 1787] for 1500 rupees, that it contains 563 folios, 56,200 verses and 120 miniatures by the artist Ḥāyyat.

F.T.I. no. 3

Shāh-nūmeh (Book of Kings)

Dated A.H. 1065 [A.D. 1654-5]

The manuscript of the Persian national epic contains thirty-six Indian miniatures of the late XVII century, of which one is here shown.

P.T.I. no. 2