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“I am happy to contribute to the Conversation with an article on a richly illustrated copy of the Yusuf and Zulaikha of Abd al-Rahman Jami in Persian. It was produced towards the end of the sixteenth century during the most prolific period of luxury book production of the Safavid city of Shiraz, but was then somehow transferred to Istanbul to belong to the Ottoman imperial treasury. Even though it is now preserved at the Topkapı Museum in İstanbul and not in Rhodes, the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library has Haliloğlu Ali’s Turkish version of the same Yusuf and Zulaikha story, which is not illustrated. The Topkapı manuscript therefore exemplifies the type of images that this story has in its illustrated versions.”

Lâle Uluç

An Illustrated Copy of the *Yusuf and Zulaikha*
from the End of the Zu’lqadir Gubernatorial Period in Shiraz

Persianate classical epic/narrative poems (*masnavis*) relating the romance of Yusuf and Zulaikha are various re-workings or poetic interpretations of the story told in the 12th *Sura* of the Qur’an. Literary historical sources suggest that the earliest versions of these romantic epics were written in Persian in the 10th century. The first texts composed in Turkish are from a later period, the end of the 13th century. Throughout the centuries almost forty recensions in Persian were composed in addition to approximately fifty in Turkish.¹

It is probably not exaggerated to say that there is no major Oriental manuscript collection that does not hold a copy of the *masnavi*, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, ‘the most beautiful story’ according to the *Qur’an*,² and one of the most popular *masnavis* in the Islamic world as is attested by library catalogues. The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library also has a copy of the story, which is by Haliloğlu Ali, who rendered a certain Mahmud’s version in Crimean/Northern Turkish into Anatolian Turkish, some time between 13th and 15th centuries.³ It is a well-known work in the literature, and is significant for linguistic and cultural reasons.⁴

As the large number of manuscripts preserved in libraries throughout the Middle East, Central Asia and India indicate, the most widely read and most popular of all the versified accounts of the Yusuf and Zulaikha story in the Persianate world was the *masnavi* composed in 888 (1483-84) by the celebrated Timurid sufi poet, ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), who is considered the last major poet of the classical style and as such is often called the “seal of poets” (*khatim al-shu‘ara*).⁵

Jami wrote his version during the reign of the Timurid ruler Sultan Husain (r. 1469-1506), whose court in Herat was the uncontested center of art and culture during this period. Jami’s version is worthy of attention not only for its immense popularity, but also for the boost it gave to the development of *Yusuf and Zulaikha* works in Turkish and for the purposes of this paper, for the sustained level of decorative attention it received throughout the centuries.

This study is about an illustrated copy of Jami’s *Yusuf and Zulaikha* that is presently preserved at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library (hereafter TSMK) with the inventory number H.1084.⁶ It is a large undated, illustrated manuscript of 41.5x26.5 cm. that can be attributed to the 1590s and to the Safavid city of Shiraz. The upper cover of its binding is identical to those from typical bindings found on almost all luxury Shiraz manuscripts from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, with its outer

1 For the information given in this section I would like to thank Benedek Peri and Ertuğrul Ökten, who were both incredibly generous in sharing their knowledge with me, see Péri 2018, 230-36; Ökten 2007.

2 Ayan 1996, 31.

3 About this work, see Ayan 1996, 36-38; Deniz 1998, 72-144. Not much is known about Haliloğlu Ali. The dating of his work is due to various scholars, who have evaluated its linguistic qualities.

4 At least three other copies of the work are known, see Deniz 1998, 77-81.

5 Lozensky *Elr*.

6 This article is a slightly extended and revised version of an earlier article in Turkish, see Uluç 2014. For the manuscript, see Karatay 1961, no. 749; İnal 1979; Simpson 1997, 141; Uluç 2000a, fig. 17; Uluç 2006, 337, 395, 406, figs. 9-14, 17-20, 187, 230, 249, 298, 307-9. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 500-01, ms. no. 66.

cover gilded and block pressed with a classical design of a central medallion with pendants and corner pieces enclosed in a framing border, while its doublure has gilded rectangular inner fields with a central medallion and corner pieces decorated with leather filigree motifs over multicolored grounds (FIGURES 1-2). This type of binding, and especially its doublure was so typically Shirazi that



FIGURE 1: TSMK H. 1084. Binding upper outer cover. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.



FIGURE 2: TSMK H. 1084. Binding upper doublure. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

it can be used for the attribution of manuscripts to this center.⁷ However, it may not be a remnant of the manuscript's original binding as the lower cover of the binding is clearly not (FIGURES 3-4).⁸ The rebinding appears to have been at the Ottoman palace, since the manuscript includes a page of explanation in Ottoman Turkish directly preceding or following each of its thirteen textual illustrations.



FIGURE 3: TSMK H. 1084. Lower outer cover. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.



FIGURE 4: TSMK H. 1084. Binding lower doublure. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

⁷ For similar examples see Uluç 2006, figs. 171-72, 175-79, 184, 190, 192, 195-96, 198.

⁸ H.1084 may have retained the upper cover of its binding, or it may have been a re-used sixteenth century Shiraz one that was available within the Ottoman treasury, while the lower cover may have been either newly made at this time or was once again a re-used one.

This was probably when half of its double-folio frontispiece was lost,^{9,10} as well as several folios from the end of the volume, including the last page of text, which may have had a colophon.

The volume opens with the remaining half of its frontispiece (fol. 1b), which can be easily seen to have been part of a double-folio composition (FIGURE 5), followed by a fully illuminated double-folio opening (*sarlahu*) (fols. 1b-2a) (FIGURE 6), and an illuminated heading (*unvan*) with the inscription “*Kitab-i Yusuf u Zulaikha-i Maulana Jami*” at the beginning of the text (fol. 2b) (FIGURE 7). It additionally has thirteen full page illustrations (FIGURES 8-20) with the facing text page in the bifolio opening decorated with golden textual backgrounds, and intercolumnar illumination, as well as some text bifolios within the codex that appear to have been chosen randomly to be decorated with

FIGURE 5: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 1a. Right half of a double folio frontispiece, outdoor entertainment. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95. ➤



⁹ Similar inserts are also found in a Timurid copy of the *Mir'ajnama*, today preserved in Paris (Bibliothèque National de France, supp. Turc 190), which was also re-bound in Istanbul, see Esin 1966, 111; Gruber 2008, 211-212, 346-352, figs. 5.6 and 5.8, as well as the *Shahnama* of Firdausi produced for Shah Tahmasp b. Isma'il, the second Safavid shah (r. 1524-76). This renowned manuscript is today dispersed and its 258 illustrations are preserved in various collections around the world. They are generally attributed to the years between 1522 and 1540, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 3-4. For the most recent summary of the literature on the *Shah Tahmasp Shahnama* and the collections where the individual paintings are found see, Canby 2014, 14-18. For a summary of the previous secondary literature on the volume and its provenance, see Rüstem 2012, notes 1-2. For color publications of all the illustrations of the Timurid *Mir'ajnama*, (Bibliothèque National de France, supp. Turc 190), see Seguy 1977.

¹⁰ This indicates that the manuscript may have acquired even the upper cover of its binding during its Ottoman rebounding, even though it is a typical Shiraz cover. The *Tahmasp Shahnama* also has a similar gilt leather binding, which is most probably not its original binding, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 2: pls. 262-65. The Ottoman Ahmed Feridun Paşa (d. 1583), in *Nüzhetü'l-Ahbar der sefer-i Sigevar* dated 976 (1568) (TSMK H. 1339, fol. 246v), describes this *Shahnama* presented by the Safavid ambassador Shah Quli Khan to Selim II in 1568 as having two hundred and fifty-nine illustrations and a *murassa* (gem encrusted) binding. Today the manuscript only has two hundred and fifty-eight illustrations. Since it has clearly lost this precious binding at some point, an illustration may also have been extracted during the same time. Although it is impossible to determine with certainty the exact time of the rebinding of the manuscript, it is highly likely that this may have happened during the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807). An archival document (TSMA D. 38) dated 12 Safer 1204 (21 October 1790) records the collection of gold and silver objects from various persons at the court, starting with the sultan himself during the reign of Selim III, seems to shed light on the possible use of the gem-crusted binding of the manuscript which may have been used for the generation of much-needed funds for military campaigns, see Baykal 1944. During its rebinding the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp appears to have been bound not by a newly prepared Ottoman binding, but by a re-used sixteenth century Shiraz one that was available within the Ottoman treasury, since both its outer covers and doublures are identical to those from typical bindings found on almost all luxury Shiraz manuscripts from the middle of the sixteenth century, when Shiraz *Qur'ans*, and some of the illustrated manuscripts were easily as large as the *Tahmasp Shahnama*. The Ottoman Turkish inserts, providing an explanation for each of its illustrations, may also have been added during the same reign. In a separate sheet of explanation, which served as a colophon for the inserts and was located between the last two folios of the volume before it was dispersed, Müderriszade Tüfengcibaşı Mehmed 'Arif Efendi (d. 1829-33) declares that “in accordance with the decree of Sultan Selim III...” he provided the text of the inserts within a year. For a detailed discussion of the inserts, see Rüstem 2012, *passim*, and notes 28-33, for the career of this personage.



Figure 6: TSMK H. 1084, fols. 1b-2a. Fully illuminated openig bi-folio. Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

golden textual backgrounds, intercolumnar illumination, and gold floral or animated scrolls in the margins (Figure 21).

The inserted folios in Ottoman Turkish provide detailed explanatory information about the subjects depicted in each of the thirteen textual illustrations of the manuscript (Figures 8-20). These explanation pages, which translate the images into words in Ottoman Turkish, were written only on one side of the folios, and inserted into the volume to have the explanatory texts covering the matching illustration, excluding one, which faces the matching illustration (fols. 67b-68a) (Figure 9). Therefore, the inserted text pages correspond exactly to the pictures and can almost replace the pictures. The only illustration left out of this arrangement is the existing half of the frontispiece of the work.

The remaining half of the frontispiece of the manuscript depicts a scene of garden entertainment (fol. 1r). Yusuf, recognizable by the flame halo around his head and his beardless depiction, is seated on a throne (Figure 5). The fully illuminated double-folio opening pages (fols. 1v-2r) following the frontispiece is in the most popular illumination layout of the period (Figure 6); the central field has a tripartite linked medallion design with a full medallion in the center, while the wide, lobed borders have a triangular medallion in the middle of the side border. The basic color scheme of bright lapis blue and gold closely pursue the common practice of the time. The opening pages are followed by the beginning of the text with an illuminated heading (*unvan*), once again in the Shiraz illumination style of the period.

Although it lacks a dated colophon, H.1084 can be attributed to Shiraz ca. 1588-95. All of its illustrations, together with its illuminated folios and binding, are published here, as well as in

the earlier Turkish version of this article,¹¹ since they play an important role in determining the characteristics of the Shiraz manuscript production of this critical period when it decreased greatly due to the changing political situation of the Safavid state, and especially of the years around 1590, the key year when this change began.

The Qizilbash, who had played a crucial role in the conquest, were rewarded with important posts and continued to maintain a monopoly over influential military positions both at court and in the provinces for almost a century after the Safavid conquest. The region of Fars was assigned to the Zu'lqadir Turkman tribe immediately after the Safavid took over its capital, Shiraz, providing all the governors of the region until the crucial year of 1590.¹² During this period the Safavid army was essentially feudal. The Qizilbash troops depended upon their Turkman commanders who held all the important provincial gubernatorial posts and could not be controlled easily by the central government. The local governors collected the revenue from the region and remitted only a small portion of it to the central government.¹³

Shiraz was an important manuscript production center from at least the fourteenth century.¹⁴ It remained so through its Timurid (1392-1452), Qaraqoyunlu (1452-67) and Aqqoyunlu (1467-1501) Turkman periods during the fifteenth century and after its Safavid conquest in 1503, was governed by the Turkman tribe Zu'lqadir. Even though it was merely a provincial center it is significant that the number of surviving high quality manuscripts from Shiraz, during both its Turkman and Safavid periods, is larger than those from any other center in the greater Iran region.

The absence of patrons' names in Shiraz manuscripts combined with their large number led to their being regarded as "commercial." To label Shiraz manuscripts "commercial" because of the sheer numbers and the absence of patrons' names is justified. They do seem to have been produced to be sold on the market. It should not, however, be assumed that just because they are produced for sale to an unknown patron, they are necessarily of indifferent quality.

The large numbers as well as the richness and highly refined style of the deluxe manuscripts of Shiraz suggest that they must have had some financial backing in spite of the absence of patrons' names, since their production involved considerable expense.¹⁵ Circumstantial evidence as well as a few instances when their names crop up in sources suggest that the Zu'lqadir governors supported manuscript production, especially since its decline corresponds to the reversal in fortunes of the Zu'lqadir tribe, when Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629) initiated centralizing policies and removed the gubernatorial power from the Zu'lqadir.

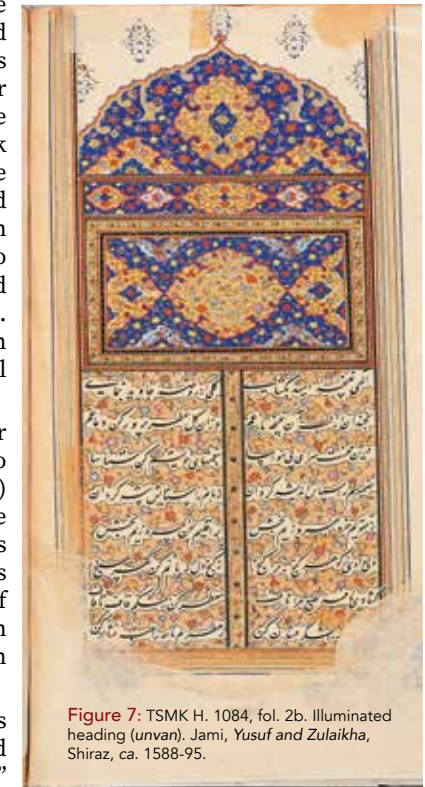


Figure 7: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 2b. Illuminated heading (*unvan*). Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

11 Uluç 2014, 397-422, figs. 1-43.

12 Qadi Ahmad 1959, 70.

13 Babayan 1996, 120; Roemer 1986, 264 and 344; Savory 1986, 364.

14 We don't have earlier extant illustrated manuscripts, but we know that in the tenth century, when Shiraz was one of the Buyid capitals, its library was renowned in the Islamic world, see Barthold 1984, 154-55.

15 See Çağman 2000, 70-72, for an account book dated 992 (1584) listing the huge sums expended for the production of a royal Ottoman Qur'an.



Figure 8: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 9b. Text page that was originally facing the illustration on fol. 11a (right); fol. 10a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 11a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (center); fol. 11a. Mi'raj of the Prophet Muhammad over the Ka'ba enclosure (left), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

Two illustrated manuscripts, a copy of the *Shahname* of Firdausi dated *Rajab* 1011 (December 1602) preserved at Rampur (Raza Library P.39a1 [M.K./491]),¹⁶ and an incomplete copy of the *Masnavi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi, dated 1011 (1603), (New York Public Library, Spencer Pers.ms.12)¹⁷ that bear the name of a Zu'lqadir patron, Imam Vardi Beg b. Alp Aslan Beg Zu'lqadir, provide some evidence, albeit circumstantial, of Zu'lqadir support for Shiraz manuscript production. Thus, the name of a Zu'lqadir patron finally appears in the colophons of two manuscripts, more than ten years after the Turkman tribe of Zu'lqadir had lost the governorship of Shiraz. The former is copied by a scribe named Ghiyath al-Din b. 'Abd al-Qadir b. Abi Ishaq, "probably in Ij, in the Shiraz region,"¹⁸ while the latter appears to have been produced in Ottoman Baghdad, since it stylistically belongs with a group of Ottoman manuscripts executed in that city between 1590 and 1605.¹⁹

Support for the idea of Zu'lqadir backing for the Shiraz manuscript production is also supplied by an unillustrated copy of *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* from the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul (Ayasofya ms.no. 3055), which must have entered the Ottoman treasury during the reign of Sultan Süleyman I (1520-1566), since it bears the oval imperial seal (*muhr-i Humayun*) of this sultan on its first and last folios. The opening bi-folio of the book bears two medallions that state that it was produced by the order of the library of Shah Tahmasp (*Bi rasm-i khizanat-i kutub al-sultan b. al-sultan b. al-sultan..... Abu al-Muzaffar Shah Tahmasp Bahadur Khan*), but at Shiraz and for a Zu'lqadir governor of the city.

16 Schmitz and Desai 2006, 211-12, cat. no. IV.32.
17 Schmitz 1992, 265.
18 Schmitz and Desai 2006, 211.
19 Schmitz 1992, 265-67. For Baghdad painting, see Çağman 1979; Milstein 1990; Taner 2019.



Figure 9: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 67b. Yusuf taken to the desert by his brothers (right); fol. 68a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish facing the illustration on fol. 67b (center); fol. 69a. Text page that was originally facing the illustration on fol. 67b (left), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95

Besides bearing the signature of a prolific Shiraz scribe, Muhammad Qivam *katib-i Shirazi*,²⁰ the book includes a postscript that elaborates the *raison d'être* of its production and closes with a panegyric poem for the shah (FIGURES 25-26). Here it is explained that an individual named Shah Vali Tatioghlu, who is referred to as "*ghulam-i dargah-i 'alam-panah*," had this copy prepared for the shah, because the shah had read an older copy of the same text, which he thought was rather worn (*Kuhna / Köhne*) and that it was important to have one in a better condition.²¹ Shah Vali Tatioghlu was a member of the Zu'lqadir tribe, who had served as governor of Mashhad and later Shiraz, as well as the guardian of the fourth son of Shah Tahmasp, Sultan Sulaiman Mirza.²²

Zu'lqadir Shiraz governors appear to have been deeply involved in the last stages of the power struggle between the Turkman aristocracy and the shah. The last powerful Zu'lqadir governor Ya'qub Khan revolted against the shah, but was captured and executed in 1590-91.²³ Kathryn Babayan pinpoints Ya'qub Khan's death as the event that marked the end of the Safavid civil war of 1576-90, which had begun after the death of Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524-76), and the final victory of Shah 'Abbas I over the rebellious Qizilbash.²⁴ The Zu'lqadir tribe continued to provide governors of Shiraz for a few more years: They lost the governorship of Shiraz in 1592-93, but were given it back a year later.²⁵

20 Many manuscripts carry the name Muhammad Qivam al-Shirazi, although it is impossible to assert with certainty whether any of these signatures are by the same individual or not. For a discussion of a few, see Uluç 2000, 299-302. For a list of manuscripts bearing this name, see Uluç 2000, 335-338.
21 Also see Uluç 2018, 103-5, figs. 9-10; Uluç 2022a, 613-15, figs. 10-11.
22 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 1: 216 and 316.
23 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 1: 539 and 2: 610-11.
24 Babayan 1994, 137, n. 6, and p. 142.
25 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 2: 631.

In the same year, according to Natanzi, the Shah farmed out (*muqta' namud*) the province of Fars for a three-year period for the sum of 120,000 *tuman* to a group of notables from the province itself.²⁶ Although these notables, who filled the post of governor of Shiraz were members of the Zu'lqadir tribe, they were no longer tribal leaders but *shahisivans*, whose loyalty to the shah was above their loyalty to their tribes.²⁷

The shah's policy of neutralizing the Turkman military aristocracy meant the abolition of the



FIGURE 10: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 72a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 73a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Yusuf's escape from the well (right). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

nearly independent tribal rulers like the Zu'lqadir in Fars. After less than a year of reinstatement as governors of Shiraz, the Zu'lqadir lost the governorship of Fars altogether in 1594-95.²⁸ The governorship was transferred to Allahvardi Khan, a Georgian slave (*ghulam*) who was the first commander (*qullar-agasi*) of 'Abbas I's new non-Turkman military corps (*qullar*) and was among the officers of state closest to the shah.²⁹ This marked the total collapse of the power of the Zu'lqadir, together with the other Qizilbash tribal groups.

26 Natanzi 1350/1971, 458, cited by McChesney 1981, 187.

27 Babayan 1993, 46, nn. 84, and 66-67. *Shahisivan* literally means those who love the shah. They were members of various qizilbash tribes who were ready to break away from the tribe and fight for the shah in return for an official post.

28 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 2: 674. During his recounting of the events of the year 1594-95, Iskandar Munshi comments, "In most of the provinces under the jurisdiction of the officers of the Safavid state, matters had now been settled in accordance with the shah's intent; headstrong governors had been removed from office and replaced by the shah's own protégés."

29 Iskandar Munshi 1978, 2: 631 and 690-91; Roemer 1986, 265.



FIGURE 11: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 92a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 93a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Yusuf acting as a shepherd (right). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.



FIGURE 12: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 103a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 104a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Yusuf in the vineyard built for him by Zulaikha (right). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

From the 1560s onwards Shiraz manuscripts had begun to display a degree of richness that reached its zenith in the 1580s, when a remarkable number of illustrated manuscripts incorporated all the outward trappings of sumptuous court productions. Many of the large size, sumptuously illustrated Shiraz manuscripts from this decade carried lacquer painted bindings that resembled those of the Safavid court manuscripts, while precious pigments of gold, silver, and lapis blue were employed more frequently, in more varied tones and in a purer and more intense form than they had been. Both brighter colors and pastel shades were additionally used in an extended color palette. The volumes were written on highly sized, gold-flecked paper and opened with a number of decorated bi-folios: A double-folio figurative frontispiece and an illuminated bi-folio at the beginning of text, with, sometimes, another bi-folio of illuminated medallions. Many also had double-folio figurative finispieces, while all double-folio illustrations that marked the beginning or the end of a text, or a separate section thereof, were framed by illuminated borders. Illuminated or illustrated folios often also had gold textual backgrounds, and inter-columnar illumination (*bayn al-sutur*), while their margins were decorated with golden floral scrolls or animal and vegetal motifs (*halkar*).

The most noticeable change that occurred in the illustrations of the second half of the century was seen in the picture space of the textual illustrations, which was extended first into the upper margin within a ruled frame and then into the lower margin as well. In the 1570s, the manuscripts in which both the upper and lower margins were utilized were all at least 40 cm in height. Furthermore, in the next decade, all Shiraz manuscripts included illustrations at least with the top extension, regardless of their sizes.

From the early 1590s onwards the figures in Shiraz illustrations became proportionally larger and by the second half of the 1590s the smaller figure type was no longer used at all. This was also the year when the luxury level of Shiraz manuscripts began to decline. Although luxury manuscripts of 40 cm high or more continued to be produced, by 1595 they almost exclusively consisted of copies of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi; other texts were produced on a much smaller and less luxurious scale. The creative variety of illustrations from the previous decade was also lost, and the use of precious materials, such as gold, silver, and lapis blue gradually began to cease. The textual illustrations with extended picture frames were used only in a few manuscripts with larger sizes and only in one or two instances. A second indication of the change in Shiraz practice in this early period seems to be the disappearance of multi-unit architectural depictions, which were one of the most prominent features of the Shiraz manuscripts from the 1570's onward, while the developed balance, fine details, and volumetric features of the examples dated to the 1580s could not be matched. Along with all of these changes, the luxurious manuscript production of Shiraz gradually lost its former richness.

After 1595, the quality of Shiraz manuscripts declined radically. Illuminated areas were considerably reduced, gold-flecked paper, intercolumnar illumination, and marginal gold floral scrolls and animals, all of which had been distinct features of the luxury production of the previous decade, disappeared; the amount of detail in paintings was much reduced, along with the range and intensity of colors. Gold was replaced with yellow pigments. By the end of the century, the production of large luxury manuscripts with the sumptuous characteristics of the 1580s had ceased altogether.

Such changes in color quality observed in Shiraz manuscripts belonging to the Topkapı Palace Museum are supported by the recently published findings of tests conducted on four illustrated folios from two fragmentary Shiraz *Shahnama* manuscripts from the Norma Jean Calderwood Collection at the Harvard Art Museums.³⁰ One of the analyzed folios is from a copy of the *Shahnama* dated 969

(1562), while three others are from an undated *Shahnama*, which has been attributed to circa 1575-90 on art-historical grounds.³¹ According to the test results, “the full palette of the paintings in the circa 1575-90 *Shahnama* appears somewhat limited relative to that of the 1562 manuscript...This is especially apparent with respect to the greens...The issue of natural greens versus mixtures deserves further investigation...A related question concerns the color blue. While ultramarine [from lapis lazuli] was present, the circa 1575-90 paintings also used indigo [from *indigofera* plant genus], both with orpiment to make green and alone as a blue colorant. *In the 1562 painting, only ultramarine was present; indigo was never found despite repeated analyses*” (my emphasis).³² Visual evidence from Istanbul examples also suggests a problem with the greens in Shiraz practice, since a bright, deep shade of green seen for the first time in the 1560s, no longer appears in the 1590s.³³



FIGURE 13: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 111a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 112a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Zulaikha preparing to meet Yusuf and Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

H.1084, with twelve out of its fourteen illustrations featuring intricate architectural structures, reflects the trend in manuscripts of this period toward the use of multi-unit, complex architectural depictions. It is, thus, one of the most notable examples of this trend, showcasing an increased interest in depicting elaborate building designs reminiscent of palace architecture in Shiraz and was probably one of the last manuscripts of the 1580s to be illustrated with complicated compositions and multi-unit structures. It is therefore dated to ca. 1588-95 here, due to four of its distinctive characteristics: (1) its large size (41.5x26.5 cm); (2) the small-scale of the figures with respect to the

31 Simpson 2013, 80.

32 Knipe with Eremin 2013, 127.

33 A most striking example of this bright green is a tree with its leaves in a bright deep shade of green in the illustration of Rustam rescuing Bizhan from the pit from a copy of the *Shahnama* dated 993 (1585), TSMK R. 1548, fol. 165v, see Uluç 2006, fig. 174.

30 Knipe with Eremin 2013.

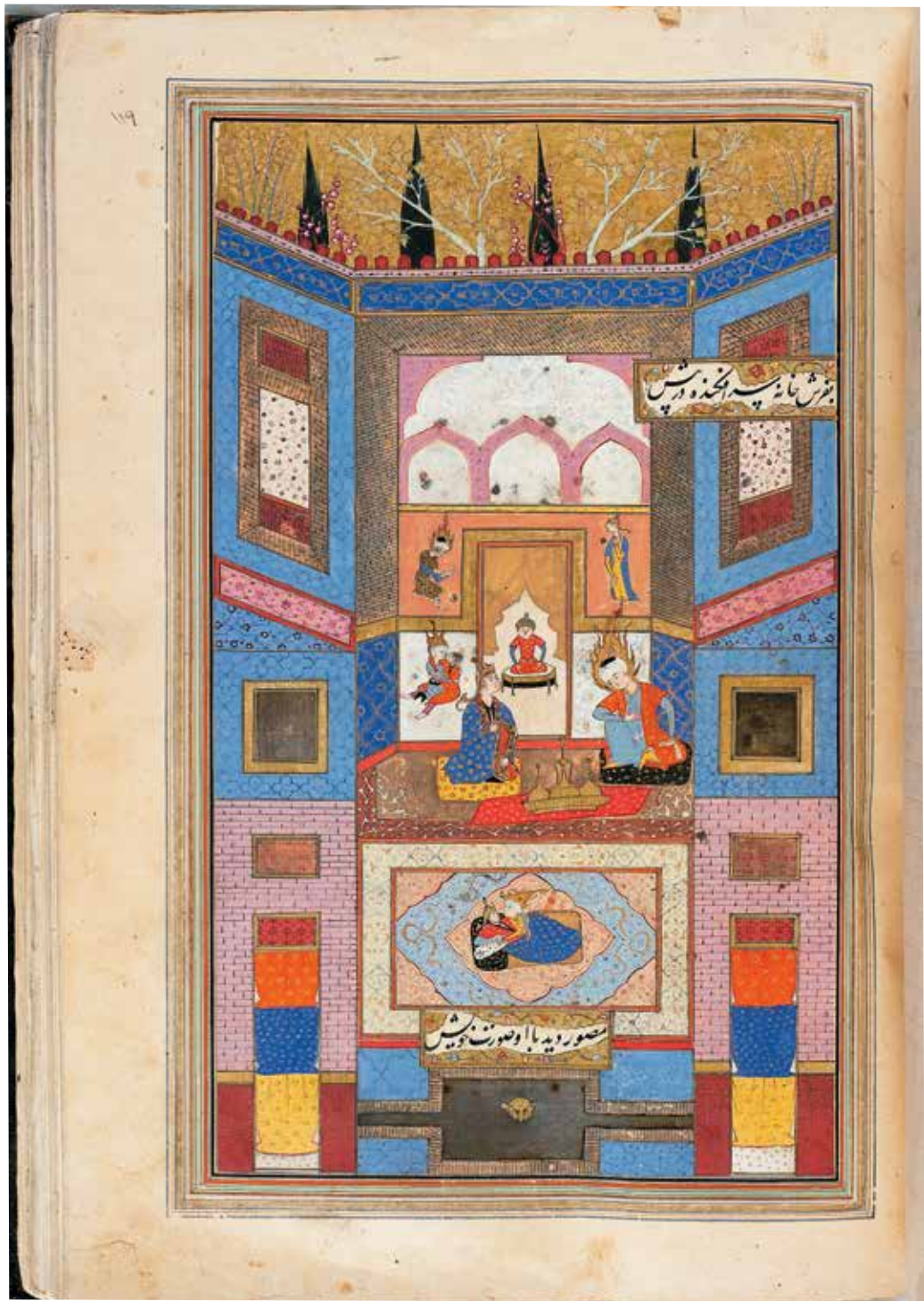


FIGURE 14-a: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 119a. The meeting of Yusuf and Zulaikha, Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.



FIGURE 14-b: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 118a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 119a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert, Jami, Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

picture space in all the images, since from the early 1590s onward the figures become proportionally larger; (3) the fact that while ten out of its fourteen illustrations have architectural depictions, they lack the detail of the earlier ones from the manuscripts of around 1585, which makes it one of the last manuscripts to be illustrated with multiple complicated compositions and multi-unit structures; (4) the use of precious pigments with gold, silver, lapis lazuli (ultramarine) as well as a bright green, together with their cheaper counterparts.



FIGURE 15: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 118a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 124a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Zulaikha attempting a suicide (right), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

The last two characteristics also suggest a completion date for the illustrations after the quality of illustrated Shiraz manuscripts had already begun to decline. A good example is the structure found in the illustration depicting “The meeting of Yusuf and Zulaikha” (H.1084, fol. 119a, FIGURE 14),³⁴ which can be compared to similar structures in two illustrations; the first depicting “The death of Khusrau Parviz” in a Shiraz copy of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi dated 993 (1585) (TSMK R.1548, fol.

34 Uluç 2006, fig. 9-10.

536b, FIGURE 22),³⁵ and the second, “Iskandar and the seven sages” in an undated Shiraz *Khamisa* of Nizami, also dated to ca. 1585 (TSMK A.3559, fol. 398b, FIGURE 24).³⁶ While the structures in H.1084 are arranged with more detail than those in the later Shiraz examples from the post-1595 period, the vibrant colors and details of the earlier depictions from the 1580s are missing. This difference is particularly striking when comparing the tile panels on the walls of the buildings.



FIGURE 16 AND 17: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 129b (16) Yusuf imprisoned by Zulaikha's husband (right); fol. 137a (17) the women of Egypt affected by Yusuf's beauty, cut their hands instead of the fruit (center); detail (left). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

A similar situation arises when comparing the structure in the illustration depicting “Zulaikha visiting Yusuf in Prison” (H.1084, fol. 149b, FIGURE 18)³⁷ with one from an illustration depicting “Zulaikha watches Yusuf explaining religious points to her ladies-in-waiting” from a copy of the *Haft Aurang* of Jami dated to ca. 1575 (TSMK H.751, fol. 178b, FIGURE 23).³⁸ A second structure in the illustration showing “The marriage of Yusuf and Zulaikha” from a second copy of the *Haft Aurang*

35 The date in the colophon of R.1548 was erroneously written as 399 rather than 993. This manuscript also supplies the names of two artisans, its scribe and its illuminator: the name of the scribe, Nizami b. Amir Jalal Kashi, is in the colophon and that of the illuminator, Qasim ‘Ali Shirazi, on the border of the heading on fol. 12v. Unfortunately, no other known manuscript mentions either of them. Karatay 1961, no. 363; For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 484-85

36 Karatay 1961, no. 432; İnal 1982; Stchoukine 1977, 130-33. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 493-95

37 Uluç 2006, fig. 250.

38 Canby – Thompson 2003, 45, fig. 2.18; Uluç 2006, fig. 204-5. Karatay 1961, no. 461. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 438-39.



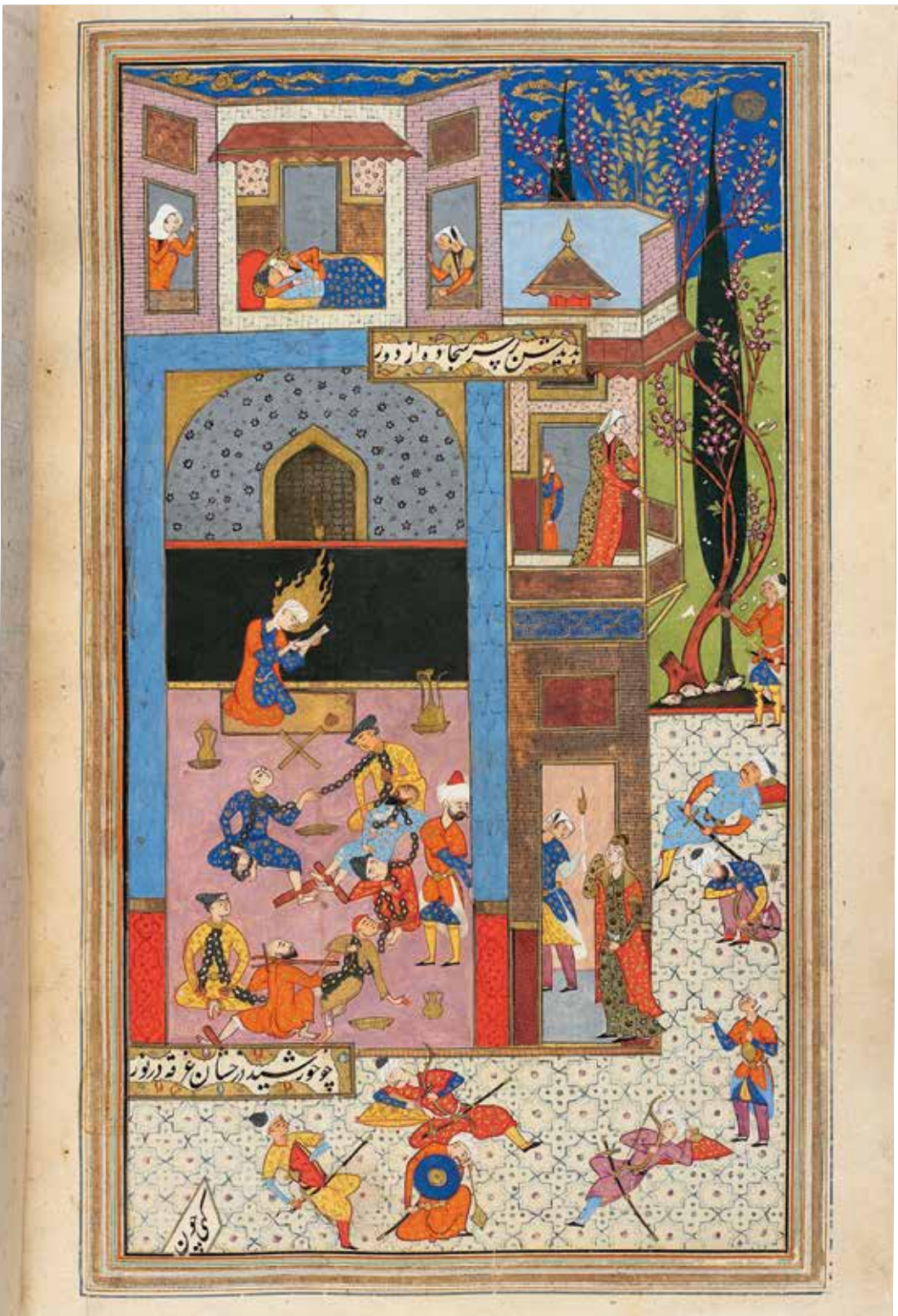
FIGURE 18: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 149b. Zulaikha visits Yusuf at prison (next page); details of the same (above), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

of Jami dated to ca. 1585 (London, British Library, Or.4122, fol. 155b),³⁹ more closely resembles the one from H.1084. Related features found in both buildings are the high-ceilinged main interior spaces with a second story above them and the double storied side walls with an upper terrace. Each painting shows sleeping guards in the paved area just outside the pavilion. Although the figures are well-positioned in each spatial unit in the H.1084 painting as well, it lacks the finer detail of the earlier one. In addition, the tile panels on the walls of the buildings, once again, showcase the particularly striking difference between the two images.

Despite these features, it seems more likely that H.1084 was begun to be illustrated around 1590 rather than at a post-1590 date. In addition to the intricate architectural depictions in the manuscript, the proportionately small figures, which are not seen after 1590, support this conclusion. A second characteristic that the manuscript displays, namely the use of both precious pigments and their cheaper counterparts in each illustration also suggest that it was begun to be illustrated at a time when these colors were still in use in the Shiraz workshops even though the simultaneous use of dull colors point to a post-1590 date. Almost all illustrations of the manuscript have certain details colored in the more precious pigments, while others lack them. In the depiction of “Zulaikha visiting Yusuf in prison” (folio 149b), for example, the brightness of both the greens used for the garden on the right and the lapis blue of the sky are remnants of the previous decade, while the blues used in the pavilion representing Yusuf’s prison are much duller. The change in blue tones is most strikingly seen in the depiction of “Zulaikha’s attendants cutting their hands instead of fruit, as they admire Yusuf,” where Yusuf’s robe, with its carelessly depicted pattern, is in a dull light blue tone instead of the bright and dark lapis lazuli blue (H. 1084, fol. 137a).⁴⁰

³⁹ Uluç 2006, fig. 248. Rieu 1879-95, supp. 189; Stchoukine 1959, 125, pls. XLIX-LI; Titley 1977, cat. no. 214. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 496-97.

⁴⁰ Uluç 2006, fig. 250; Uluç 2014, 416, fig. 30.



The overall decoration program of H.1084 clearly shows that it was planned to be an extremely richly decorated volume, before the support for illustrated manuscripts disappeared in Shiraz. The text pages opposite all of the thirteen textual illustrations as well as the illuminated heading of the manuscript were decorated with golden textual backgrounds and intercolumnar illumination, which had been a distinct feature of the luxury production of the previous decade (for example fols. 9b-11a, and 102b-104a).

In addition, even some of the text pages were decorated with golden textual backgrounds, intercolumnar illumination, and gold floral *khatai* (a stylized lotus motif stemming from Chinese models) scrolls in the margins. All of this indicates that the decoration level of this copy was planned at the highest level, but it was completed much more modestly due to the Safavid civil war and the post-1590 administrative changes of Shah Abbas.



FIGURE 19: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 160b. Yusuf interpreting the Pharaoh's dream. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

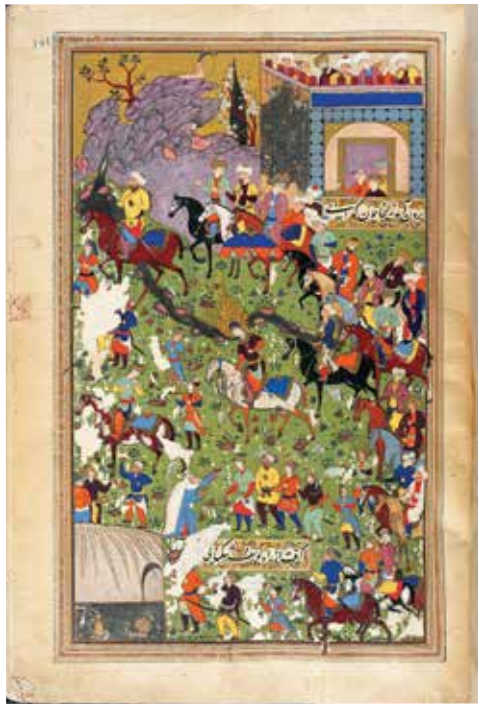


FIGURE 20: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 171a. Zulaikha as an old woman asks Yusuf for a cure for her blindness. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

Two important illustrations of the manuscript that refer back to a string of earlier court examples form a further distinguishing characteristic that showcase the significance of this copy.⁴¹ They demonstrate that during the 1580s, Shiraz manuscripts used not only the compositions that were seen in the Safavid court styles but also those from the court styles of earlier dynasties.

41 İnal 1979, figs. 2 and 3; Uluç 2006, figs. 298 and 307-09; Uluç 2014, 406-07, figs. 10-11.

The first of these depicts the *Mi'raj* of the Prophet Muhammad over the Ka'ba enclosure (fol. 11a, FIGURE 8).⁴² It is a combination of the *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes, in which the upper half of the illustration shows the prophet Muhammad on his steed, Buraq, a mythical winged beast with a human head, surrounded by flying angels. They are moving through the clouds towards Archangel Gabriel, who stands in front of them, as in typical *Mi'raj* (ascension) scenes. The lower half of the image shows the Ka'ba enclosure. This combination was not new: it had been used in a number of manuscripts in earlier high-court styles. Its earliest extant rendition is found in an anthology

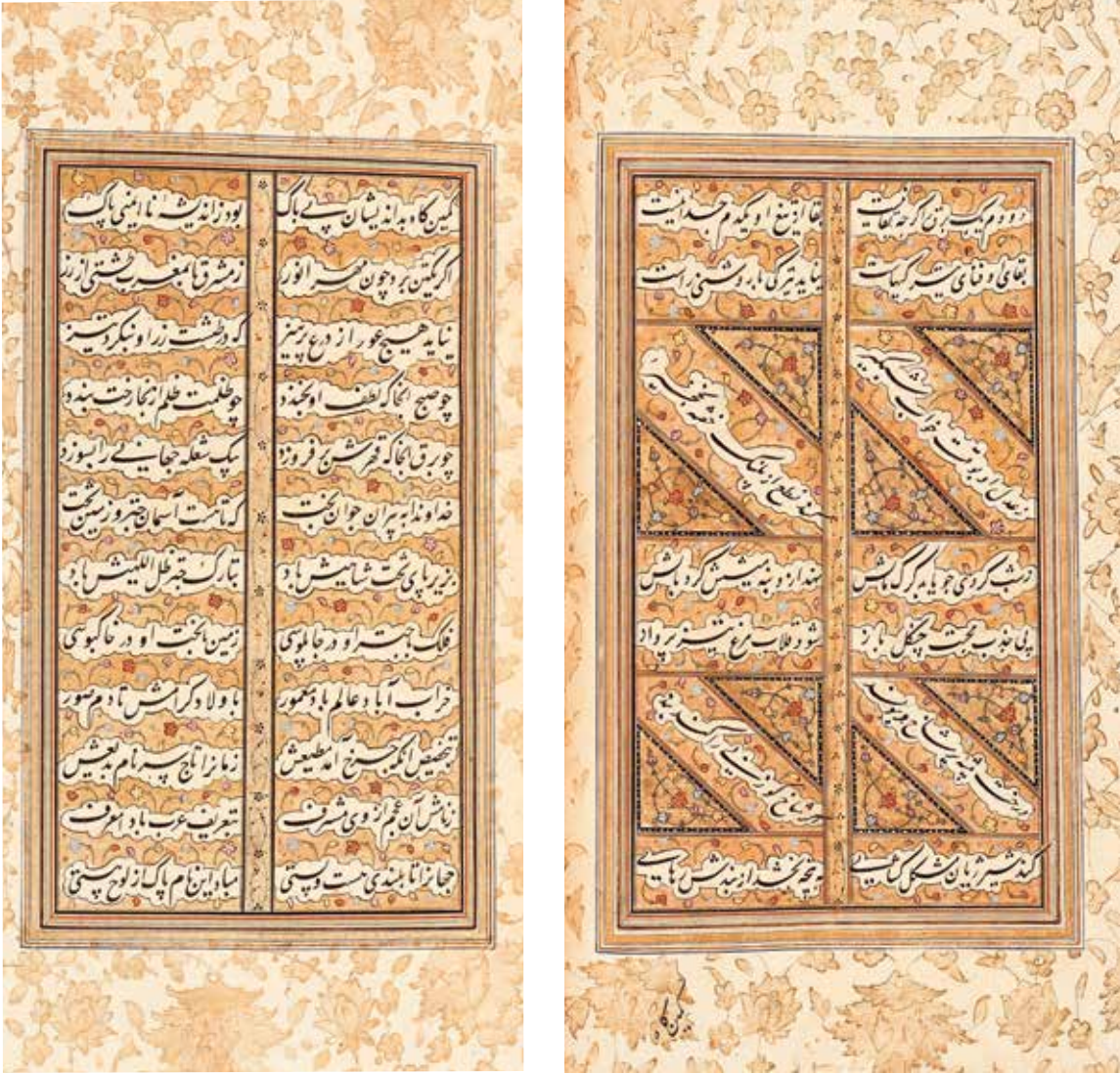


FIGURE 21: TSMK H. 1084, fols. 16b-17a. Decorated bi-folio of text. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

42 İnal 1976-77, fig. 14; İnal 1979, fig. 2; Uluç 2006, fig. 298; Uluç 2014, 406, fig. 10. For images of the *Mi'raj* of the prophet Muhammad, see Gruber 2005; Gruber 2008.



FIGURE 22: TSMK R.1548, fol. 536b. The death of Khusrau Parviz. Firdausi, *Shahnama*, Shiraz, 993, ca. 1585.

dated 813-14 (1410-11) (London, British Library, Add.27261, fol. 6r),⁴³ made for the Timurid prince Iskandar Mirza, while he was the governor of Shiraz (1410-14). However, after his 1414 rebellion against his uncle, the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (r.1405-47), he was eliminated, while the artists from the ateliers he supported as well as the manuscripts that he had commissioned were all moved to the Timurid capital Herat. Since Iskandar Mirza had been the most important patron of manuscripts of his time, and the manuscripts he commissioned were the most sumptuous, they became models to be emulated by the Herat artists. Thus, the next manuscript that has a similar combination of *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes is a copy of the *Khamisa* of Nizami (TSMK H.761, fol. 4v).⁴⁴ The manuscript's two colophons (fols. 200a and 309a) dated 866 (1461) and 881 (1476) indicate that it was planned and completed largely at an earlier stage in Herat, possibly during the reign of the Timurid sultan Shahrukh, but then belonged to the library of the two princely Turkman governors of Shiraz. It was brought back to Shiraz by the first, the Qaraqoyunlu prince Pir Budaq (d. 1467) after the brief Qaraqoyunlu occupation of Herat in 1458.⁴⁵ It reached

its final stage under the Aqqoyunlu prince Khalil Sultan (d. 1578), who must have taken over Pir Budaq's manuscript production workshop and library (*kitabkhana*) in Shiraz, when he became the city's next princely governor, after its Aqqoyunlu takeover. The third combination of *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes is in the Herat tradition of the reign of the Timurid sultan Husain Mirza (r. 1469-1506) practiced by the venerated court artist, Bihzad, and is found in the Herat-based *Khamisa* of Nizami dated 900 (1494-95) (London, British Library, Or.6810, fol. 5v).⁴⁶ The last one is on a detached folio in the Keir collection.⁴⁷ It was extracted from the celebrated royal copy of the *Khamisa* of Nizami associated with the Aqqoyunlu ruler Ya'qub Beg (r. 1478-90), which has two colophons (fols. 148r and 316r) dated 880 (1475-76) and 886 (1481) as well as a long postscript (fols. 316v-317r) added to the work during the reign of the Safavid shah, Isma'il I (r. 1501-23) (TSMK

H.762).⁴⁸ The Keir folio of the *Mir'aj* records the date 910 (1505) on a small building at the lower left of the picture frame, showing that it belongs to the final phase of the manuscript's production.



FIGURE 23: TSMK H.752, fol. 178b. Zulaikha watches Yusuf explaining religious points to her ladies-in-waiting. Jami, *Haft Aurang*, Yusuf ile Züleyha'nın gerdek gecesi, Shiraz, ca. 1575.

This iconographical line thus connects the early Timurid court of Iskandar Sultan (1510-14) at Shiraz, the Timurid courts of Shahrukh (r.1405-47) and Sultan Husain at Herat (r. 1469-1501), the Qaraqoyunlu court of Pir Budaq (d. 1467) at Shiraz, the Aqqoyunlu courts of Khalil Sultan (1471-78) and Sultan Ya'qub (r. 1478-90) at Shiraz and Tabriz, the Safavid court of Shah Isma'il I (r. 1501-23) at Tabriz, and finally the provincial manuscript production center of Shiraz under the governorship of the Zu'lqadir tribe (1503-90). Three of the earlier four manuscripts had been owned by governors of Shiraz, at a time when the manuscripts produced in Shiraz were on a royal level. The appearance of a similar image in a manuscript produced at Shiraz in the late 1580s supports the hypothesis that luxury manuscripts from Shiraz emulated earlier royal models.

Although the general compositional elements of the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* illustration of the combined *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes link it to earlier illustrations found in court manuscripts, some of its specific features are highly original. The *Mi'raj* portion of the illustration contains representations of four planets commonly found in copies of the *'Aja'ib al-makhluqat* of Qazvini (d. 1283-4), presumably to represent the levels of the heavens to which the prophet Mohammad rose. The planet Mars is represented by a four-armed male figure holding a sword, a severed head, a rabbit, and a dish full of flames; he stands in front of an empty seat on the top left corner of the picture frame. The planet Venus is represented by a female figure playing a harp, who is seated near the prophet Mohammad and Buraq. The planet Jupiter is represented by a male figure, who sits reading towards the bottom left, and the moon is represented by a female face on the bottom right.

43 Titley 1977, cat. no. 98; Uluç 2006, 396, fig. 299.

44 Karatay 1961, no. 410; Çağman – Tanındı 1979, cat. no. 37; Brend 2003, 107; London 2005, 251, cat. no. 215; Roxburgh 2014, 212; Uluç 2000a, fig. 18; Uluç 2006, 397, fig. 300.

45 Lentz – Lowry 1989, 139.

46 Gray 1961, 115-23; Titley 1977, cat. no. 319; Stchoukine 1954, 78-81, pl. LXIX; Lukens-Swietochowski 1979, 199, fig. 110, pl. LXII; Lentz – Lowry 1989, cat. no. 140. One of its illustrations contain the date 900 (1494-95) and many carry attributions to the Timurid painter Bihzad.

47 Robinson et al. 1976, 178, cat. no. III.207, pl. 19; Sims et al. 2002, fig. 66.

48 The postscript added during the Safavid period summarizes the chain of royal patrons for the manuscript, beginning with the Timurid prince Babur and continuing with the Qaraqoyunlu prince Pir Budaq and Aqqoyunlu prince Halil Sultan, who initiated the illustration of the manuscript and most probably moved this valuable work to the Aqqoyunlu palace in Tabriz when he briefly became the ruler in 1478. It continues with his brother Yakub Beg, who succeeded him as the Aqqoyunlu ruler (r. 1479-92), to be finally be presented to Shah Ismail I. For this important manuscript, see Karatay 1961, no. 412; Stchoukine 1966, 3-16; Stchoukine 1977, 71-81, ms. no. XIII; Çağman 1971; Çağman – Tanındı 1979, cat. no. 45; Çağman – Tanındı 1986, nos. 71-73; Robinson et al. 1976, 178, cat. no. III.207; Robinson 1976, 242; Dickson – Welch 1981, 1: 17; Lentz – Lowry 1989, 244-45; Soucek *Elr*; Soucek 1990, 58; Tanındı 2003, 162, figs. 6.2-6.3; Tanındı 2009, 259-60; Uluç 2006, 58-61; Uluç 2006a, 58-61; Rettig 2011, 243-244; Roxburgh 2014, 175-76. For the translation of the postscript, see Thackston 1989, 333-34; Thackston 2001, 50.

The second illustration from the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* with distinct links to earlier court paintings depicts “Yusuf being taken to the desert by his brothers” (H.1084, fol. 67b, **FIGURE 9**).⁴⁹ Its original model was from the Herat school of Bihzad, which is linked to Shiraz in the 1580s through two intermediary manuscripts: the celebrated *Shahnama* of Firdausi with a dedicatory page bearing the name of and praises to Shah Tahmasp b. Isma’il, the second Safavid shah (r. 1524-76), commonly known as the *Shahnama-i Shahi* or the *Tahmasp Shahnama*,⁵⁰ and the *Haft Aurang* of Jami, which was produced for Shah Tahmasp’s nephew, Sultan Ibrahim Mirza b. Bahram Mirza (d. 1577), while he was the governor of Mashhad (1556-65).⁵¹ The first Herat-based composition is from the famous London *Khamsa* of Nizami dated 900 (1494-95), showing “Iskandar visiting a hermit” (London, British Library, Or.6810, fol. 273r).⁵² The composition from the *Tahmasp Shahnama* depicts “Haftvad and the worm,” and is dated 943 (1537) (fol. 521v).⁵³ The scene from Ibrahim Mirza’s *Haft Aurang*, dated 963-72 (1556-65), depicts “Zulaikha’s arrival in Egypt” (Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art 46.12, fol. 100v).⁵⁴ Although the Shiraz example is stylistically different, all these examples resemble each other in composition, especially those from the *Tahmasp Shahnama* and the Shiraz Jami. Each represents a city in the background and a group of people outside the city, in an almost separate pocket of space in the foreground.⁵⁵ These two illustrations from the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* of c. 1585-90, perhaps more than any others, show the efforts the Shiraz workshops made to maintain the earlier courtly traditions of book production.



FIGURE 24: TSMK A.3559, fol. 398b. Iskandar and the seven sages. Nizami, *Khamsa*, ca. 1585.

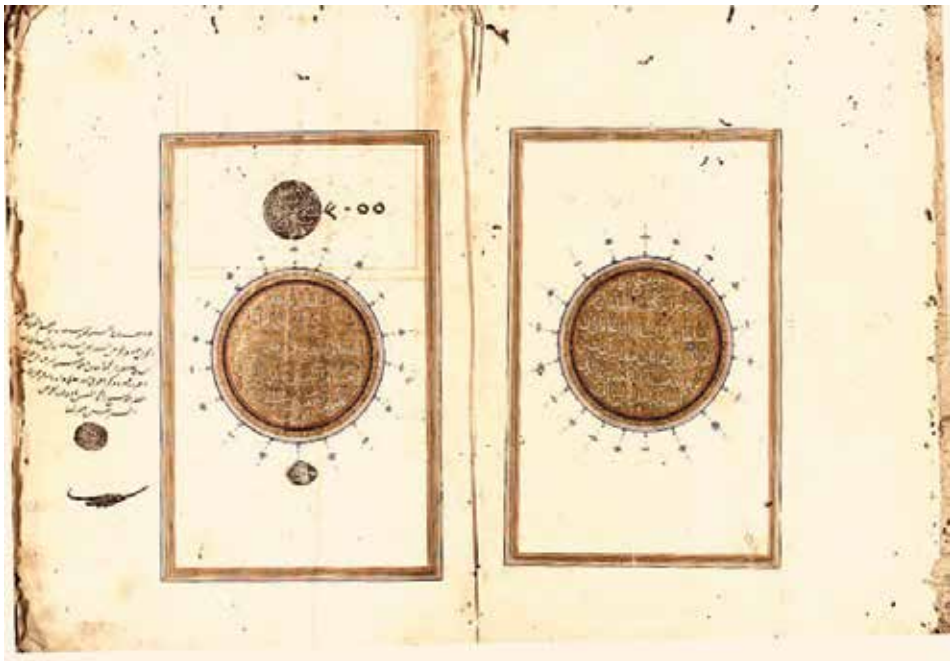


FIGURE 25 AND 26: Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library Ayasofya 3055, fols. 1b-2a (above) colophon (below). *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, copied by Muhammad Qivam katib-i Shirazi, ca. 1570.

49 İnal 1979, fig. 3; Uluç 2006, fig. 307; Uluç 2014, 407, fig. 12.
50 This renowned manuscript is today dispersed and its 258 illustrations are preserved in various collections around the world. They are generally attributed to the years between 1522 and 1540, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 3-4. For the most recent summary of the literature on the *Shah Tahmasp Shahnama* and the collections where the individual paintings are found see, Canby 2014, 14-18. Also see Rüstem 2012, for all previous secondary references.
51 Simpson 1997, 28-34 and app. A.1.14, pp. 344-45.
52 Lentz – Lowry 1989, 250, cat. no. 140; Sims et al. 2002, fig. 117.
53 Dickson – Welch 1981, 1: color pl. 14, 2: pl. 218; S.C. Welch 1979, 98-101, pl. 31; Canby 2014, 280.
54 Stchoukine 1959, pl. XLII; Canby 1990, 102, fig. 3; Simpson 1997, 118-21.
55 A copy of the same *Tahmasp Shahnama* illustration of “Haftvad and the worm” (fol. 521v) was sold at Sotheby’s, see Sotheby’s sale catalogue, London, 12 October, 1990, lot 148. It is impossible to place its production securely in Shiraz since it is on a detached page and is not available for examination, but it appears to be in the Shiraz style of the 1580s.

The production of luxury manuscripts ceased after the end of Zu’lqadir control in Shiraz, during the reign of Shah ‘Abbas I (r. 1588-1629).⁵⁶ The Shah’s policy of neutralizing the Turkman military aristocracy meant the abolition of the nearly independent tribal rulers like the Zu’lqadir in Fars. In 1595, the governorship of the city was given to Allahvardi Khan, a Georgian slave (*ghulam*), who had risen to high office under royal protection, functioning in proximity to and for the shah, rather than as a governor residing in his province, the model followed by Shiraz’s previous Zu’lqadir governors. This major difference in status can be seen in the references to Shiraz in the contemporary Safavid chronicles, which only mention Shiraz under Zu’lqadir rule whenever it falls within the royal orbit, a relatively rare occurrence. The activities of Allahvardi Khan, however, are much more connected to those of the shah and as a result are mentioned more prominently in the chronicles that record the activities at the royal court of Isfahan.

The close parallel between the gradual decrease of the luxury book production in Shiraz and the gradual loss of power of the Zū’lqadir tribe suggests that they were the principal supporters of this enterprise, even though their names do not appear in the colophons of Shiraz manuscripts.⁵⁷ The sudden appearance of a Zu’lqadir name as the patron of two illustrated manuscripts,⁵⁸ the colophons of which bear dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century, when members of the tribe were no longer in control of the Fars region, as well as the postscript of a third, unillustrated manuscript declaring that a Zu’lqadir Shiraz governor had it produced for Shah Tahmasp further support the hypothesis that the Zu’lqadir governors kept their names off the colophons of manuscripts on purpose during their rule even though they provided the necessary financial backing.⁵⁹

The copy of the *Yusuf and Zulaikha* of Jami from the Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.1084 is an important volume from the end of the Zu’lqadir rule, showcasing the difference created by the change of gubernatorial power for the luxury manuscript production of Shiraz.

56 See Uluç 2006, 52-55; Uluç 2018, 99-101.

57 Uluç 2006, 463-67; Uluç 2018, 102-08.

58 These are an illustrated copy of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi dated *Rajab* 1011 (December 1602) (Rampur, Raza Library P.39a1 [M.K./491]), see Schmitz – Desai 2006, 211-12, cat. no. IV.32; and an incomplete, illustrated copy of the *Masnavi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi, dated 1011 (1603), (New York Public Library, Spencer Pers.ms.12), see Schmitz 1992, 265.

59 This is an unillustrated copy of the *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya ms.no. 3055), see Uluç 2018, 104-5, figs. 9-10; Uluç 2022, 613-15, figs. 10-11.

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