Dost-Muhammad

Preface to the Bahram Mirza Album

Dost-Muhammad (fl. 938–72/1531–64) of Gawashwan, a village near Herat, prepared in 951/1544 for Bahram Mirza (1517–1549), brother of the Safavid Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524–76) and patron of the arts, an album of calligraphic specimens and paintings that is now in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi (H.2154). In the florid preface he wrote for the album he traces the history of calligraphy, master-pupil relationships in the calligraphic art, the history of painting and painters, and inventories the scribes and artists who were employed in Shah Tahmasp's studio.

Dost-Muhammad's "Preface," Qazi Ahmad's *Gulistan-i hunar* (Garden of art) and Mustafa Ali's *Manaqib-i hunarwaran* (Virtues of artists) are the main sixteenth-century sources for the history of the arts of the book.[1]

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The noblest rescript with which the scribes of the workshop of prayer adorn the album of composition and novelty, and the most subtle picture with which the depictors of the gallery of intrinsic meaning decorate the assemblies of creativity and invention, is praise of the Creator, by whose pen are scriven sublime letters and exalted forms. In accordance with the dictum, "The pen dried up with what would be until Doomsday,"[2] the coalesced forms and dispersed shapes of the archetypes were hidden in the recesses of the unseen in accordance with the dictum, "I was a hidden treasure." Then, in accordance with the words, "I wanted to be known, so I created creation in order to be known,"[3] he snatched with the fingers of destiny the veil of non-existence from the countenance of being, and with the hand of mercy and the pen, which was "the first thing God created,"[4] he painted [them] masterfully on the canvas of being. **[9a]** [Praise to] the Maker who made the totality of human form, which includes the forms and intrinsic

[1]Qazi Ahmad's *Gulistan-i hunar* has been translated into English by Minorsky as *Calligraphers and Painters*, Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers (Washington: Smithsonian, 1959); an edition of the Persian text, more recent than the translation, is by Ahmad Suhayli-Khwansari (Tehran: Zar, 1352); Mustafa Ali, *Manaqib-i hunarwaran*, ed. in Ottoman Turkish by Ibnül-Emin Mahmud Kemal. Türk Tarih Encümeni Külliyatı, 9 (Istanbul: Matba'a-i Amira, 1926).

[2]For the *ḥadīth*, "*Jaffa 'l-qalam...*," see Badī'uzzamān Furūzānfarr, *Aḥādīth al-mathnawī* (Tehran: Dānishgāh, 1334), p. 38 (97).

[3]The well-known *ḥadīth qudsī*, "*Kuntu kanzan makhfīyan...*"

[4]A famous "primordial" *ḥadīth*, "*Awwalu mā khalaqa...*"

meanings of the next world, in the workshop called "he created Adam in his form" on the page of creation in the most beautiful way, and cleansed from the tablet of his being the dust of nonexistence with the polish of favor; and in the heights indicated by the words, "Assume the characteristics of God," he made the mirror of creation a locus of manifestation for names and traces. [Praise to] the Omnipotent who adorned the layers of the heavenly seven, which in inimitability in the manner of seven copies—nay, in organization and systematization they are exemplars of Koranic pages—with verses of beautiful stars and the tenth and fifth of the sun and moon, and made rulings with lines of rays, and with the white ink of dawn and the vermilion of sunset placed a prototype of the four tablets on the azure page of the celest. Sometimes **[9b]** he makes black pens from the eyelashes of the houris and draws the tresses of beauties on the face of day from the inkpot of night, and sometimes he makes a pen of sunrays and moonbeams and draws the shapes of beauties with the blood of lovers on the canvas of loveliness. Praise God! What am I saying? Where the perfect swiftness of creation and destiny is, what room is there for the depiction of the pen or the pen of depiction? Where the workshop of creating bodies and forms according to the words, "and our order is but one, like the twinkling of an eye,"[5] is too narrow for the laborers of the upper and lower worlds, how can there be room for the design or mixing of water and color? Jesus the Abstract, without the aid or help of the pen, was singled out by the words, "That is Jesus, son of Mary,"[6] and in the shell of being, by the limpidity of the breeze of the words "I breathed into him of my breath,"[7] drank the water of life. And the pearl of existence, Adam the Pure, without [nurturing] shell, by aid of the words "I am going to place on the earth a vicegerent,"[8] emerged from the ocean of nonexistence: "For God Jesus is like unto Adam: He created him from dust and said to him, 'Be!,' and he was."

Hail to the Creator who, without assistance,
clothed being with existence by the
command "Be!"
Neither is his destining in need of
machination nor is his depiction dependent
upon the pen.
He quickened thousands of charming forms:
neither did he use a magic incantation nor
did he mix colors.
He clothed each one in a color, a color of
God's tincture, without hesitation.
He adorned one beautifully with mole and
down: a whole worldful [of people] fell into
error on account of its beauty.
To another he gave a seditious eye that
would shed blood with blood-dripping
dagger [eyelashes]
Around the lips of another he drew a novel
design, by means of which animating down
souls were pawned.
For yet another he innovated a fascinating
stature, casting calamity into the heart from
the world above....
If a form is not worthy of astonishment, it
is not worth a touch of the brush.
Why are you perplexed by this master
painting when you know that it is necessary
to amend your conduct?
If conduct is not pure and charming in
essence, what is the use of a beautiful form?
[If] in life the form of right conduct has been
lost, what use is there for humankind to
have been given a beautiful form?
When a man is ignorant in his being, he
cannot be called human simply because of
his form.
O God, I am that handful of dust that
previously was void of my form and
conduct.
Since you gave me human form first, make
me share intrinsically in humanity.
Especially he who is the final goal of the
world: the final goal of the creative fiat is
he.
In form he perfected Joseph's beauty; in
conduct he quickens Gabriel's soul.

[5]Koran 54:50.
[6]Koran 19:34.
[7]Koran 15:29, 38:72.
[8]Koran 2:30.

That perfect human, the outline of whose noble-fruited tree was the first form to appear from the pure light of existence on **[10a]** the page of being, and whose sapling was watered by mercy and beauty, from each twig of which a thousand flowers of saintliness and guidance blossom, the beautiful one, in witnessing whose beauty admirers of Joseph's countenance cry out alas and alack in astonishment and perplexity.

By Joseph was much agony created, but this beauty has stirred up a different tumult.

The chain of his musk-scented locks has placed shackles of the Night of Power around the sun, and his God-seeing eye has opened the gates of paradise to his community through intercession :

The eternal painter who drew that black line,
O Lord, what marvelous shapes are in his pen!

The unlettered one who has drawn, without aid of the pen, a line of abrogation through a thousand books—the unread one who, without the assistance of pen and ink, has changed the laws and rules of the past through his legislation of firm root and exalted branch.

Through knowledge he changed the precepts of religions; through his own action he made the law.
He had no script apparent, but he was favored by instruction from the Preserved Tablet.
However, on his finger he had a [fingernail] like a pen, sharpened to abrogate religions.
Yea, his tall stature was the reed that was the first stroke of the pen of fate.
In the garden of majesty, by God's favor, no sapling ever grew more swiftly than he.
The world was gladdened by the fruit of his beneficence while yet his palm was far from the garden of existence.
Had he not been given a prophetic robe of honor, Adam would have had no share of prophecy.
If the peace of the spirit had not issued from him, Noah would have remained forever in the sea of wailing.
If Abraham was the honor of the community, he wore the crown of divine friendship because of him.
If the building of the Ka'ba was completed by [Abraham], [Muhammad] bound the pilgrim's garb before it was built.

Seal [of prophets] whose ring of power is decorated with the legend, "I was a prophet while Adam was between water and clay." From the beginning the words "we have given you Kawthar," which breathe an aroma of his angelic offspring, proclaimed the good news of his end. Divine legislation was completed for the inhabitants of the earth by his holy children, love for whom is incumbent upon all who have faith and certainty in the way of guidance, through the words, "Say I do not ask you a fee for it except affection in kinship," **[10b]** and in accordance with the true saying, "I leave among you the people God's book and my family."

After paying respects to the Word of the omniscient necessarily existent [One], it is an obligation upon each individual in Islam to take an immaculate handhold onto the strong rope of following this group, respect for whom is necessary, especially the prides of humanity, by whom I mean the Twelve Imams, for were the hand of destiny to reopen the gate of prophecy, it would be opened to none other than their prophet-like beauty.

Praise God for such a unique group, who were signs of God's Apostle,
Each one a sun at the zenith of justice, each one a chapter and section of the book of prophetic inspiration.
O God, so long as the world exists, so long as the earth is stable and the celest in motion,
May the world not flourish without their grace, may it never be void of their offspring.

Especially the latest of his pure sons and most glorious of his splendid offspring, by whom I mean His Majesty of Saturnian exaltedness, who is attended by the

celestial spheres, the Sultan son of the Sultan son of the Sultan, the Khaqan son of the Khaqan son of the Khaqan, Glory of the Sultanate and Caliphate and Right-guidance and this world, Abu'l-Muzaffar Shah Tahmasp the Safavid the Musavid the Husaynid (may God eternalize his reign and beneficence) and His Majesty's felicitous brothers and noble children—and most especially the pearl of the oyster of the caliphate and justice, the gem of the casket of magnificence and rule, bouquet of the garden of power and good fortune, blossom of the meadow of nobility and splendor,

A Faridun in majesty, a Jamshid in rank, an Alexander in splendor, a Dara in reign,

the glory of the sultanate, Abu'l-Fath Bahram Mirza (may God cause the days of his power and glory over the heads of the mighty to last until the Day of Resurrection), who, after perfecting the affairs of rule and perusing histories and tales, used to spend his time contemplating the masters' beautiful calligraphic specimens and rare and precious essays, and his gaze of favor and kindness was ever upon this group until his exalted opinion inclined to this, that the scattered folios of past and present masters should be brought out of the region of dispersal into the realm of collectedness. In this regard the exalted command and sublime order was issued to this poor slave, miserable speck of dust, distracted sinner, Dost-Muhammad the Scribe, that, in endeavoring to organize and decorate [the collection], he should cinch the waist of his soul with the belt of servitude. Therefore, in accordance with this exalted command, **[11a]**

He bound the waist of his soul with the belt of servitude: he girded himself with his soul as a belt

in order to arrange an album for His Exalted Majesty's library. Inasmuch as it is necessary to mention in this album the origin of calligraphy and the masters of the science of calligraphy who are so outstanding in the school "taught by the pen, taught mankind what he knew not,"[9] prefatory remarks shall follow in which all that shall be introduced, God granting assistance and success.

Know that in the opinion of historians and biographers of happy output and specialists in the sayings of the Best of Mankind—upon whom be peace—the first person to write, the founder of this magnificent affair and noble occupation, was Adam, who fashioned a pen and wrote on a tanned hide. After him was Enoch. However, the form of their writing, in what manner they wrote, is not known, even though it is well known that they spoke in the Syriac Hebrew expression. All other prophets and sages also established writing systems, but the manner of reading the same and the purport of their words are not apparent and would take too long to describe.

Thereafter, Ya'rub ibn Qahtan[10] produced the Kufic style from the Ma'qili,[11] and he was the inventor of the Kufic script; nonetheless, it reached perfection at the glorious hand of the Prince of the Faithful and Imam of the Pious, the Conquering Lion of God, Ali ibn Abi-Talib. The reed-riding fingers of no creature have ever passed through the field of writing like the miraculous, cavalier fingers of that majesty. The distinguishing characteristic of that majesty's script, after its clarity and loveliness, is that at the head of the *alif* as written by him is a split

[9]Koran 96:4–5.

[10]Ya'rub ibn Qaḥṭān, one of the progenitors of the Arabs.

[11]The Kufic style of writing is named for the city of Kūfa in Iraq. It is a "blanket" term applied to the nonrounded styles of Arabic. Ma'qilī, named after Nahr al-Ma'qil at Basra in southern Iraq, is the term sometimes used for the highly geometrically stylized script used in brick work.

in the value of half a dot, and wherever letters are parallel to each other on the front and back of a page, black is on black and white on white.

There was Kufan script until the time of al-Muqtadir-bi'llah,[12] at which time Ali ibn Muqla, who is known as Ibn Muqla, saw the Prince of the Faithful Ali in a vision, during which he instructed him in the *thuluth*, *muhaqqaq* and *naskh* script, which script was named the "Arabic script".... Ibn Muqla, being al-Muqtadir's vizier, was accused of treason, and al-Muqtadir ordered two fingers of his right hand cut off with a penknife. **[11b]** Thus that tree was deprived of drawing the water of life that rested in the darkest recesses of the inkpot. Thereafter he instructed his offspring, who was a very talented girl, with his left hand. Master Ali ibn Hilal, known as Ibn Bawwab, was his student.[13]

Shaykh Jamaluddin Yaqut[14] was instructed by Ibn Bawwab in the time of al-Mustansir-bi'llah,[15] the last Abbasid caliph, and through his guidance laid down the rules for this script and brought down the cryptic regulations of this science from heaven to earth. Without the least taint of extravagance it may be said that he caused his musk-scented pen to skim through the current of scripts in such a way that the pen's tongue and the two-tongued pen are incapable of describing it.

The Shaykh had six students known collectively as the SIX MASTERS. To each of them he gave license to produce their own calligraphy in his name. The perfection of beauty in the script of these six is so established that the calligraphy of [other] experts in this craft has been ruled out, and [their art] is so far beyond description that it is impossible even to begin [to describe it].

If an intelligent man does not describe the sun, the grace of its light is description enough.
And if one does not speak in praise of musk, its own scent is a sufficiently eloquent eulogizer.

Their noble names are: (1) Mawlana Nasrullah Tabib,[16] (2) Shaykhzada Suhrawardi,[17] (3) Khwaja Arghun Kamili,[18] (4) Khwaja Mubarakshah Zarin-Qalam,[19] (5) the excellent Sayyid-Haydar,[20] and (6) Mawlana Yusuf Mashhadi.[21]

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[12]'Abbasid caliph, ruled 295–320/908–32.

[13]"Student" is used in the loosest possible sense and may include a gap of several generations. Ibn Muqla died in 940, and Ibn al-Bawwāb in 1032.

[14]Known as Yāqūt al-Musta'ṣimī. Bayānī (*AAK*, iv, 1227), in agreement with Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, places his death in 698/1298–99. The specimen of his calligraphy bearing the latest date (695) appears to be an album page in Istanbul, TSM, H.2160, fol. 82a.

[15]Ruled 623–40/1226–42.

[16]Among the surviving works by Naṣrullāh Ṭabīb are two specimens dated (1) 729/1328–29, Istanbul, TSM, H.2161, fol. 24a and (2) 735/1334–35, Istanbul, TSM, B.411, fol. 106b. He is said to have died ca. 740/1339 (Bayānī, *AAK*, iv, 1222).

[17]Aḥmad b. al-Suhrawardī of Baghdad, known as Shaykhzāda. The earliest surviving specimen of his work is in Istanbul, TSM, H.2310, fol. 55b dated 702 (1302–3); the latest, dated 728 (1327–28), is a detached page from a *Nahj al-balāgha* in the Taqwā Collection, Tehran (Bayānī, *AAK*, iv, 1025).

[18]The earliest surviving specimen is an album page (Istanbul, TSM, H.2156, fol 92a) by "Arghūn b. 'Abdullāh" dated 700 (1300–1); the latest is in the same album (fol. 33b) and is dated 753 (1352).

[19]Mubārakshāh b. Quṭb is said to have executed the epigraphic calligraphy in the shrine of 'Ali b. Abī-Ṭālib in Najaf commissioned by Sulṭān-Uways Jalāyir. A single dated specimen by him survives in Istanbul, TSM, H.2310, fol. 25b, dated 732 (1331–32).

[20]Sayyid-Ḥaydar, known as Gunda-niwīs ("the majuscule writer"), was the teacher of 'Abdullāh Ṣayrafī (Mīr Sayyid-Aḥmad in Istanbul, TSM, H.2161, fol. 8a). There are no works by the name Ḥaydar; however, he may be the same as Muḥammad b. Ḥaydar al-Ḥusaynī, specimens of whose work are found in Istanbul, TSM, H. 2160, fol. 29b (dated 717 [1317]), H. 2310, fol.

Mawlana Abdullah Sayrafi,[22] whose name shines throughout all realms, was the student of Sayyid-Haydar, and the line of tutelage among the calligraphers of Khurasan goes back to Khwaja Abdullah Sayrafi. The line of tutelage among the calligraphers of Iraq goes back to Master Pir-Yahya Sufi,[23] a student of Khwaja Mubarakshah, who, although he did not have the honor to be his direct pupil during his lifetime, did practice calligraphy during his time.

Such is the working of fate: to whom will [the lot] now fall?

Khwaja Abdullah Sayrafi instructed his nephew Shaykh Muhammad Bandgir, [12a] who instructed Mawlana Sa'duddin Tabrizi, [who instructed] Mawlana Shamsuddin Qattabi,[24] who inscribed himself as Shams Sufi. He [instructed] the Unique Master of the Age, Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far Tabrizi,[25] who, in the time of his late majesty Baysunghur Mirza,[26] the son of the late emperor Shahrukh Bahadur,[27] was held in the greatest of respect and, because of his calligraphy, acquired indescribable fame. He is, however, even more famous for his *nasta'liq* script.

His Highness Baysunghur Mirza, who was greatly inclined to calligraphy and patronized calligraphers, himself raised the banner of the pen amidst the fray of calligraphy.

Moreover, Mawlana Abdullah Tabbakh[28] studied under Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far and, in truth, the tongue of the pen falls short of doing justice to him. Despite the aforementioned Mawlana's perfect expertise, some were jealous of him and pitted themselves against him, such as Mawlana Muhammad [b.] Husam,[29] who is known as Shams Baysun-

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97b (dated 717), and B.411, fol. 103b (dated 718 [1318]).

[21]Of Yūsuf Mashhadī's work there are no examples in the Istanbul albums, but he is mentioned by Muṣṭafā 'Ālī (*Manāqib-i hunarwarān*, p. 23), who calls him Mullā Yūsuf Khurāsānī, and Qāḍī Aḥmad (*Gulistān-i hunar*, 22), who says that after serving Yāqūt he left Iraq for Tabrīz and that 'Abdullāh Ṣayrafī studied with him. The "Seven Masters Album" (made for Bāysunghur Mīrzā and now in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.2310) lists the "seven" as (1) Yāqūt, (2) Mubārakshāh, (3) Arghūn, (4) Aḥmad b. Suhrawardī, (5) 'Abdullāh Ṣayrafī, (6) Pīr-Yaḥyā Ṣūfī, and (7) Muḥammad b. Ḥaydar al-Ḥusaynī. Many examples by Yāqūt and his students are also contained in Istanbul, TSM, B.411.

[22]An active epigraphic and architectural calligrapher, particularly during the reign of Öljeitü (1304–17), 'Abdullāh b. Maḥmūd al-Ṣayrafī ornamented many buildings in and around Tabriz. Examples of his work range from an album page dated 710 (1310–11) in Istanbul, TSM, B.411, fol. 70b to a Koran in Istanbul, TIEM, dated 744 (1343–44).

[23]Yaḥyā b. Jamāl al-Ṣūfī was a pupil of Aḥmad al-Rūmī and also studied with Mubārakshāh Zarīn-Qalam. His extant works range from 731 [1330–31] (Bayānī, *AAK*, iv, p. 1233) to 746 (Istanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, F.1422, fol. 53a, executed in Shiraz).

[24]Qāḍī Aḥmad (*Gulistān-i hunar*, 25) gives his name as Shamsuddīn Mashriqī Qaṭṭābī and makes him a pupil of Mu'īnuddīn, a pupil of Ḥājjī Muḥammad Banddūz, who was Ṣayrafī's student and also teacher of Shaykh Muḥammad Bandgīr.

[25]Farīduddīn Ja'far b. 'Alī Tabrīzī was the supervisor of the library at Herat under Shāhrukh and Bāysunghur. His earliest dated work is a *Dīwān* of Ḥasan Dihlawī dated 820 (Tehran, Majlis); the latest work bearing his signature is a *Kalīla u Dimna* dated 835 (Istanbul, TSM, H.362).

[26]Bāysunghur Mīrzā, 799–837/1397–1434.

[27]Shāhrukh (779–850/1377–1447), son of Amīr Tīmūr, ruled in Khurāsān 807–50/1404–47.

[28]Shihābuddīn 'Abdullāh Harawī, known as Ṭabbākh and Āshpaz (cook), whose known works range in date from 833 (Tehran, Sulṭan al-Qurrā'ī Collection, album page) to 866 (*Ḥifẓ al-āyāt*, Tehran, Bayānī Collection). He also made the inscriptions at Gāzargāh in Herat and in the Āghācha Mosque in Mashhad.

[29]His extant dated works range from 821 (*Humāy u Humāyūn* by Khwājū Kirmānī,

ghuri and is well known as a student of Mawlana Ma'ruf.[30]

Mawlana Ma'ruf was a contemporary of Mawlana Ja'far and, together with Mawlana Abdullah, was the tutor of the aforementioned Mawlana Shams, whose writing never reached the heights of Mawlana Abdullah's. Mawlana Ma'ruf was a student of Mawlana Sa'duddin Iraqi, who was a student of Pir-Yahya Sufi.

The learned and erudite Khwaja Shihabuddin Abdullah Bayani learned the basic scripts from Mawlana Abdullah Tabbakh and practiced the *ta'liq* character from Khwaja Tajuddin Salmani. The pen's tongue is incapable of describing their excellence.

[Abdullah Bayani's] eldest son, the most learned and erudite Khwaja Nuruddin Muhammad-Mu'min,[31] who in the basic scripts is today the first of the age and the second of two after that unique one, has been ennobled by the supervision and directorship of the glorious library of his royal majesty.

Khwaja Tajuddin Salmani, who was the founder of the *ta'liq* script and who codified its rules, is admired for his skill in composition. After him Mawlana Abdul-Hayy Munshi, who perfected this craft and was held in great honor and respect as the felicitous emperor Sultan Abu-Sa'id's secretary, reached the pinnacle of perfection.[32]

Mawlana Mu'in Isfizari was one of Mawlana Abdul-Hayy's best students, and his calligraphy and composition **[12b]** are not unadmired by the great of the age. Mawlana Darwesh Abdullah Munshi[33] was his student, and in *ta'liq* he surpassed not only his own teacher but also most practitioners of this script.

An Exposition of the Masters of Nasta'liq

The inventor of *nasta'liq* script was the master "Qiblat al-Kuttab" Khwaja Zahir-uddin Mir-Ali Tabrizi, and the line of discipleship can go no further back than to him.[34]

Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, cod. NF 382) to 833 (*Kalila u Dimna*, Istanbul, TSM, R.1022).

[30]Mawlānā Ma'rūf, a calligrapher formerly in the employ of Iskandar-Sulṭān in Shīrāz, brought to Herat by Shāhrukh. See Khwāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, III, 616. A rare specimen of his calligraphy, undated, exists in Tehran; see Badri Atabay, *Fihrist-i dīwānhā-yi khaṭṭī-i kitābkhāna-i salṭanatī*, 440.

[31]Extant dated works range from 924 (Istanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi F.1422, fol. 56a) to 947 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2151, fol. 8a).

[32]Sulṭān Abū-Sa'īd Kürägän, ruled in Samarqand 855–73/1451–69 and in Herat 863–73/1459–69.

[33]A specimen dated 917 is found in Istanbul, TSM, H.2161, fol. 182b.

[34]Despite his universal fame as the "originator of nasta'līq," no uncontestable example of Mīr-'Alī Tabrīzī's work has been discovered. The nearest thing is a collection of *mathnawīs* by Khwājū Kirmānī (London, BL, Add. 18113) written by one 'Alī b. Ilyās al-Tabrīzī al-Bāwurchī in Baghdad in 798/1395–96, which would be approximately the correct time for him, although "the" Mīr-'Alī Tabrīzī is usually called 'Alī b. Ḥasan. Other attributions to Mīr-'Alī Tabrīzī, which are legion, are patent forgeries. It is clear from books produced in western Iran and Baghdad around the turn of the 14th century that copyists' manuscript hands were undergoing a significant change from the horizontally based *naskh* to a diagonally biased proto-nasta'līq. It is most unlikely that a Mīr-'Alī, or anybody else, "invented" *nasta'līq*, which should be seen as a natural development of scribes and calligraphers at that time. It was also quite natural for later generations to seek out an individual to whom the invention *(waḍ')* could be attributed: an identical tendency to eponymize was manifested in practically every field of human endeavor.

His son Khwaja Abdullah[35] was his pupil; and his calligraphy is of such a degree that the cognoscenti of the age cannot distinguish between his writing and that of his father. Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far was his student in this script.

Then, Mawlana Kamaluddin Shaykh Mahmud Zarin-Qalam[36] was a student of Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far. Mawlana Zahiruddin Azhar[37] was also Mawlana Ja'far's student, but he was a calligrapher of such a rank that the masters of this art consider his writing better than his master's.

Mawlana Ja'far Khalifa, who was Mawlana Ja'far's eldest son, and Mawlana Miraki, a son of Mawlana Zahiruddin Azhar, both became calligraphers and were patronized by sultans.

The pious Hafiz Hajji Muhammad, the teacher of Mawlana Sultan-Ali, was a pupil of Mawlana Zahiruddin Azhar, but he also had the honor to be a student of Mawlana Ja'far.

Mawlana Sultan-Ali,[38] along with his erudition, excellent qualities in poetry and the skills of the age and good character, has taken *nasta'liq* to such an extremity that no one, from beginning to end, can ever surpass or even vie with him, and his glorious name shall endure forever in the annals of the world.

Next, Mawlana Nizamuddin Abdul-Rahim Khwarazmi,[39] known as Mawlana Anisi, wrote a very graceful, clear and pleasing character in which no one could challenge him. He was a contemporary of Mawlana Sultan-Ali Mashhadi.

The excellent Mawlana Sultan-Ali Qayini[40] was in the service of the late Sultan Ya'qub,[41] from whom he received much patronage.

The learned and pious Mawlana Sultan-Muhammad [b.] Nur[42] was a pupil of Mawlana Mu'inuddin Wa'iz and was one of the outstanding of the age in *nasta'liq* script, particularly in writing in colors, for generally color **[13a]** has not flowed so nicely from anyone else's pen, and few have equaled him for accomplishment and purity in the profession of scribe. From his youth until his sixty-third year, which were the years of his life, he was always devoted and pious.

The excellent, beloved Sultan-Muhammad Khandan[43] was very modest and af-

[35]Elsewhere called 'Ubaydullāh (see Mīr Sayyid-Aḥmad's introduction to the Amīr Ghayb Bēg Album, Istanbul TSM H.2161, fol. 8b). There exists a *Dīwān* of Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir dated 809 (Istanbul, TSM H.909) and twice signed by 'Ubaydullāh b. 'Alī al-Kātib al-Sulṭānī.

[36]Extant dated works range from 846 (Tehran, Imperial Library, Koran) to 871 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2153, fol. 75a, at Sawa).

[37]Extant dated works range from 824/1421 (Manchester, Rylands Library, Pers. 6, *Khusraw u Shīrīn* of Niẓāmī) to 877/1472–73 (Lahore, Punjab Univ., *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī, at Isfahan).

[38]There are dated works signed by Sulṭān-'Alī ranging from 857/1453 to 926/1520. Though it is not totally without the realm of possibility for a calligrapher to have worked for 69 years, it is extremely unlikely. Many of the later dates either are "licensed signatures" by his students or belong to other Sulṭān-'Alīs, such as the elusive 'Alī Sabz Mashhadī, or are outright forgeries.

[39]Extant dated works range from 864/1459–60 (Tehran, Bayānī Collection, *Dīwān* of Ḥāfiẓ) to 899/1493–94 (Tehran, Bayānī Collection, *Dīwān* of Anīsī).

[40]Extant dated works range from 884/1479–80 (Leningrad, Publichnaya Biblioteka, Dorn 252, *Zubdat al-ḥaqāyiq* of 'Ayn al-Qaḍāt al-Hamadānī) to 898/1492–93 (Tehran, Kitāb-khāna-i Salṭanatī, Atabay 80, *Dīwān* of Jāmī).

[41]Sulṭān Ya'qūb, Aqqoyunlu sultan, ruled at Tabrīz 884–96/1479–91.

[42]Extant dated works range from 912/1506–7 (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Mxt. 131, fol. 17a, specimen) to 957/1550 (London, British Library, Or.4124, *Ṣifāt al-'āshiqīn* of Hilālī). There is also a *Dīwān* of Ṭūsī in the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, No. 1553, with a questionable date of 896.

[43]Extant dated works range from 910/1504–5 (Leningrad, Publichnaya Biblioteka, Dorn 418, *ghazaliyyāt* of Amīr Shāhī; possibly also London, BL, Or. 8760 dated 888) to 935/1528–29 (Leningrad, Publichnaya Biblioteka, *Dīwān* of Nawā'ī).

fable. He wrote solidly and with gusto and was a student of Mawlana Sultan-Ali.

The late Mawlana Muhammad Abrishami,[44] a pupil of Mawlana Sultan-Ali, became an acknowledged master.

The rarity of the age, Mawlana Kamal-uddin Mir Jan, known as Ali al-Husayni,[45] cannot be described by the pen's tongue or by the two-tongued pen, so no attempt will be made.

Mawlana Muhammad-Qasim [b. Shadishah][46] wrote very gracefully, cleanly and pleasingly. He was a pupil of Mawlana Sultan-Muhammad Nur and also received instruction from Mawlana Sultan-Muhammad Khandan.

The eloquent Khwaja Ibrahim[47] is a student of Mawlana Muhammad Nur, by whom he is highly and excellently regarded. He writes a very nice, clean line.

The lineage of the masters of calligraphy being beyond ennumeration, the prancing steed of the pen will be checked from crossing that valley. Inasmuch as [specimens of] their writing will be included in this tome, a description of the calligraphy and appreciation of the subtlety of the pen of those who are most famous in this regard will be held up to the gaze of connoisseurs and cognoscenti, and hence they need not be discussed here.

[44]Extant dated works range from 910/1504–5 (Tashkent, Akademia, 6149/5293, *Haft awrang* of Jāmī) to 923/1517 (Istanbul, TIEM, 2011, *Manṭiq al-ṭayr* of 'Aṭṭār).

[45]Extant dated works range from 919/1513–14 (Istanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi FY 477, *Būstān* of Sa'dī) to 950/1543–34 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Suppl. Pers. 1958, *Gulistān* of Sa'dī) and possibly a *Tuḥfat al-aḥrār* of Jāmī in Dublin, Beatty Library 215 with a questionable date of 955.

[46]Extant dated works range from 924/1518 (Istanbul, Nuru Osmaniye 3825, *Qirān al-sa'dayn* of Amīr Khusraw) to 959/1552 (Washington, Sackler Gallery S86.0339, calligraphic specimen).

[47]A single dated work is found in Istanbul, TSM H.2154, fol 144a, dated 933/1527.

Our works point to us: gaze after us at our works.

And praise be to God first and last, inwardly and outwardly.

An Introduction to the Painters and Limners of the Past

It is etched on the minds of the masters of the arcane that the garden of painting and illumination is an orchard of perfect adornment; and the arrangement and embellishment of Korans, which bespeak the glorification of the Word of the Necessarily Exalted, are connected to the pen and bound to the design and drawing of the masters of this noble craft.

It has been recorded that the first person to adorn with painting and illumination the writing of the Word that is necessarily welcomed was the Prince of the Faithful and Leader of the Pious, the Conquering Lion of God...Ali ibn Abi-Talib, and the gates of this commodity were opened to this group by the key of that majesty's pen. A few leaves *(barg)*, known in the parlance of painters as *islami*,[48] were invented by him.

If, by the externality of the religious law,[49] the masters of depictation hang their head in shame, nonetheless what is gained from the writings of the great is that this craft originated with the prophet Daniel.

It has been related that after the Prophet [Muhammad]'s death, some of his companions went to Byzantium with the purpose of presenting Islam. In that realm they met an emperor named Hercule. After many strange and wonderful things happened, [the emperor] inquired after the Prophet and asked of his deeds and acts. Thereupon he had brought a chest, which he opened. In it there appeared to those present a marvellous portrait that astonished the group. Since the onlookers were so gratified and pleased

[48]*Islāmī* = *islīmī*, q.v. in Glossary.

[49]In reference to the disapproval of Islamic law for depiction of animate form.

by seeing the portrait, the Companions were asked, "Do you recognize this person?"

"No," said the Companions, "never have our eyes feasted upon such beauty, and never has the gate of illumination from the origin of this likeness opened to us."

"This," said Hercule, "is a portrait of Adam, the Father of Humanity." And thus he continued to show portraits until he produced one with a miraculous visage as luminous as the sun, whose regal being took Adam from the dust of nonexistence and garbed him with a cloak of purity. The admiration that the former portrait had elicited from the onlookers was nullified by the sight of this blessed face, and the perplexity with which they had been struck by the first portrait's beauty ceased with the contemplation of the sun-like beauty of the latter.

You are better than any beautiful form:
God fashioned you after his own image.

When the Companions saw that portrait, teardrops streamed like stars from their eyes, and a longing for the Prophet was reborn in their hearts. Seeing their sadness, agitation and tears, Hercule sought the reason from them.

"This," they said, "is a portrait of our blessed Prophet. Where are these portraits from, for we know that they conform to the actual countenances of the prophets?"

"Adam besought the Divine Court to see the prophets among his offspring," said Hercule. "Therefore [14a] the Creator of All Things sent a chest containing several thousand compartments, in each of which was a piece of silk on which was a portrait of one of the prophets. Inasmuch as that chest came as a witness, it was called the Chest of Testimony *(sanduq al-shahada)*. After attaining his desire Adam placed the chest in his treasure house, which was near the setting place of the sun. Dhu'l-Qarnayn[50] carried it away and gave it to the prophet Daniel, who copied [the portraits] with his miraculous brush."

From that time forward the continuity of portraiture has continued beneath the azure dome of the sky, and the likeness that was painted by Daniel was meticulously preserved by the ruler of Byzantium in his treasury until the time of the death of the Best of Mankind [Muhammad]. Therefore, portraiture is not without justification, and the portraitist's conscience need not be pricked by the thorn of despair.

When the sun of the celest of prophecy, the fourth of the determinator apostles, Jesus son of Mary, became a neighbor of the great luminary [the sun[51]], Mani began to pretend to prophesy and made this claim acceptable in the eyes of the people by cloaking it in portraiture. Since the people expected a miracle of him, he took a span of silk, went into a cave and ordered the entrance closed. When one year had passed from the time of his withdrawal, he emerged and showed the silk. On it he had painted and portrayed the likenesses of humans, animals, trees, birds and various shapes that occur only in the mirror of the mind through the eye of imagination and that sit on the page of possibility in the visible world only with fantastic shapes. The short-sighted ones whose turbid hearts could not reflect the light of Islam, duped by his game, took his painted silk, which was known as the Artangi[52] Tablet, as their copybook for disbelief and refractoriness and, strangest of all, held that silk up as an equal to the Picture Gallery of China, which is known to contain images of all existing things, as the poet Shaykh Muslihuddin Sa'di of Shiraz has said of the two at the beginning of the *Gulistan:*

There is hope that one not frown in
boredom, for a garden is not a place of
solitude:
If adorned by lordly attention, it is a
Chinese Gallery and an Artangi Tablet.[53]

Mostly these things were done by Mani in the regions of Iraq, [14b] but thereafter

[50]Dhū'l-Qarnayn, the Koranic prophet often identified as Alexander of Macedonia. In the legend of Dhū'l-Qarnayn in the Koran he is said to have reached the "setting place of the sun" (*maghrib al-shams*, Kor. 18:86).

[51]Jesus is said to have been assumed to the fourth heaven, which is the sphere of the Sun.

[52]Or, the more common form, Arzhangī.

[53]Sa'dī, *Gulistān*, in *Kulliyyāt-i Sa'dī*, ed. Muḥammad-'Alī Furūghī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1363), p. 33.

he set out for Cathay and did amazing things there too.

Another of the ancients was Shapur, who painted the countenance of Chosroës with his magic brush and every day arrayed his lovely pleasure-palace in a different color, like a damask rose on the stem of acceptability. As there is no further room in this work to expound upon these two matchless ones, and the details are mentioned in the *Khamsas* of several great [poets],[54] anyone who desires further details may read and discover them in verse.

Then, the custom of portraiture flourished so in the lands of Cathay and the Franks until sharp-penned Mercury scrivened the rescript of rule in the name of Sultan Abu-Sa'id Khudaybanda.[55] Master Ahmad Musa, who was his father's pupil, lifted the veil from the face of depiction, and the [style of] depiction that is now current was invented by him. Among the scenes by him that lighted on the page of the world in the time of the aforementioned emperor, an *Abusa'idnama*, a *Kalila u Dimna*,[56] a *Mi'rajnama* calligraphed by Mawlana Abdullah Sayrafi, and a *Tarikh-i Chingizi* in beautiful script by an unknown hand were in the library of the late emperor Sultan-Husayn Mirza.[57]

Amir Dawlatyar, a slave *(ghulam)* of Sultan Abu-Sa'id, was ennobled by being a pupil of Master Ahmad Musa and was outstanding in this regard, especially in *qalamsiyahi*, such that, although Mawlana Waliullah was without equal in the world, when he saw Amir Dawlatyar's work he justly confessed his inability [to match it].

One of his students was Master Shamsuddin, who was trained in the time of Sultan Uways[58] and made scenes in a square-format *Shahnama (qat'-i murabba')* that was written by Khwaja Amir-Ali. When Sultan Uways went to his eternal reward, Master Shamsuddin chose not to enter anyone else's service; and his student, Khwaja Abdul-Hayy, undertook [to provide] him with the necessities of life, and the aforementioned master lived in [Abdul-Hayy's] house, constantly enjoying leisure, and devoted himself to training Khwaja Abdul-Hayy so that the Khwaja, in the time of the emperor Sultan-Ahmad of Baghdad,[59] whose countenance shone in patronizing the masters of learning and perfection, took up the pen of uniqueness and instructed Sultan Ahmad in depiction so that the sultan himself produced a scene in the *Abusa'idnama* in *qalamsiyahi*.

When the realm-conquering banners of Timur Kürägän **[15a]** cast the ray of the caliphate in subjugating the realm of Baghdad, and he made that Abode of Peace the residence of the caliphal throne for a few days, Khwaja Abdul-Hayy was taken along with the celestial army to the Abode of the Sultanate Samarqand, where he died. After the Khwaja's death all masters imitated his works.

Another of Shamsuddin's students was Master Junayd of Baghdad.

One of Khwaja Abdul-Hayy's outstanding students was Pir Ahmad Baghshimali, who was unique in his own time, and no one could surpass him in this style. He was fifty years old when he bade farewell to life.

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[54]Among whom, Niẓāmī of Ganja in his *Khusraw u Shīrīn* and Amīr Khusraw of Delhi in his *Shīrīn u Khusraw*.

[55]Abū-Sa'īd, Il-Khanid sultan, reigned 717–36/1317–35.

[56]This may be the *Kalīla u Dimna* now in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Manuscrits, Sup. Pers. 913 = Blochet Cat. #2032) completed in 794/1392 and copied by Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm; it was once in the library of Shāh Walād, Aḥmad Jalāyir's son. See Gray, "Arts," p. 333, No. 543.

[57]Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Mīrzā, Timurid ruler at Herat, 875–912/1470–1506.

[58]Shaykh-Uways I, Jalayirid sultan, ruled at Baghdad 757–76/1356–74.

[59]Sulṭān Aḥmad, Jalayirid sultan, ruled at Baghdad, d. 813/1410.

His Highness Baysunghur Mirza had Master Sidi Ahmad the painter, Khwaja Ali the portraitist and Master Qiwamuddin the bookbinder brought from Tabriz and ordered that after the pleasing manner of Sultan Ahmad of Baghdad's miscellany *(jung)*, they should produce a book in exactly the same format and size *(qat' u mastar)* and with the same scenes depicted. The copying of it was given into the charge of Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far. The binding was commissioned of the aforementioned Master Qiwamuddin, by whom inlay *(munabbatkari)* in bindings was invented; and Mir Khalil was put in charge of decoration and depiction of scenes.

Amir Khalil was at that time without equal or peer in his own line, and the aforementioned prince had showered him with great patronage and day by day so increased his favor towards him that he became an object of jealousy on the part of the high and mighty. One of the strange things that happened to this amir is the following:

One night, in the company of His Highness [Baysunghur, Amir Khalil] began to joke, but the affair went so far that the heel of his boot unintentionally hit the prince on the forehead. His Highness's forehead was cut, and blood poured from his august head. When the attendants, servants and others present at that marvelous gathering witnessed this event, the fabric of their patience was ripped and they gathered around the prince. In the meantime Amir Khalil, wailing and lamenting, took flight to the chamber in the Chihil Sutun [Palace] where Mawlana Fariduddin Ja'far wrote, and locked himself in. Having fled from the valley of boon companionship, he sat down in penitence.

When the merciful prince saw that the honor of the sultanate had been spilled onto the ground and the ashes of misfortune had been smeared across the forehead of fortune, he commanded that all entrances and exits to the garden be locked **[15b]** "lest the slightest news reach the hearing of my mother." Then he strove to exonerate Amir Khalil and ordered that he be brought to him lest the fellow's mind be vexed and he be worried over his disgrace. Torches and lanterns were lit, and all parts of the garden were searched until he was found in the aforementioned chamber, the door to which he had fastened tight from the inside. Since the servants realized how compassionate the prince was toward him, they did not break down the door but reported the situation to the prince, who, with all clemency and favor, came to the door of the chamber. Amir Khalil opened the door and fell at the feet of His Highness. The prince kissed him, took him back into the palace into the assembly and, showering him with favor and compassion, bestowed upon him all the silver and china vessels that were in use at the assembly, along with robes of honor of which Chosroës and Jamshid would have been proud. By showing him such generosity, [the prince] delivered him of his shame....

Before the Baysunghurid miscellany was completed, the prince cast off the ship of life from the shore of living into the sea of death, and his eldest son, Ala-'uddawla Mirza, ascended the throne of patronage and called for the miscellany to be finished. Gathering that group together in the library, he gave them generous support. At about this time someone was sent to Tabriz to bring Khwaja Ghiyathuddin Pir-Ahmad Zarkub. When, in obedience to the command, he honored the library with his presence, he ennobled the leaves of painting in Herat with the subtlety of his brush and touched up *(qalamgiri)* some places in the scenes of the miscellany and painted with captivating colors and finished it off with blood, sweat and tears. **[16a]** Amir Khalil passed over those paradise-like gardens with the eye of equity and, in giving him his due, declared that he [Amir Khalil] would henceforth abandon depiction and consider himself exempt from concern with it.

From an old man of wisdom the truth is
best: a rational person entertains no doubt
whether boastfulness be best.
When the desired form is manifested from
the invisible world, like a mirror, the surface
of a pure heart is best.

Thereafter, His Conquering Highness Ulughbeg Kürägän invaded Khurasan on the steed of agility from Samarqand and, in accordance with the destiny of the

Omnipotent ("thou givest rule to whom thou willest"), overturned Ala'uddawla Mirza's banner of fortune and, raising the Ulughbegid victory banner to the summit of the heavens in accordance with the [verse], "We have given you a clear victory," circumscribed Khurasan with his subjugation.[60] He took Mawlana Shihabuddin Abdullah, Mawlana Zahiruddin Azhar and all the others of the library under the shadow of Kürägänid bounty and carried them to Samarqand, where he showed them great favor, made them his attendants and, having commissioned them to copy the history of his excellent time, showed them kindness increasing from day to day—nay, from hour to hour. The pen is incapable of describing the extent of that emperor's patronage and encouragement.

Then there is Amir Ruhullah, known as Mirak Naqqash, originally from Herat and one of the bowmaker sayyids. At first he was engaged in memorizing the Koran and practicing writing, but after his father's death he was inclined to be a copyist. Since he was of the bowmaking sayyids, he also practiced that trade. Later he entered the service of Mawlana Waliullah and took up outlining *(tahrir)* and illumination *(tadhhib)*, but he gave that up too and took a fancy to depiction, in which craft he became without equal or peer. In the time of the late Sultan-Husayn Mirza[61] he was shown favor and, among other things, was given the post of royal librarian.

The pupil and son of the aforementioned sayyid, the most excellent of the moderns in depiction, pride of the ancients in illumination and outlining, the rarity of the age, Master Kamaluddin Bihzad, is beyond all description. In this album [his work] is much in evidence, and he had the honor of being attached to the royal library of His Majesty **[16b]** the Sultan Abu'l-Muzaffar Shah Tahmasp the Safavid the Musavid the Husaynid Bahadur Khan, by whom he was shown great favor and at whose court he bade farewell to life and was buried next to the grave of the great poet Shaykh Kamal in Tabriz. The chronogram for his death is "Cast a glance at THE DUST OF BIHZAD'S GRAVE,"[62] which was composed by Amir Dost Hashimi.

A Mention of the Scribes of the Royal Library Who Are Renowned for Their Calligraphy

First, Mawlana Shah-Mahmud,[63] who with his graceful script *(khatt)* and beautiful writing has stolen the down *(khatt)* from adolescents' cheeks, and whose gift for verse is accepted worldwide, is originally from Nishapur. His calligraphic style was learned from his maternal uncle, the eloquent Mawlana Abdi Nishapuri,[64] and his good qualities and pleasing characteristics are beyond description.

Then there is the writer of majuscule and minuscule script, Mawlana Kamaluddin Rustam-Ali,[65] who is foremost among modern calligraphers in writing in colored ink and in proficiency.

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[60]Mirza Ulughbeg Kürägän (796–853/1394–1449) occupied Herat in 852/1448.

[61]Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Mīrzā (842–911/1438–1506), ruled in Herat 872–911/1468–1506.

[62]*Khāk-i qabr-i Bihzād* = 942.

[63]Shāh-Maḥmūd Nīshāpūrī's many known dated works range from 922/1516 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2156, fol. 63b) to 979/1571–72 (Istanbul, TSM, H.750, *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī).

[64]His few dated works range from 928/1522 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2154, fol. 86b) to 940/1533–34 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2154, fol. 92a); undated works abound.

[65]Albums contain a few specimens of his calligraphy, but only one dated specimen has been located, Istanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi F.1422, fol. 69b, dated 945/1538 .

Then there is Mawlana Nizamuddin Shaykh-Muhammad,[66] who in speed and power of pen is unequaled in the world.

Next is Mawlana Nuruddin Abdullah,[67] a scribe from Shiraz who in beauty of writing and speed of copying is not to be excelled.

Then there is this humble one, Dost-Muhammad,[68] who like a pen has spent his life placing the head of devotion on the line of obedience and who has given the writ of servitude over to those who dwell in this angel-protected court. He has flecked the page of the ground of service with the gold of his cheek and added to the leaves of eulogy a patch of unhypocritical praise.

My pen, which has scriven the words of your praise, is renowned in all regions for eulogizing you.
Like the pen, I am all tongue in praising you. My head is ever on the line of your command, like the pen.

Since the writers have been mentioned in every chapter of this introduction, if I be so bold as to make mention of the artists, it may not be out of place. **[17a]**

The Portraitists and Painters of the Royal Library

First is the rarity of the age, Master Nizamuddin Sultan-Muhammad, who has developed depiction to such a degree that, although it has a thousand eyes, the celestial sphere has not seen his like. Among his creations depicted in His Majesty's *Shahnama* is a scene of people wearing leopard skins:[69] it is such that the lion-hearted of the jungle of depiction and the leopards and crocodiles of the workshop of ornamentation quail at the fangs of his pen and bend their necks before the awesomeness of his pictures.

With the pen of his fingertips, on the tablet of vision, he has drawn a different version at each and every instant.

Next is the sayyid, unique of the age, intimate of the royal personnage, Aqa Jalaluddin Mirak al-Husayni al-Isfahani, the likes of whose pictures the brush of ornamentation has never painted in the studio of depiction....

Next is the sayyid of immaculate brush, the unique among the nations, Mir Musawwir....

These two matchless sayyids in [the service of] the royal library have mixed such colors and painted such faces—especially in the royal *Shahnama* and the *Khamsa* of Nizami[70]—that if I begin to speak of them not only would it take too long but the pen would also be incapable of describing them. Among [the things they did] for the ornamentation of a *jamkhana* for the sun of the royal celest, the bouquet of the kingly garden, not even a whiff of which could be adequate-

[66]Extant dated works range from 970/1562–63 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2137, fol. 18b) to 976/1568–69 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2151, fol. 39a).

[67]May be identified with 'Abdullāh b. Shaykh-Murshid al-Kātib al-Shīrāzī, by whom was copied a *Kulliyyāt* of Sa'dī in 960/1553 (Istanbul, TSM H.739).

[68]Extant dated works range from 938/1531–32 (Istanbul, TSM, H.2156, fol. 31b, at Herat) to 972/1564–65 (Tehran, Sipahsālār, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*).

[69]The painting referred to is "The Court of Gayumars" in Shāh Ṭahmāsp's *Shāhnāma*, fol. 20b., reproduced by Stuart Cary Welch, *Wonders of the Age: Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting, 1501–1576* (Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University: 1979), p. 17. All illustrations from the Ṭahmāsp *Shāhnāma* have been reproduced in Martin B. Dickson and S. C. Welch, *The Houghton Shahnameh* (Cambridge: Fogg Art Museum, 1981).

[70]The *Khamsa* is housed in the British Library, Or. 2265. The MS is dated from Jumada II 946 (1539) to Dhu'l-Hijja 949 (1543) at Tabriz. It was calligraphed by Shāh Maḥmūd Nishāpūrī and contains miniatures signed by Mīrzā 'Alī, Sulṭān-Muḥammad, Mīr Sayyid-'Alī, Āqā Mīrak and Muẓaffar-'Alī. When the MS passed into the possession of the Mughals miniatures were added by Muḥammad-Zamān in 1086/1675–76.

ly described, they made two *sipars*[71] arched like the infatuating bowed eyebrows of beauties and unrivaled in the gallery of the world. Oh, what a *jamkhana!* Were I to call it a world-revealing mirror, it would not be out of place. Its mirrors have broken the splendor of the azure celest, and the master who made it has shackled the hands of the craftsmen of the world. It is a heaven adorned with stars, a place decorated with the likenesses of people. It is a paradise without shortcoming, an Eden resplendent with serving-boys and houris. Its carpets would dazzle the eyes of the great; its threshold is kissed by the mighty. Like the hearts of the enlightened it gazes with the eye of its heart in every direction, and people of insight are **[17b]** amazed and astounded by it....

Then there is the portraitist and poet Mawlana Muhammad known as Qadimi, who, knowing that content is more important than form, has painted and spoken things as they ought to be.

Next is the incomparable line-artist *(tarrah)* Master Kamaluddin Husayn the perfection of whose every *band-i rumi* and *ktrma*[72] is unfathomable to even the most discerning eye and has never been equaled by the painters of China. He has great prowess in painting.

Then there is Master Kamaluddin Abdul-Ghaffar, whose essence is beyond comparison.

Then there is Master Hasan-Ali, who is also second to none.

[71]The MS has *sipar* (shield); clearly *sipihr* (celestial vault) is intended.

[72]Clearly written in the MS as *KTRMH*. No known technical term of painting or illumination approaches this spelling. The configuration of consonants suggests the Turkish *gätirmä* (bringing forth, even product), which would not be out of place, but it is unattested elsewhere in such a context.

The Limners of the Sublime Library

First is the illuminator of the pages of intrinsic meaning, the mine of human perfection, Mirak al-Mudhahhib, who has so adorned the chain stitching *(zanjira)* of the line of inimitability and the title panel *(lawha)* of expertise that all discerning people who have seen his work have loosed their tongues in praise.

His peerless son, Qiwamuddin Mas'ud, has made from the rays of shooting stars vined ruling and has created abodes of burnished gold in his sunbursts.

Master Kamaluddin Abdul-Wahhab is a worthy artisan known as Khwaja Kaka. His work is unexcelled among bookbinders,[73] and he is second to none as an intimate companion.

Then there is widely imitated inventor Mawlana Muhsin the leatherworker, who has stripped the skin off craftsmen and bound the sun and moon together with chains of kettle stitching. Although he torments the scribes, their hearts are patient with him and their minds are given joy by the binding of his love.

Since a mention of those who labor in the royal library was deemed necessary in this introduction, I have dared to mention each of them.

So long as the names of Venus and the moon are in the celest,
So long as Mars (Bahram) remains at the apex of the heavens,
So long as the celest is patchworked by the moon and sun,
May there be this book of Prince Bahram.

When this album was completed, a crier came forth from the host of angels to give congratulations on this calligraphy, depiction and illumination.
For the library of the prince, the moon of the zodiac of power, the flower of happiness and joy, the celestial sphere of perfection, Bahram Mirza, unrivalled by anyone anywhere.

[73]Reading *shīrāza'īān* for the text's *shīrāzīān*.

When the date of completion was sought, I
said, "Abu'l-Fath Bahram the Just."[74]

[74]The chronogram *(Abū'l-Fatḥ Bahrām-i 'ādil-nihādī)* yields 951 (A.D. 1544).