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JĀMI III. AND PERSIAN ART

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Jāmi's writings are among the most frequently illustrated in the history of Persian manuscript painting. By the fifteenth century, the intense devotion of Timurid warlords and princes to Sufi elders had created the most favorable conditions for the spread of Sufism and an increase in the influence of Sufi orders. Whether in prose or verse, books and treatises on Sufism, its ideology, and exposition of its goals, continued to be written both in Arabic and Persian (Yarshater, pp. 19-20; Ṣafā, pp. 66-78). The popularity of Sufism led to the ascendance of literary works with Sufi contents among texts that were commissioned for illustration (Sims, p. 57). During the reign of the Timurid Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (1470-1506), Herat, where Jāmi resided for most of his life, became the center of literature and book production in the Iranian world (Sām Mirzā Ṣafavi, pp. 14-15; Blair and Bloom, p. 63). The later years of Jāmi's life thus coincided with the high point in the history of Persian miniature painting. The last decade of Jāmi's life also corresponds with the emergence, as master miniaturists, of a number of individuals known by name, including Kamāl-al-Din Behzād (d. 1535-36), whose name was to become proverbial for skill in painting. Wide scale patronage of poetry and painting by members of the court at Herat, most notably, Ḥosayn Bāyqarā, and his confidant and childhood companion, Mir ʿAliŠir Navāʾi (1441-1501), and Jāmi's own eminent position, as a poet and a master of the Naqšbandi order of Sufis, must have contributed to the desirability of his works as subjects for book illustrations

while he was still alive (Subtelny, 1988, p. 488; and 1979, pp. 81-97, 98-110). This desirability did not diminish during the Safavid period and in fact increased during the latter part of the 16th century (Simpson, 1998, p. 12; Galerkina, p. 231).

The fact that Jāmi's works were illustrated during his lifetime distinguishes him from most other major literary figures of the so-called classical period. Completed by Jāmi in 1483 (Arberry, p. 442) a manuscript copy of the mystical romance *Yusof o Zoleyḵā*, dated 1488—four years before Jāmi's death—contains two spaces reserved for paintings, in one of which a sketch can be seen representing Yusof and Zoleyḵā in the latter's palace (Simpson, 1997, p. 371; Simpson, 1998, p. 11). One often noted miniature painting from this same year was likewise inspired by Jāmi's *Yusof o Zoleyḵā*. This illustration, depicting the attempted seduction of Yusof by Zoleyḵā, is not in a manuscript of Jāmi's own works but is rather one of four paintings, undisputedly by Behzād, in a *Bustān* of Saʿdi that was made for the library of Ḥosayn Bāyqarā, with a text colophon of 893/1488. Although the scene illustrated corresponds with Saʿdi's text regarding Zoley-ḵā's seduction scheme, the elaborate architectural setting illustrated by Behzād is that described in Jāmi's romance, where Zoleyḵā's palace, its conception, building, decoration, and completion are detailed (Afṣaḥzād, p. 123, line 2183 ff.; Golombek, p. 28). Following Jāmi's description, the painting shows Yusof who, having been led from room to room, at last flees from Zoleyḵā's reach to make his escape through all the rooms that according to Jāmi's text, she had carefully bolted as she led him through the building.

Inspired by the often illustrated *Ḵamsa* of Neẓāmi and with strong Sufi content, the seven maṯnawis comprising the *Haft owrang* (awrang), whether as individual poems, selections of poems or compilations of all seven, have been the most popular of Jāmi's works for illustrations, as evidenced by at least two hundred manuscripts held in collections around the world (Simpson, 1998, p. 12; Simpson, 1997, p. 369). However, among his works commissioned for illustration his divan of poems (Richards, pp. 69-74), his work *Bahārestān*, modeled on Saʿdi's *Golestān*, his *Nafaḥāt al-ons* on the lives and works of Sufi saints, and his *LawÚāyeḥ*, a treatise on Sufism (Galerkina, p. 232) can be mentioned. Popularity of Jāmi is particularly prominent in Bukhara during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Under the Uzbek rulers, numerous manuscripts of his works, such as selections from his Divān, copied by Solṭān ʿAli Mašhadi (d. 1519) with later miniatures attributed to Maḥmud and

Ḵʷājakak Naqqāš, were copied and illustrated (now at the New York Public Library; Schmitz, p. 59). From Bukhara is also a manuscript of *Bahārestān* (at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Museum in Lisbon), which has illustrations that have been dated to circa 1525-30 (Hillenbrand, pp. 70-71). An illustration belonging to a copy of the *Nafa-ḥāt al-ons* (presently at Chester Beatty Library in Dublin) was also executed in Bukhara circa1650s for ʿAbd-al-ʿAziz Bahādor Khan (r. 1645-91; see ABU'L-ḠAZI BAHĀDOR KHAN) and is attributed to Farhād (Soudavar, p. 221). A copy of *Bahārestān*, dated 1595 and made in the imperial atelier at Lahore and now at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, has been cited as one of the finest books produced under the Mughals in India (Blair and Bloom, p. 292).

Perhaps the most noteworthy and elaborately illustrated among works of Jāmi is the *Haft owrang* manuscript at the Freer Galley of Art in Washington DC (accession number 46.12), with its twenty-eight remarkable miniatures executed between 1556 and 1565 (Simpson, 1998, p. 13). This luxury manuscript was commissioned by the Safavid Ebrāhim Mirzā (1540-77), who at the age of sixteen was appointed the governor of Mashad by his uncle Shah Ṭahmāsp in 1554-55 (Qāżi Aḥmad, pp. 93-94). The calligrapher Moḥebb-ʿAli, who was the head of the *ketāb-ḵāna* of Ebrāhim Mirzā must have been responsible for delegating different segments of the project to various artists, not all of whom resided in Mashad. Other calligraphers known to have participated in this nine-year long project are Rostam-ʿAli, Malek-al-Daylami, and Ayši b. Ešrāti. The illuminator ʿAbd-Allāh al-Širāzi's signature also appears on the manuscript. Only two painters have been identified provisionally on stylistic grounds as having illustrated certain of the miniatures, Shaikh Moḥammad and ʿAli-Aṣḡar (Simpson, pp. 308-14).

Stylistically the illustrations in this manuscript, with large-scale compositions running over into the margins; bright, polished colors; sophisticated landscape or architectural settings; and idealized figures belong to the so-called classical tradition of Persian manuscript painting that by the second half of the fourteenth century had moved beyond merely advancing the narrative it accompanied, evolving through the fifteenth century into a complex art form in its own right. Especially noteworthy in the Freer Jāmi paintings is the phenomenon whose origins can be traced back to the last decade of Jāmi's life in the late fifteenth century and to the workshop of Ḥosayn Bāyqarā in Herat, where the familiarity of the artists with Sufi literature has been acknowledged (Galerkina, pp. 237-41; Lentz and Lowry, p. 285), and where certain depictions

in Sufi manuscripts transcended subordination to the signified text. It might be relevant that this was also a period when composition, in verse form, of *moʿammā* (riddle) had become extremely popular (Subtelny, 1986, p. 77). Some of the twenty-eight miniatures in the Freer Jāmi seem barely to relate to the subject of their scenes, which in every case involves the precise moment narrated in the verses that are incorporated within each painting, and are in every case of selected anecdotes that Jāmi has used, allegorically, to elaborate or explain his often abstract and didactic theme (Simpson, 1998, p. 21). Literary works with Sufi content, such as Jāmi's *Haft owrang*, are rich in metaphorical images and mystical symbols that are open to a wide range of interpretation. In the case of the illustration (folio 52a, Simpson, p. 26) of the anecdote about the father who advises his son about love [Figure 1] from *Selselat al-ḏahab* (in *Haft owrang*, ed. Alishah, p. 265, line 4039 ff.), it is not exactly clear which two figures among the twenty-three depicted are those of the father and son. Several figures depicting youths engaged in conversation with other men, though not at all described specifically in Jāmi's text could be understood as various examples of the types of suitors that are courting the favor of the son and about whom the father's advice is sought; but certain figures, having no apparent link to the meaning of the story could also be understood as Sufi symbols connoting secondary, or more oblique references that are signified by Jāmi's parable of the father and son. The figure of the kneeling man on the right, playing the flute, is an example in this case (Schimmel, pp. 273-75). As the spokesman of his time for the theosophy of Ebn ʿArabi (q.v.) and his school, Jāmi uses the pervasive influence of mystical currents, ideas, symbols, and images in his narrative and lyric poems, so that various interpretations for the recurrent depictions found in paintings that illustrate his texts may be possible (Chittick, p. 140). In the case of the illustration from the romance of *Leyli o Majnun*, where Qayṣ, visiting Leyli's tribal encampment catches a glimpse of her for the first time (Figure 2; folio 231a; Simpson, 1998, p. 65), a Sufi allusion should be read into both the figure of the man playing the flute at the top-center of the painting, and the man with his spindle at the right-center, neither of whom are directly mentioned in Jāmi's text (Brend, pp. 174-76).

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