

ARBA'ŪN ḤADĪS

DATED 964 (1557)

A collection of the Arabic Arba'ūn Ḥadīs, or Forty Traditions, of Muḥammad, with the paraphrase into Persian quatrains composed by Jāmī in 886 (1481)

SUBJECT. For other copies of this well-known work see Ethé, *India Office Catalogue*, i, col. 762, no. 1357 (2), and no. 172 above.

MEASUREMENTS, ETC. 17.8 × 11.4 cm.; the written surface measures 12.5 × 6.8 cm.; 3 lines of large script between panels of 4 lines of small oblique script; 9 folios.

WRITING AND PAPER. The writing on each page consists of three lines of Arabic text in large horizontal *Nasta'liq* and four of Persian paraphrase in small and elegant oblique *Nasta'liq*. The paper, with gold-sprinkled panels, is polished and set within gold-sprinkled margins.

BINDING. The outside of the plum-coloured leather cover has a central medallion with two pendants and corners containing a stamped floral design; the more ornate inside cover is of plum-coloured leather with a central medallion of octagonal outline and two pendants and corners ornamented in brown leather lacework on a lapis ground. The edges of the cover are repaired with tooled red leather.

DATE AND SCRIBE. This copy was made at Mashhad by the famous scribe Shāh Maḥmūd of Nishapur (for whom see nos. 179 and 180 above) in 964 (1557):

حرره العبد المذنب شاه محمود النساپوري غفر الله ذنوبه بمشهد مقدسه منوره في سنه ٩٦٤

ILLUMINATION AND ILLUSTRATION. On fol. 1 is a rosette, with pendants, executed in lapis with red and black fleurons, possibly copying work of the Timurid period. In the centre of the rosette, which had been left blank, a former owner has set a highly involved seal comprising the *Bismillah* and his own name, Shams al-'Ulā. On fol. 9b is a similar rosette with the same seal. On fol. 1b is an illuminated heading in

lapis and gold with floral ornament bearing blue and a few red flowers; at the heart of the blue ones being most delicately drawn and painted female heads.

A single illustration, which must be a later insertion, appears on fol. 2 in the shape of a fanciful portrait of Jāmī, clad like a Ṣūfī and wearing the characteristic head-dress of the Order, seated in a meditative attitude beneath a tree. This, drawn in the style of the middle 17th century, is in outline, with pale washes of colour and touches of gold.

SEALS AND INSCRIPTIONS. On the first and last pages is the seal of one Shams al-'Ulā. Also, a seal in margin of fol. 1a, dated 1180 (1767), and one adjoining colophon, dated 991 (1583).

[E. B. and B. W. R.]