

MATHNAVĪ-YI MA'NAVĪ

AUTHOR. Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī (d. A.H. 672/A.D. 1273).

TITLE. CONTENTS. *Mathnavī-yi ma'navī*, the famous Persian mystical poem. Text with some old variants:

بشنو این نی چون حکایت میکند . . .

در قییم مرد وزن نالیده اند . . .

Books begin: I—f. 3a; II—f. 51b; III—f. 94b; IV—f. 152b; V—f. 195b; VI—f. 249b. F. 306b: a poem by Sulṭān Valad, son of Jalāl al-dīn:

مدتی زین مثنوی چون والد

شد خمش گفتش ولد کای زنده دم

SIZE. FOLIOS. 18 × 12 cm.; written surface 13 × 8 cm.; in 4 columns; 23 lines; 308 folios.

BINDING. Red leather, centre panel of black velvet with heavy white silk embroidery within an oval border of twisted silver embroidered thread. Inside, pink paper with gold line lattice work. The manuscript is enclosed in a white silk case, embroidered in colours with floral and other patterns, and with dark cord borders and holder. On the flap is an inscription in red: *Yā Haḍrat Maulānā*.

SCRIPT. PAPER. Very small naskh. Firm thin paper.

SCRIBE. DATE. 'Ubayd b. Khidr al-Maulavī. A.H. 936/A.D. 1529–30.

PROVENANCE. On f. 2a a seal in the shape of a Maulavī bonnet with a turban.

خادم این مثنوی شریف کمتر [ین] درویشان شیخ محمد سعید المولوی

'The servant [*sic*] of this honourable Mathnavī, the least of the dervishes Shaykh Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Maulavī', which suggests that the manuscript was connected with some Maulavī centre.

ILLUMINATION. Opens with two large black circles on entirely gilt pages; inside the circles are stars ✨ with the name of *Allāh* inscribed in the centre. First two pages of each Book are richly decorated, having blue headings with delicate gold designs, and borders filled with varied floral and geometrical ornament, containing a considerable amount of red, on gold and light-blue ground. The margins throughout are entirely gilt, with gold cloud forms in the text. Each Book is followed by a page or more of unusual black, gold, and colour designs: ff. 50b–51a: *یا فتاح الله*; ff. 93b–94a and 151b–152a faint floral motifs in gold; ff. 193b–194b: two black oval panels with floral designs in gold; ff. 246a–247a: floral designs in gold and pink; f. 308: designs in faint gold flowers; f. 309a: oval panel left in blank. The ornament throughout is wholly Turkish in character.