

SOME ILLUSTRATED PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS IN THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY

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THE main repositories of fine Persian manuscripts in this country are the British Museum, the Bodleian, and the India Office Library. Apart from these there is little, now that Mr. Chester Beatty has removed his unique collection to Ireland : two splendid fourteenth century manuscripts at Edinburgh, the companion volume to one of them and a fine mid-fifteenth century *Shāhnāma* at the Royal Asiatic Society, and a superb Qur'ān of 1442 at St. Andrews are in fact the only items of outstanding importance outside the present collection.

The John Rylands Library possesses some twenty Persian manuscripts illustrated with miniatures, of which several are of considerable importance to the study of Persian painting either from their splendid quality or their stylistic features. For convenience of treatment the manuscripts may be divided into three groups : (i) Timurid, c. 1400-1500, (ii) Early Safawid, 1500 up to the death of Shāh Tahmāsp in 1576, (iii) Later Safawid, 1576-1650. There are apparently no examples of the fourteenth century Mongol style of painting in the Library.

(i) *The Timurid Group*

(Persian MSS. nos. 933, 36, 37, 9, 24)

The majority of the numerous miniature paintings in the *Shāhnāma* No. 933, are in a rough hurried style of the early seventeenth century, but the general character of the manuscript, its writing, and some of its illuminations point to some two centuries earlier. The colophon gives the date 1195-1781, but this must apply only to the last few folios which have been supplied in a different hand and on different paper from the body

of the manuscript. The initial illuminations are of the same date as the majority of the miniatures, but the beginning of the Poem itself is illuminated in a broad style of the early fifteenth century. From this period also are four of the miniatures, representing Tahmīna coming to Rustam's chamber, Suhrāb on the point of killing Rustam, the fire-ordeal of Siyāwush, and Rustam carried by the Demon Akwān (they must be referred to by their subjects because, in common with nearly all the manuscripts under discussion, this *Shāhnāma* is not foliated). These miniatures occupy comparatively narrow bands across the wide pages of the manuscript, and have suffered a little from rubbing and clumsy retouching. The style is clearly "provincial", equally far removed from the sumptuous and elaborate productions of Baysunqur's artists at Herāt and the less magnificent but bolder and more vigorous paintings made for his elder brother Ibrāhīm Sultān at Shīrāz.

The problem of "provincial" painting in the Timurid period is bewildering and has scarcely been touched; very few examples can be pinned down in time and place. Either, as in the present instance, the first and last folios of the manuscript are lost, thereby depriving us of the *ex libris* of the first owner and the colophon with the date and the copyist's name, or, what is almost more exasperating, the colophon is confined to pious ejaculations, and the initial illuminated rosette, if any, merely calls down blessings and prosperity on an owner who modestly remains anonymous. Comparable provincial work of much the same period as the four miniatures under discussion occurs in a *Shāhnāma* now broken up, but from which twelve miniatures are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,¹ one in the Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University,² and another in the Vever collection.³ Schroeder tentatively attributes the Fogg miniature to Tabrīz, and while not prepared to make so precise an attribution, I would agree with him in placing these miniatures in the north-west of Persia owing to certain similarities with a *Shāhnāma* dated 850-1446 and written for Muḥammad,

¹ *Eastern Art* (1928), i, 23 ff. (4 reproductions).

² Schroeder, *Persian Miniatures* (1942), pp. 79 ff. and pl. X.

³ *L'Illustration*, Christmas Number 1930 (colour reproduction).



کرمی از قیوم حج شد
شکارانکه سینه
آشی در کتیا دور نرسد
کار در سر در این صفا شد

بهرام گور و دراج
بهرام گور و دراج

Bahrām Gūr and the Dragon. From the *Khamsa* of Nizāmi (Rylands Pers. MS. No. 36).

Shiraz school, dated 848-849/1444-1445.

To face page 71.

the fourth Sultan of an obscure local dynasty in Māzanderān.¹ The miniatures in the John Rylands manuscript, however, though of the same general character and probably also of north-western origin, contain some more markedly Mongol features than the others noticed above, and I should be inclined to date them about 1430. Besides the rough seventeenth-century miniatures already mentioned, this curious manuscript contains three illustrations towards the end of the Poem, representing Bahrām Gūr entertained by female musicians, Bahrām Gūr wrestling before King Shangul of Hind, and the enthronement of Pālāsh, which seem to be late copies (sixteenth or seventeenth century?) from originals of the Mongol period in a style recalling that of the various *Shāhnāmas* and other manuscripts of about 1330-1340 associated with the Injū rulers of Shīrāz.²

The splendid Nizāmī of 1444-1445 (No. 36) is probably the finest Persian manuscript in the Library, remarkable alike for its superb illuminations, its vigorous and well-executed miniatures, and its excellent state of preservation which includes the original binding (rebacked only). The style of these miniatures, of which there are nineteen, appears to be directly descended from that of the Berlin Anthology³ and the Bodleian *Shāhnāma*⁴—in other words the style associated with Shīrāz under its Timurid governor Ibrāhīm Sulṭān b. Shāh Rukh (1414-1434). It persisted after his death, and can be clearly traced in a miniature of Iskander and the dragon of 1436,⁵ the Vever Khwājū

¹ de Zambaur, *Manuel de Genealogie &c.*, p. 193. This manuscript is at Dunimarle Castle, Fife. It was copied in *naskhī* by Faḥallāh b. Aḥmad al-Sabzawārī, and although only the first half is illustrated (unfilled spaces being left throughout the remainder) it contains over eighty miniature paintings. An illuminated rosette on fol. 1a gives the full titles and genealogy of the patron.

² Stchoukine, *La Peinture Iranienne* (1936), pp. 93 f.

³ Copied "at Shīrāz" by Maḥmūd al-Ḥusaynī. See Kühnel's article on this manuscript in *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* (1931), LII, 133 ff., and compare British Museum MS. Or. 2833, also copied "at Shīrāz" by the same scribe in 1405.

⁴ MS. Ouseley Add. 176. Binyon, Wilkinson and Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (1933), front. and XXXVIII-XL.

⁵ Martin, *Miniature Painting . . . of Persia &c.* (1912), pl. 53.

Kirmānī of 1438,¹ the Paris Juwaynī also of 1438,² the double-page miniature which formerly served as frontispiece to the Chester Beatty Nizāmī of 1463, but which must antedate that manuscript by some twenty years,³ two *Shāhnāmas* (one fragmentary) at Leningrad⁴ the second of which, dated 1445, was in the Persian Exhibition of 1931 (Catalogue 539H), and a Nizāmī of 1449-1450 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.⁵ Of the later stage of the style this John Rylands Nizāmī is an excellent example whose illustrations, while retaining much of the vigour and certain of the mannerisms of Ibrāhīm Sulṭān's court painters, are on a smaller scale, and the rather *farouche* quality of some of the earlier miniatures has been toned down. The copyist has appended a colophon to each of the five poems, but unfortunately gives neither his name nor the place where the manuscript was produced; the dates are between Sha'bān 848 and Ṣafar 849 (November 1444 and May 1445). However, from the style of the miniatures and illuminations⁶ I have little hesitation in assigning the manuscript to Shīrāz. Associated in date and style with this Nizāmī, but of far lower quality, are the miniatures in a Qazwīnī in the John Rylands Library (No. 37). Unfortunately, as well as being of inferior execution, they are for the most part badly damaged.

The miniatures of the next manuscript we have to consider, a *Shāhnāma* with Nizāmī's *Khamsa* in the margins (No. 9), are apparently the work of at least two different artists, one of good average standard, and the other very primitive and crude. Many are damaged and some are left unfinished. Stylistically they seem to belong to a transition between the style of the

¹ Persian Exhibition Catalogue 539B. *Persian Miniature Painting*, LIII.

² Bibliothèque Nationale Suppl. pers. 206, and two detached miniatures in the British Museum, 1948-12-11-05 and 06. Blochet, *Musulman Painting* (1929), XCIV etc.

³ Schulz, *Die persisch-islamische Miniaturmalerei* (1914), II, 36 f.

⁴ Giusalini and Diakonov, *Iranian Miniatures* (1935), pl. 6-9.

⁵ Jackson and Yohannan, *Catalogue*, No. 6, p. 49. Dimand, *Handbook*, Fig. 9. *Eastern Art*, i, 29 and Figs. 6, 7.

⁶ For the latter compare for example Bodleian MS. Elliot 189 written "at Shīrāz" in 1463 probably by Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd Jamālī, and Lord Teignmouth's *Shāhnāma* of 1457 copied by the same scribe, and therefore most probably also a Shīrāz manuscript.

Nizāmī No. 36 and that of the *Shāhnāma* of 1486 in the British Museum (Add. 18188). This latter style is very frequently met with during the last quarter of the fifteenth and the first few years of the sixteenth century, and I select the British Museum *Shāhnāma* to exemplify it only because it is probably the most easily accessible and best known. Excellent examples of this well-known style, which seems to have persisted with very little change for close on half a century, are the six charming little miniatures in MS. No. 24, a copy of the *Mihr u Mushtari* of 'Aṣṣār. A manuscript of the same work of very similar size and appearance and containing seven miniatures in the same style is in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society (No. 304).

The location of this style has puzzled many scholars. The only two manuscripts known to me whose miniatures clearly exemplify it and which at the same time contain statements of where they were produced are British Museum MS. Or. 5770, a *Dīwān* of Amīr Khusraw copied "at Shīrāz" in 1488 by Shaykh Murshid-al-Dīn,¹ and the well-known Upsala *Āṣafī*² which was the work of the calligrapher Sulṭān 'Alī, completed in 1502 "at the Sultan's residence Herāt". Two of the miniatures in the latter manuscript, however, are separately dated between one and two years after the completion of the text, and it has been generally admitted that they are "totally unlike Herāt work of the period". I would tentatively suggest that this style be associated, not so much with a particular place as with the dynasty of the Āq-Quyunlū, or "White Sheep" Turcomans, who were in possession of most of northern and western Persia during the second half of the fifteenth century. Their first capital was Diyarbekir (Amida) in Kurdistan, but the greatest

¹ Other manuscripts written by this scribe "at Shīrāz" include a Fattāhī of 1480 at Cambridge (Univ. Lib. Or. 1280), an Amīr Khusraw of 1505 at Halle (Guest, *Shīrāz Painting in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 24, n. 1), and a Nizāmī of 1513 in the Kevorkian collection. Following Schroeder's excellent plea for the application of Occam's razor to the study of Persian painting, I see no necessity to postulate more than two Shīrāz copyists named Murshid between 1472 (B.M. Add. 6619) and 1552 (B.M. Or. 1359); I have noted eight manuscripts written by the first, dated between 1472 and 1513, and Miss Guest has listed thirteen by the second (called al-'Aṭṭār) between 1523 and 1552.

² Fully published and described by Zetterstéen and Lamm, *Moḥammed Āṣafī : the Story of Jamāl and Jalāl*, Upsala, 1948.

of the "White Sheep", Ūzūn Ḥasan (1453-1478), who extended the family's dominion over Āzarbaijān and Fārs, made Tabrīz his capital from 1472. The maturity of the style during the last quarter of the fifteenth century may, however, be associated mainly with Shīrāz on the strength of the colophon of the British Museum Amīr Khusraw; on the fact that the copyist Na'im al-Dīn from whose pen seven manuscripts are recorded between 1481 and 1510, was a Shīrāzī, and four of these are illustrated in this style (the other three contain no miniatures); and on certain stylistic considerations, especially details of landscape, which have been carried over from the earlier Shīrāz style associated with the court of Ibrāhīm Sulṭān. But, as argued by Schroeder,¹ this "Turcoman" style was probably also practised at Tabrīz, the "White Sheep" capital. Its characteristically squat and sturdy figures are quite different from the slim and even attenuated ones favoured by the earlier Shīrāz artists; they are probably traceable to the north-west, being found in the controversial Paris Rashīd al-Dīn,² the Dunimarle *Shāhnāma* from Māzanderān of 1446 (see p. 71, n. 1), and the British Museum Anthology from Shīrwān (Shamakhā) of 1468.³

In view of the above considerations I am inclined to date the *Shāhnāma* No. 9 about 1460, and to suggest that it may have been produced at Shīrāz. The colophon of the little manuscript of *Mihr u Mushtari* gives the date 788-1386. But this date is utterly belied by the paper, the writing, the illuminations, and the miniatures, all of which can be closely paralleled again and again in manuscripts dated between 1480 and 1500. As the date is written out in full (*thamān wa thamānīn wa sab'amāya*) it seems hardly likely (as might be expected) that it could be a *lapsus calami* for 888-1483, though that would be a probable enough date for the manuscript. Possibly it was prompted by a desire to approximate the date of the copy to that of the actual composition of the work by 'Aṣṣār in 778-1376, or else it may have been the date of the original manuscript from which this copy was made.

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 87 ff.

² Bibliothèque Nationale Suppl. pers. 1113. Blochet, *Musulman Painting*, LIX-LXV etc.

³ Add. 16561. Arnold, *Painting in Islam* (1928), pl. II. B.M. post-card B. 28.

(ii) *The Early Safawid Group*

(Persian MSS. nos. 20, 932, 8, 910, 6, 23, 907)

Just as the Safawid dynasty brought unity to the numerous principalities into which Persia had been divided during the fifteenth century, so also Persian painting during this period becomes more unified, and its study is beset with less difficulty and confusion. Shīrāz maintained a certain artistic independence for the first hundred years of Safawid rule, as has been shown in Miss Guest's admirable study *Shīrāz Painting in the Sixteenth Century*,¹ and in the John Rylands Library examples of it may be found in MSS. Nos. 20, 932 and 8.

The first of these, dated 924-1518, is Jāmī's *Yūsuf u Zulaykhā* copied by Ḥusām al-Dīn Ibrāhīm. The five small miniatures it contains are of only average quality. They demonstrate the curious Safawid head-gear round which the turban was wound with its red "baton" rising from the centre. This became the distinguishing mark of the adherents of the fanatically Shī'a Safawid family, and hence a national Persian badge during the first half-century of their reign. Owing to its strong Shī'a associations it was naturally anathema to the Sunnī Turks, and in manuscripts which have passed through Turkish hands the "baton", where it occurs, is often found to have been laboriously painted out. The contrary may, however, be seen in a Nizāmī in the India Office Library (No. 387; Ethé 976) which was probably in course of production at Shīrāz when that city was surrendered by the "White Sheep" Turcomans to Shāh Ismā'il Ṣafawī. In several of the miniatures the full round turbans typical of the style I have tentatively associated with the "White Sheep" dynasty have been altered in shape and provided with "batons" to bring them into line with the usage of the new reigning house.

The other two manuscripts of this Shīrāz group, Nos. 932 and 8 are both *Shāhnāmas*. There is much similarity between them, and they are typical of the mid-sixteenth century Shīrāz style. The first is dated Muḥarram 949/April-May 1542, and contains thirty-eight miniatures of which the earlier ones

¹ Freer Gallery of Art Oriental Studies No. 4, Washington, 1949.

appear to be by a less able artist than those in the later part of the volume. Among the latter is a representation of the fire-belching iron horsemen constructed by Alexander and used in battle against the Hindus ; this subject is very rarely treated, the only other example I know being the celebrated fourteenth century painting from the Demotte *Shāhnāma*.¹ No. 8 appears to be a little later, perhaps between 1550 and 1560, and contains nineteen miniatures somewhat inferior in general quality to those in no. 932. The printed handlist of Arabic, Persian and Turkish MSS. (1898), states that this manuscript is dated 1455 ; this is, however, almost exactly a century too early, and during my examination of it I was unable to find any date.

Another *Shāhnāma*, no. 910, contains about a hundred miniatures of a not very high quality on the whole, and painted in two distinct styles. Those towards the beginning may perhaps be Shīrāz work of about 1520, but the later ones recall the work of artists of Qazwīn or Iṣfahān towards the end of the century. The last folio has been remounted, and the colophon thereby damaged ; it is possible, however, to make out part of the date as “ ninety-four ” (*arba' wa tis'in*). 894-1489 is, of course, far too early, but 994-1586 would agree well with the probable date of the later miniatures, and it may be that the manuscript was for some reason left unfinished, being at length completed and the later miniatures added some sixty years after its inception.

But the “ classic ” painting of the earlier Safawid period was executed at Tabrīz under the royal patronage of Shāh Tahmāsp, himself an amateur painter and connoisseur. The masterpiece of this magnificent court art is the famous Nizāmī in the British Museum,² which occupied his foremost artists and craftsmen between 1539 and 1543. The John Rylands Library has a very fine example of Shāh Tahmāsp's court style in MS. no. 6, the *Khusraw u Shīrīn* of Nizāmī copied by Aẓhar al-Sultānī Mashhadī. As it stands, the date in the colophon reads 824-1421, but even a cursory examination will reveal that

¹ Often reproduced, but see especially Schroeder, *Persian Miniatures*, pp. 46-48 and pl. VI.

² Or. 2265. Fully published and described by Laurence Binyon in the *Studio* publication *The Poems of Nizami* (1928).

the first two digits have been interfered with. The original date was most probably 944-1538, though there was a scribe named Azhar who copied Bodleian MS. Elliot 210 in 1431. The five miniatures are of exquisite quality, and the manuscript is splendidly illuminated.

Another copy of Jāmī's *Yūsuf u Zulaykhā*, no. 23, was executed in 957-1550 by Muḥammad Amīn b. 'Abdallāh, and illustrated with four miniatures of good average quality. They are quite unlike Shīrāz work of the period, and the strong colouring together with certain features of the drawing seem to foreshadow the Qazwīn style of some twenty years later.¹ No. 907, the *Laylā wa Majnūn* of Hilālī, contains three miniatures of medium quality, retouched in places, and may also be Qazwīn work. It is dated 969-1562, and was copied by Muḥammad al-Kātib.

(iii) *The Later Safawid Group*

(Persian MSS. nos. 45, 28, 856, 12, 945, 3, 2, 35, 908, 909)

During the whole of the sixteenth century a distinct school of painting was flourishing at Bukhārā. Its style was at first modelled closely on that of Herāt at the end of the fifteenth century—the style of Bihzād—but gradually deteriorated until by 1596 it had sunk into the mediocre drawing and tedious mannerisms found in a pair of Jāmī manuscripts in the Bodleian (Elliot 418 and 337). The John Rylands Library possesses a typical example of the school in the set of five miniatures in MS. no. 45, dated 987-1579, which contains selections from the works of several poets. As frequently at this period and later, the illuminations are of a much higher standard than the paintings, which in this case have also suffered from retouching. No. 28, a copy of Hātifi's *Laylā wa Majnūn*, containing sixteen miniatures in a curious provincial style apparently of the late sixteenth century, may also have been executed in Transoxania.

¹ As exemplified in two Nizāmī manuscripts copied by the celebrated Bābāshāh of Iṣfahān: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MS. 18-1948, dated 1572, and Bodleian MS. Ouseley 316 of about the same date. Huart (*Les Calligraphes, etc.*, p. 234) states that Bābāshāh was also a painter, and the strong resemblance between the miniatures in these two manuscripts may possibly suggest that he was the illustrator as well as the copyist.

The first three manuscripts from Persia proper to be considered in this period may all be associated with Shīrāz. The first, no. 856, is a fine but undated copy of Nizāmī's *Khamsa*. The sixteen miniatures it contains are so close in style to certain others in a Bodleian *Haft Awrang* of Jāmī which was shown at the Persian Exhibition of 1931¹ that they may well be by the same hand. This Oxford manuscript was copied by Muḥammad Qiwām, a well-known Shīrāz scribe, and is included by Miss Guest in her conspectus of sixteenth century Shīrāz work.² Both manuscripts may be dated to about 1580-1590.

The same style on a smaller scale may be seen in MSS. nos. 12 and 945, dated 1016-1607 and 1027-1618 respectively. The former was copied by the Shīrāz scribe Muḥammad al-Qiwāmī. Several Shīrāz copyists of this period bear very similar names, and it is difficult sometimes to distinguish between them. Besides Muḥammad Qiwām and Muḥammad al-Qiwāmī mentioned above, we also find Muḥammad b. Qiwām, Muḥammad al-Qiwām, and Qiwām b. Muḥammad. It might be possible to identify Muḥammad Qiwām with Muḥammad al-Qiwām, though their dated work spans a period of forty-five years from 1537 to 1582; whilst it seems not unreasonable to merge Muḥammad al-Qiwāmī (dated work 1601-1607) with Muḥammad b. Qiwām (work undated, but c. 1580-1590). Qiwām b. Muḥammad, who seems also to have signed simply Qiwām al-Kātib al-Shīrāzī,³ may well have been son of the first and father of the second; a *Shāhnāma* copied by him is dated 1589.

The capital of Persia was transferred to Iṣfahān at the close of the sixteenth century by the great Shāh 'Abbās, and under the influence of Āqā Rizā and later Rizā-yi 'Abbāsī the character and palette of Persian painting underwent a considerable change from about that time. Combinations of purples, browns and

¹ Elliot 149: Persian Exhibition Catalogue 721E. Two artists were employed on this manuscript, and it is the better of them, who painted twelve of its twenty miniatures, whose work the illustrations in John Rylands MS. no. 856 so closely resemble.

² *Op cit.*, p. 61, no. 32.

³ Bodleian MS. Marsh 431. In Ethé's Catalogue this manuscript is said to be dated 1556; but I have been unable to find this date in the colophon or elsewhere. Both the miniatures and illuminations suggest some twenty years later.



وگر در سر ریایستند و مادام که نشسته باشد ایستاده باشند و چون ملک بجای
 خدایش بنایشاید و فرود که آرد و بدین کل که مصورشند و منها صورت شعل السوم و انجان بود که



سر سازند و در زیر آن سر
 جری بر سی طایم بر پستان
 میل موهتی بود و در دست او
 شمشیر و در زیر صورت خود
 پرازیک و از حوض مانوس بود
 ماجع جبا که رک از آن انور

بر وجهی میزد جرج را میگرداند چون جرج بگرد میل را بگرداند و دست صورت شمشیر از حوض

From the 'Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt of Qazwīnī (Persian version). (Rylands Pers. MS. No. 3)

Isfahān school, dated 1041/1632

To face page 79.

yellows often replace the pure bright colours of the previous century, and the figures, with their languid posturing and effeminate features, reflect an increasing national decadence which made the once proud Safawid kingdom an easy prey to a handful of marauding Afghans at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The style at its best is represented in a Qazwīnī of 1041-1632 (no. 3), copied by a certain Shamsā. The illustration of Qazwīnī must often have been a bugbear to Persian artists, requiring as it did several hundred paintings for each copy, many of them monotonous repetitions of rocks, trees, or fish; and it must be admitted that the roughest work of any period is often to be found in the illustration of this astonishing work. But there are honourable exceptions, as everyone interested in Persian painting will know, and the present manuscript is certainly one of them; the numerous miniatures are of a uniformly high standard of execution, and the manuscript itself is in a splendid state of preservation. The style is close to that of Rizā-yi 'Abbāsī himself, particularly as exemplified in the Victoria and Albert Museum *Khusraw u Shīrīn*,¹ and some of them at any rate are worthy of him. Contrasted with this superb manuscript is another copy of the same work dated Muḥarram 1029-December 1620 whose miniatures, rough and of poor quality, are nevertheless typical of the period, the style of Āqā Rizā being not yet superseded by that of Rizā-yi 'Abbāsī.

MS. no. 35, another *Khamsa* of Nizāmī dated 1037-1628, is subscribed as having been copied by Mīr 'Alī "at Shīrāz the abode of grace". The two double-page miniatures, at the beginning and end, are in good average Shāh 'Abbās style, and seem to indicate that Shīrāz work had by this time ceased to have any readily recognisable characteristics of its own. To the following year, 1038-1629, belongs an exquisite little *Kulliyāt* of 'Urfī (no. 908) in its original binding and in superb condition throughout, with splendid illuminations and two double-page miniatures, beginning and end, as in the previous manuscript, which it much resembles in style and format. But its magnificent quality inclines one to assign it to Iṣfahān the capital, and Shāh 'Abbās himself is easily recognisable (chiefly by his

¹ No. 364-1885. *Burlington Magazine*, xxxviii, 59 ff.

famous moustaches) as the central figure in the out-door court scene with which the manuscript opens.

Finally no. 909, a *Shāhnāma* dated 1st Jumāda 1060-May 1650, and copied by Yūsuf b. Maḥmūd Shāh b. Yūsuf, presents a melancholy picture of the debased state of Persian painting towards the close of the Safawid period. The numerous miniatures, roughly executed, are of comparatively small size, but are filled with large clumsy figures with "Shāh 'Abbās" moustaches, the whole effect being awkward and incompetent.

I have attempted in this article to give a general idea of the periods and styles of Persian painting represented in the John Rylands Library's manuscripts, and to indicate some of the problems they raise or to whose solution they contribute. I should like in conclusion to express my appreciation of the help and kindness I received from the Librarian and his Staff during the all-too-brief two days which I spent in the examination of this rich and interesting but almost unknown body of material.