

FOUR MAṢNAVĪS OF JĀMĪ

DATED 1543-68

Four of the maṣnavī poems comprising the Haft Aurang of Jāmī

SUBJECT AND ARRANGEMENT. This manuscript, illuminated for and formerly in the library of Sulṭān 'Abd al-'Azīz Bahādur Khān, Shaibanid ruler of Bukhara, begins on fol. 1b with the preface to the *Haft Aurang* in Persian prose wherein are named the seven *maṣnavī* poems composing the collection, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, *Salāmān u Absāl*, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥrār*, *Subḥat al-Abrār*, *Yūsuf u Zulaikhā*, *Lailā u Majnūn*, and *Khīrad-nāmah i Sikandarī*. Fol. 2. *Silsilat al-Zahab*. Fol. 54. *Subḥat al-Abrār*. Fol. 91. *Lailā u Majnūn*. Fol. 139. *Khīrad-nāmah i Sikandarī*.

MEASUREMENTS, ETC. 21.8 × 14.0 cm.; the written surface measures 16.0 × 9.2 cm.; 4 cols. of 22 lines; 165 folios.

WRITING AND PAPER. The writing is a delicate *Nasta'liq* enclosed within gold and blue rulings. The paper is of an ivory tone, semi-polished and thin but firm; the fore-edge is cut.

BINDING. The outside of the clumsily repaired *sūkhṭah* cover of dark brown, almost black, leather has a stamped central panel with floral ornament and stylized Chinese cloud forms on a gilt ground surrounded by a stamped panelled border ornamented with floral trails; the inside is of printed paper.

DATES AND SCRIBES. The first poem was copied by Mīr Ḥusain al-Kātib al-Khāqānī al-Ḥusainī in 950 (1543-4)—so the date stands at present, but it appears that the middle digit has been erased, and a red dot added at the end; the original date was probably 975 (1568); the two next by Muḥammad 'Alī ibn al-Maḥmūd al-Munajjim al-Khāqānī in 974 (1567); the last by Khvājah Jān al-Kātib in 954 (1547), at Bukhara.

ILLUMINATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS. On foll. 1b-2 is a splendid double-page frontispiece illuminated in the Timurid style in gold and blue within black borders with floral ornament, red flowers, and fleurons, containing the commencement of the *Silsilat al-Zahab*; on fol. 54b, at the head of the *Subḥat al-Abrār*, is a small *sarlah* of similar style with a blank gold central cartouche; on fol. 91b is a similar small *sarlah* to *Lailā u Majnūn*; on fol. 139b a similar *sarlah*, to the *Khīrad-nāmah i Sikandarī*, embodying the title of the work in a red script on a gold ground ornamented with blue arabesques.¹

SEALS AND INSCRIPTIONS. On fols. 53 and 54 is the seal of one Ibrāhīm 'Alī dated 1245 (1829-30).
[A. J. A. and B. W. R.]