

Love Stories and Lovers' Scenes in Persian Painting

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Abstract

This research aims to study the scenes of lovers in Persian painting from the fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth centuries. The studied scenes classified into two types; the first include paintings with famous love stories in Persian literature, of these; Khusraw and Shirin, Layla and Majnun, Yusuf and Zulaykha, Bahram Gur and Azda. Those paintings were depicting the important episodes of the story. The second type includes paintings that were either accompanying lyrical poetry or independent. During the 17th century such paintings were representing couples or lovers in postures reflecting intimacy and liberation. The research, therefore, aims to study the two paintings' types; to compare between them and explain their features. It also aims to clear the reasons that led to appearing and accept of daring scenes of lovers that reflect closeness, liberty and eroticism.

Keywords: Persian painting, romantic poetry, Persian love stories, eroticism

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Introduction

Passionate poetry was one of the main themes of Persian poetry and many poets were famous for their passionate lyrical poetry such as Sunna'i,¹ Attar,² al-Rumi,³ Sa'di,⁴ Hafiz⁵ and Jami.⁶ Their works varied between realism, mystic and spiritual poems. Tale poetry was another theme of Persian poetry that appeared as early as the eleventh century and included both passionate and historical stories. The poem of *Vis and Ramin* of Gurgani⁷ is the earliest example of passionate poetry in a tale form. Later centuries; other poets became famed.⁸ They adopted some great stories of epic literature and giving them a new character; by changing the mood and proposing more details about feelings and emotions of the heroic tale.⁹ In the twelfth century, Attar applied this in Khusraw, and Birds Language tales. Other such as Nizami¹⁰ in his Quintet, Khwadju,¹¹ Jami and Hatifi¹² - during the thirteenth till the sixteenth centuries- either did. Sketching Poetic writings in general began by the fourteenth century. Painters traditionally changed the styles of miniatures according to the text. Thus, in epics like *Shahnameh*, combats and reaching throne scenes usually exist, while Nizami and Khwadju's poetry have static lyrical miniatures.¹³ In fact, painters paid special attention to the passionate poetry since it enabled the painter to show his talent through the miniature that should reflect the text and foresee its meaning.

The heritage of Persian tale poetry included love stories. Poets presented these stories repeatedly, each imposing his touch. Such stories were a rich source of lovers' paintings; whom the story main characters. The present study examines the paintings accompanying such love stories to reveal their features. The study also traces the changed taste of passionate poetry; that sometimes with lovers' scenes. Further, it will trace the independent scenes of lovers that came into fashion during the seventeenth century with unique style. The study presents two scenes' types through variant stylized and dated examples; to compare between painting two types, and highlight each type's features. In addition, the study analyzes the atmosphere of each type, and clears motives of altered Persian taste.

Famous Persian Love Stories and their accompanying paintings

In 446 A.H/1054 A.D Gurgani presented - one of the earliest lyrical poems- the story of *Vis and Ramin*. This passionate story was about Merv's king "Mubid", who wanted to marry the beautiful princess Shehru. She refused, and promised him her daughter. The daughter "Vis" brought up with the king Mubid's brother Ramin. When Vis turned up sixteen, her mother asked her to marry her brother Wiru. When Mubid knew, he asked Shehru to fulfill her promise, but she refused. A war broke out between the two counties, king Mubid seized Vis to marry. At the same time Vis met "Ramin" after a long period of abandonment and fell in love with him. Mubid tried hard to separate between the two lovers. Ramin battled his brother and killed him. The story came to end with the marriage of Vis and Ramin.¹⁴ This no sketched story was the earliest passionate poems key, which encouraged poets for writing.

The story of *Yusuf and Zulaykha* was another classic Persian love story based on the story of Yusuf, mentioned in the Old Testament and the holy Quran. Firdawsi first introduced between 384- 6 A.H. / 994- 6 A.D. Other poets like al-Bukhari, al-Harawi and Jami -in his Haft Awrang- represented it either.¹⁵ Firdawsi related his version to the holy Quran description.¹⁶ While Jami's version revealed firsthand details; neither mentioned in the holy Quran nor the Old Testament. Jami focused on the love story and the main character's "Zulaykha" feelings. The story of Jami tells how Zulaykha fall in love with Yusuf when she saw him in dreams. She, then, went to Egypt and married Aziz of Egypt,

Potiphar, thinking that he was Yusuf she saw in her dreams. The story gives details about Yusuf and his brothers, and how he ended at Potiphar court. Zulaykha finally found Yusuf that she saw in her dreams and declared her love. She tried to seduce him but he refused. So, she accused him of seducing her, and threw him into prison. Many years later, Yusuf came out of prison and became Aziz of Egypt. Although Zulaykha was old and lost her beauty then, she was still in love with Yusuf. On seeing her, Yusuf prayed for God to keep her youth and beauty and then married her. Soon after, Yusuf died and Zulaykha followed him.¹⁷ The story of Jami has Sufi aspects; where Zulaykha's lust for Yusuf represents the soul's longing for God.¹⁸

The story of Jami was full of details that attracted painters, who either favored. The often depicted scenes showed Zulaykha entering Egypt, the Egyptian women overwhelmed by Yusuf's beauty, Zulaykha trying to seduce Yusuf at her palace,¹⁹ and the marriage scene of Yusuf and Zulaykha.²⁰ Another famous Persian love story was the story of *Khusraw and Shirin*, presented by the gifted poet Nizami. The story tells the love story of the Sasanian king Khusraw II and the Armenian princess Shirin. Although the story bases on figures recorded in *Shahnamah* of Firdawsi, Nizami set forth more details in his Quintet. He gave the story a real unity, expanding it with his thoughts on religion, philosophy and government, thus, creating a romance of great dramatic intensity. The story recounts how Khusraw fell in love with Shirin on hearing about her outstanding beauty. He sent his attendant and painter, Shapur, to Armenia to find her. The latter traveled disguised as a monk, searched for Shirin's palace and managed to present her a portrait of Khusraw that made her fall in his love. Khusraw traveled to meet Shirin, the two lovers eventually met but Khusraw had to go back to reclaim his throne from his enemy Chubin. Longtime ago, the two lovers left each other, during which the sculptor Farhad fell in love with Shirin. Khusraw tried to convince Farhad to stay away from Shirin but in vain, so he sent him false news of Shirin's death that made Farhad kill himself. The two lovers unified and married, but their story ends tragically when an enemy killed Khusraw, and then Shirin takes her own life.²¹

Later, Jami and Hatifi adopted Nizami's version. Painters who produced fake scenes usually favored certain episodes of the story. Of these, scenes of Shirin looking at Khusraw's portrait,²² Khusraw looking – in surprise - at Shirin while having bath,²³ Khusraw at Shirin's palace or castle,²⁴ Shirin visits Farhad at the mountain,²⁵ and Shirin's wedding to Khusraw.²⁶ In his Quintet, Nizami presented *Layla and Majnun's* story, one of the famous love stories in Islamic world. Although the original story dates to the second half of the seventh century, it became popular when adopted and presented by Nizami. He based his story on the main character of the original story Qays b. Al-Mulawwah, who probably lived in the Najd desert. Nizami used all the available material about the story but he added, altered and adapted many details to create his tragic masterpiece. A story for Nizami about Qays and Lyla, who fall in love at school, when they grew up, Qays began composing poems about his love for Layla, so considered mad or *Majnun*. When he proposed for her, Layla's parents opposed their engagement, so separated the two lovers. Qays then fled his tribe and began wandering into the desert and lived with wild animals. Soon after, another man married Layla; she became ill and eventually died. Majnun visited her grave and died in the nearby.²⁷

Persian poets such as Jami and Hatifi adopted and copied Nizami's version of the story. Paintings of the story certain parts accompanied their works. The scenes favored by painters were: Layla and Qays at school, Majnun visits the camp of Layla,²⁸ Majnun in the desert,²⁹ and Majnun at Layla's grave.³⁰ Another romantic story presented by Nizami in his Quintet was the story of *Bahram Gur and the seven princesses*. This based on the classical story of Bahram Gur V, the Sasanian Persian King, son and successor of Yazdegerd I. He reigned from 420 to 438. Firdawsi mentioned this story in *Shahnamah*. It focused on Bahram Gur's adventures, military skill and efforts to ruling well. Nizami's version of the story is psychologically subtle, erotic and symbolic. The story recounts how Bahram Gur traveled to Yemen to learn kingship art, where he saw a room with seven portraits of seven princesses and fell in love with them. When he returned to Persia and became the king, he married the seven princesses and built a certain colored palace for each one. This focused on the stories that each princess tells him as he visits on successive days of the week. The symbolism of planets, colors, and the number seven pervades the romance.³¹ The paintings accompanied the story represented Bahram Gur with each princess in her palace. Each palace represented with different colored cloth and furniture,³² and represents Bahram Gur in the seven portraits room.³³

Painters of several art schools repeatedly copied and decorated the works of Nizami, Sa'adi, Khwadju, Jami and Hatifi. Yet, a general review of the paintings accompanying love stories, which were in lyrical poetry form, and reveals certain features. First, it seems that painters sketched certain scenes of each story. These scenes were the most expressive of the story, representing the plot and focusing on each story's turning point events. Second, the scenes were conservative in presenting the two lovers and never presented them in intimate postures unless by the end of the sixteenth century. The lover usually represented peeking at his beloved, visiting her place (camp, house or palace), displaying his heroic actions, or finally sitting with her to celebrate the triumph of their love. Even the famous scene of Khusraw looking at Shirin while bathing, which was depicting Shirin naked, was a conservative scene (pl.1). It intended to depict the surprise of Khusraw at seeing Shirin rather than depicting the beauties of Shirin's body and the seduction her naked body might imply.³⁴ Bihzad,³⁵ who famed with his realistic and innovative treatment, started to represent intimacy between the two lovers. His style and new ideas of traditional scenes helped the following artist to represent lovers in intimate postures; the following category will discuss. Bihzad in his representation of Yusuf escaping from seduces by Zulaykha in her maze-like palace was presenting a new approach of presenting lovers with intimacy. This

Love Stories and Lovers' Scenes in Persian Painting

tempting picture was on one wall, rather than between the painting's real characters (pl.2).³⁶ By the second half of the sixteenth century, paintings of Yusuf and Zulaikha story were more expressive. They depicted Yusuf embracing Zulaikha in their marriage scene (pl. 3, 4).³⁷

The third feature that marked lovers' scenes accompanying lyrical love stories was the care for both the main characters and the scene's background. Such care for details contributed in creating a detailed image of the story as described by the poet. The scene's details reinforce the mood and meaning of the story.

Paintings of lovers accompanying lyrical poetry or independently represented

Another category of lovers' paintings; accompanying romantic poetry (*ghazal*) or independently represented, became more frequent during the fifteenth till the end of the seventeenth century. They were not part of a story, depicted unspecified event with unidentified characters. During the fifteenth century, paintings of lovers were discrete. Such paintings represented two lovers sitting in a garden and amused by musicians (pl. 5, 6).³⁸ In other paintings, the lover was embracing his beloved (pl. 7)³⁹ or kneeling in front of her to offer her a cup of wine (pl. 8).⁴⁰ Those painting usually show a fruitful tree, where the two lovers sit under its shadow or the beloved leaned on. Often, lovers' scenes with wine bottles, or the lover presents his beloved a wine cup.

It was also during the fifteenth century that Bihzad introduced innovative daring themes in his paintings accompanying *Khamsa* of Nizami and *Bustan* of Sa'adi. His works relaxed the formality of the court, humanized the style of painting and thus, encouraged the following painters to tackle new themes, including scenes of lovers. During the sixteenth century, Muhammadi⁴¹ had his fingerprint in introducing a revolutionary style, which later became popular.⁴² Two lovers paintings of Muhammadi; the first shows two lovers by a pool (pl. 9),⁴³ and the second shows two lovers in a pavilion.⁴⁴ In the first painting, the lover is embracing his beloved with his left arm and offers her a cup of wine with his right. His beloved declines the wine-cup gracefully but firmly while still keeping her arm round his shoulder. The two lovers standing beside a pool; cypress and willow tree are behind, besides a large bottle in the middle. The second painting depicts the lover playing the tar in a garden pavilion while his beloved embraced him. Two other women play the tambourine and dulcimer, and a dark-skinned youth is there with a covered stem cup. On the pavilion's both sides, there are cypress and willow trees, a pool with a fountain stands at the base between two large vases.⁴⁵ Those two paintings give a clear idea of the typical Muhammadi style. It sketches slim and graceful figures with rounded, youthful and slightly smiling faces. Landscape details and decorated buildings kept to minimum and in general uses rather pale colors.

It is worth mentioning that other paintings depicting lovers realized during the sixteenth century. The common feature between them was representing the lover kneeling and pulling his beloved from her veil, dress or hand but she was priming and escaping from him (pl. 10, 11 and 12).⁴⁶ Muhammadi's scenes of lovers in particular presented more intimate physical contact for Riza 'Abbasi⁴⁷ to present more liberal scenes. Riza 'Abbasi was the master of these scenes, by whom many students affected. Riza 'Abbasi produced several paintings of lovers. The first (pl. 13) depicts two lovers in outdoor scene, sitting on a carpet, and a mountain is behind.⁴⁸ The lover approaches his beloved with a wine-cup in one hand and a wine bottle in the other, while she is leaning on a large cushion and embracing her lover in an inviting gesture. The mountain with few plants and trees decorate the background. A vase, a plate with fruits, and a bottle of wine occupy the carpet's three corners, leaving the fourth corner for the two lovers. The second painting (pl. 14) is a preparatory sketch depicting a seated lover holding his beloved face under her chin and putting his left hand on her knee. While his beloved looks at him in passion and holds his belt (sash).⁴⁹ The painting depicts an elderly man behind the two lovers and approaches the man. This sketch carried out as a painting (pl. 15) where a cupbearer -offering the two lovers two wine cups- represented instead of the elderly man, with more detailed background.⁵⁰ The fourth and most important painting of Riza (pl. 16), represents the most clearly erotic work Riza had produced up to 1630.⁵¹ It depicts two entwined lovers, where the beloved sits on the lap of her lover while he embraces her to hold her body and her face. The woman's uplifted breast and exposed navel, the man's hand penetrating her clothes, besides a half-drunken wine bottle, these reflects an approach toward eroticism and sexuality.⁵² A fifth painting of Riza (pl. 17), represents the two lovers in a more intimate pose;⁵³ the beloved sits on her lover's lap, who embraces her with both arms and leg. The pose of the two lovers, the eye contact between them, their close faces and intertwined bodies all reflect submission and passion.

Riza 'Abbsi who fashioned more distinct paintings rather than album paintings, displayed notable technical skill in presenting cloth surfaces, motion and the characters of his paintings. He displayed an enduring interest in novel subject-matter.⁵⁴ He succeeded in introducing the lovers as the paintings' main theme. He also managed to present innovative poses and compositions of the lovers that reflect passion and lust. His ingenious representation of the lovers encouraged other contemporaries and followers to depict even more openly sensual scenes of lovers. Among the lovers paintings assigned to Riza's followers, is a drawing with ink and watercolors (pl. 18) depicts the two lovers standing by a tree, the lover embracing his beloved and trying to kiss her.⁵⁵ Another painting assigned to Mu'in Musawir⁵⁶ depicts the two lovers sitting, and the lover is embracing his beloved with one arm and wraps her with his embroidered cloak with the other. A servant, who sits close to the lovers, offers the beloved a cup of wine and the wine bottle is in front of them.⁵⁷ A third painting assigned to Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni⁵⁸ depicts two men kneeling before a standing

woman. One man is embracing her waist, while she took his turban off and put it on her head.⁵⁹ A famous painting of Afzal al-Husayni⁶⁰ depicts the two lovers lain on two large cushions (pl. 19).⁶¹ The lover embraces his beloved and puts his hands on her naked belly with part of her under clothes. While the beloved leans on his right shoulder and offers him a cup of wine. The painting displays two barefooted lovers with a wine-cup, a wine bottle, a fruits plate and a vase before them. Muhammad Qasim's painting⁶² depicts two naked lovers (pl. 20), shows a more erotic scene.⁶³ The woman lies on a large cushion with naked body, although her veil is downward from her head behind her body. The lover is sitting on his knees next to her, embracing her with two arms and his cloak covers his shoulders and back. He is also wearing a European style hat, a cup and wine bottle placed before.

A review of lovers' paintings, either accompanying romantic poetry or individually depicted reveals several features. The scene depicts lovers standing or sitting, usually in outdoors scenes. The Physical contact between the two lovers varied between a simple touch to a tight embracing making the bodies of the two lovers one compact unit. Intimacy between lovers in fifteenth century paintings was restrict, but gradually increased to reach its maximum by the seventeenth century. This applies to the lovers' gestures. During the fifteenth century, the paintings usually depicted the beloved glimpsing shyness and fondness towards the lover who is flirting with her. Then, more eye contact presented in later paintings with inviting gestures or even tempting looks. On the other hand, some paintings depicted the lovers with a dreamy look and unfocused facial expressions reflect their mental separation from the physical surroundings. Minimized background details depicting one or two trees beside or behind lovers; besides plants and sometimes rocks. Wine cups and bottles were common in all lovers' paintings from the fifteenth till the end of the seventeenth century.

Analysis of lovers' scenes and reasons for their appearance

Lovers' scenes in Persian painting appear in two main types. Scenes with love stories; written in lyrical poetry form, and scenes with romantic poetry (ghazal) or independent. The comparison between the scenes' two categories revealed the following facts:

The first category appeared during the fourteenth century, and continued till the end of the sixteenth century. Scenes varied in style according to the artistic school and artists' background. They were consistent with the story events, focusing on important episodes. They also showed continual care for the characters and as well as background details to draw an ideal image of the two lovers' environment. This highlights meaning of love rather than appearance of love. However, scenes were traditional in presenting the two lovers, and never presented them in intimate postures unless by the end of the sixteenth century. *Sufi* features of most famous Persian love stories forced the painters to be more traditional, while depicting the paintings with the story. Therefore, most lovers' scenes depicted minimum physical contact between them.

The second category appeared during the second half of the fifteenth century and continued till the end of the seventeenth century. These were independent scenes with unidentified characters. Those scenes were more liberal than the first category scenes, and reflected intimacy reached its supreme in the seventeenth century scenes. Unlike the first category paintings, painters did not pay much attention for the details of the background. Wine cups and bottles were common in this category scenes background. This was a clear influence of literature on painting since Persian poets as early as Hafiz usually mentioned lovers with wine in their romantic poems. Wine was the comfort from love distress, so lover liked to become drunk to cure love woes. Therefore, scenes depicted the lover presenting a wine cup to his beloved, the *Saqi* or servant presenting wine to the two lovers, or just depicting wine bottles before them. The scenes' first category with other scenes, flourished because of Persian court patronage. Great works of famous Persian poets with paintings of great painters in manuscripts; these considered among the rulers' successes to brag. There was a constant association between brightening the ruler, stable society, and incentive art. Therefore, political instability during the second half of the fifteenth century overshadowed painting; since painters moved from one court to another depending on patrons.⁶⁴

During the second half of the sixteenth century a crucial change has occurred and affected painting. Shah Tahmasp, one major patron of painting and among Bihzad learners. He became a religious bigot and turned his back on painting.⁶⁵ His successors; Isma'íl II and Muhammad Khudabanda didn't provide artists the needed care. As a result, artists could no longer live on royal patronage and they depended increasingly on commissions from private citizens. Therefore, new expressions tested and new trials made to break out of the mold of classical painting.⁶⁶ Besides, painters produced single-page portraits and individual paintings. The manuscripts of that era were no longer sketched texts but albums of paintings.⁶⁷ Since painters sold their works to anyone who could afford them, they chose new themes for their paintings might prevail among new customers. Those paintings appeared by the end of the sixteenth century, included scenes of workingmen, shaykhs, dervishes, courtiers and courtesans, elegantly clad youths and lovers.

These conditions caused the second category of lovers' scenes to appear. The new scenes were differing from those accompanying various stories: they were independent, with fewer details on the background, focusing on the two lovers with more liberal positions. Although Muhammadi was the first painter to introduce lovers with more intimate postures, Riza °Abbasi had a deep role in presenting them in varied liberal voluptuous and astonishing postures. His paintings were popular during the seventeenth century; and his followers and students extensively copied and mirrored them.

An important question might arise about the social conditions that led the society to accept such erotic flagrant paintings as a depiction of sensual love. In fact, the causes influenced Persian artists between 1630 and 1722 can answer. The work of Riza °Abbasi was the first cause to influence Persian painting during the seventeenth century. His early advanced works introduced new subjects; yet, his works after he left the court atelier to consort with lowlife people were rebellious.⁶⁸ When he returned to the court atelier he intended to break all the molds and his works became more ponderous. His lovers' paintings in particular depicted more openly sensual scenes. The clearly erotic lovers painting of Riza (pl. 16) produced during the reign of Shah Safi (1619-42), who was addict. This reflected Safi's attitude to eroticism and sexuality.⁶⁹ This explains why Riza's contemporaries and followers found suitable environment when they mirrored Riza's works and even outdo him with more erotic paintings. The same environment was present during the reign of Shah °Abbas II (1642-66) who also addicted to drugs, wine and sex.

The European influence was the second cause to affect Persian Painting during the seventeenth century. In fact, relations between Iran and Europe have existed for several centuries, but slightly during the earlier years.⁷⁰ By the early sixteenth century Shah °Abbas I had received ambassadors from Spain, Portugal, Russia and England. By the late 1620s the flow of the European visitors to the court of Isfahan increased; introducing the Iranian public to European art, dress and behavior. Clearly, those foreigners fascinated Riza °Abbasi, who inspired his paintings' themes from their lives.

By the mid-seventeenth century; trade with Europe finely proved and Europeans visited Iran. They preferred single paintings and portraits; and their production was to satisfy their taste. They even brought their pattern books with them; so artists can follow their style in products.⁷¹ Besides, Shah °Abbas II have favored Western art that he sent the Persian painter Muhammad Zaman to Rome to study Western art.⁷²As a result, European style of art, clothes and themes prevailed and had its market, besides the spread of lovers' paintings to satisfy the need of such market.

We should also mention the influence of literature on painting. Most poems of al-Rumi, Hafiz Jami and other fewer fame poets -prevailed from the 12th century- were romantic with Sufi features. Love in such poems represented in a metaphorical context; where symbols of love, suffering and wish for the beloved intimating the soul yearning for God.⁷³ The paintings accompanying those poems reflect love displaying both real and metaphorical features. During the seventeenth century, real romantic poetry prevailed; representing the lover and his beloved with all what happens between them in simple words without metaphorical meanings.⁷⁴

In other words, love represented in liberal environment in which sensation features highlighted and erotic feelings stressed. Thus that era paintings reflected the dominating taste. It is worth mentioning that lovers' paintings during the seventeenth century were model of the art reflecting the decay of the Persian society. Foreign standards retreat of Sufism and decline of morals affected Europeans in the Persian society. These all took part in accepting many ethics, previously rejected by the Persian society on religious or ethical basis, such as addicting drugs, wine, and sex. Because of such moral decline, an era of religious intolerance has occurred during the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn (1694- 1722), and such paintings of lovers disappeared.

Conclusion

Paintings with lovers' scenes appeared in Persian painting as early as the fourteenth century, and were at first accompanying classical love stories. Such paintings were conservative and depicting scenes related to the story. By the fifteenth century, another category of lovers' scenes appeared in Persian painting, and were accompanying romantic lyrical poems. They presented more intimate lovers' scenes. By the end of the sixteenth century, single independent paintings appeared, and the lovers' scenes increased, especially during the seventeenth century representing liberal erotic scenes. These focused on the sensation features of love, and depicted the moral decline of the Persian society.

Plates



Pl. 1: Welch, Royal Persian Manuscripts, pl. 25



Pl. 2 : Roxburg, "Kamal al-Din Bihzad", fig. 1



Pl. 3: Grube, The Classical Style, fig.78



Pl. 4: Robinson, Persian Painting, fig. 25



Pl. 5: Grube, The Classical Style, fig.15



Pl. 6:

www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=F1907.275



Pl. 7: Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig.14



Pl. 8: Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig.16



Pl. 9: Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, pl. 46



Pl. 10: Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig.48



Pl. 11: <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/a-young-man-offering-a-cup-of-wine-to-a-girl-13883>



Pl. 12: <http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.316>



Pl. 13:

<http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.315>



Pl. 14:

<http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.311>



Pl. 15: <http://www.corbisimages.com/stock-photo/rights-managed/IH100317/miniature-painting-of-a-bird-and-scene>



Pl. 16:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/451023>



Pl. 17: Kühnel, *Miniaturmalerei*, 79



Pl. 18:

www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=F1954.28



Pl. 19: Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, pl. 68



Pl. 20:

asianartnewspaper.com/sites/default/files/articles_additional/1950%20130%20LoversDalliance.jpg

Endnotes

- ¹ Sunna'i was one of the famous Persian poets of the 6th century A.H./12th A.D. The date of his birth is uncertain and his death was between 525 A.H. / 1130 A.D. and 545 A.H./1150 A.D. He was famous for romantic poetry. Es'ad Qandil, *Funun al-She'r al-Farisi*= Arts of Persian Poetry (Cairo, 1981), 204-209.
- ² Attar, Farid al-Din Muhammad b. Ibrahim was a Persian mythical poet. The dates of his birth and death cannot be fixed with certainty. What is accepted is that he was born in 513 A.H./ 1119 A.D. and died in 586 A.H./ 1190 A.D. The main works attributed to him are *Mantik al-Tayr*, *Ilahi-nama*, *Musibat-nama*, *Ushturnama*, *Djawhar al-Dhat*, *Mazhar al-Adja'ib* and *Lisan al-Ghayb*. H. Ritter, "ATTAR," *Encyclopedia of Islam* I (Leiden, 1954-2002), 752-755.
- ³ Al-Rumi, Jalal al-Din was one of the greatest Persian poets. He was born in 604 A.H. / 1207 A.D. and died in 672 A.H/ 1273 A.D. He was a student of Shams al-Din al-Tabrizi who attracted him to Sufism. Al-Rumi was famous for his romantic poetry which has Sufi aspects. Qandil, *Funun al-She'r*, 210- 216.
- ⁴ Sa' di, Abu 'Abd Allah Musharrif al-Din b. Muslih was one of the great Persian poets. He lived between 610-15 A.H/ 1213-19 A.D. and 691 A.H./1292 A.D. The most important of his work were *Bustan* which was completed in 655 A.H./1237 A.D. and *Gulistan* which was completed a year later. He was famous for *ghazals* and his works has been a major formative influence on subsequent writing in Persia. R. Davis, "SA'DI," *Encyclopedia of Islam* VIII, 719-723.
- ⁵ Hafiz, Shams al-Din Muhammad Shirazi was a Persian lyric poet and commonly considered the pre-eminent master of the *ghazal* form. He lived between 717-26 A.H. /1317-26 A.D. and 791 A.H. /1389 A.D. His greatest achievement

- was his *Diwan* which is thought to be completed in 770 A.H./1368 A.D. G. M. Wickens, "HAFIZ," *Encyclopedia of Islam* III, 55-57; Qandil, *Funun al-She'r*, 217-222.
- ⁶ Jami, °Abd al-Rahman Nur al-Din b. Nezam al-Din Ahmad-e Dasti was a Persian poet, scholar and Sufi. He was born in 817 A.H./1414 A.D and died in 898 A.H./1492 A.D. Jami's most important work were his *Diwan* and *Haft Awrang* or the seven thrones. The latter included seven poems which were *Selselat al-Dahab*, *Salaman o Absal*, *Tohfah al-ahrar*, *Sohbat al-abrar*, *Yusuf and Zulykha*, *Layla and Majnun* and *Kerad-nama-ye Eskandari*. Paul Losensky, "Jami," *Encyclopedia Iranica* XIV, 469-475.
- ⁷ Oleg Graber, *Mostly Miniatures: An Introduction to Persian Painting* (N.J, 2001), 104. Although the story of Yusuf and Zulykha by Firdawsi was older than that story of Vis and Ramin by Gurgani, the former was probably classified as an epic story not romantic.
- ⁸ Muhammad Kafafi, "Al-Adab al-Farisi," in *Turath Faris= The Heritage of Persia* (Cairo, 1959), 273.
- ⁹ Graber, *Mostly Miniatures*, 104.
- ¹⁰ Nizami, Djamal al-Din Abu Muhammad Ilyas b. Yusuf b. Zaki Mu'ayyad was one of the great Persian poets and thinkers. He lived between 535 A.H./1141 A.D. and 575-613 A.H./1180-1217 A.D. His greatest achievement was the Quintet or *Khamsa* which includes five poems: *Makhzan al-Asrar* or the Treasury of Mysteries (completed in 582 A.H./1184-5 A.D.), the romance of *Khusraw and Shirin* (completed after 581A.H./1184A.D.), the romance of *Layla and Majnun* (written in 584 A.H./1188 A.D), *Haft Paykar* or the story of Bahram Gur and the seven princesses (completed in 593A.H./1197A.D.) and *Iskandar-nama* (written in 587A.H./1191A.D.). P. Chelkowski, "NIZAMI GANDJWI," *Encyclopedia of Islam* VIII, 76-81; Hasan al-Basha, *Al-Taswir al-Islami fi al-°sur al-Wusta= Islamic Painting in Medieval Times* (Cairo, 1992), 121-123.
- ¹¹ Khwadju, Kamal al-Din Abu l-°ata' Mahmud b. Ali was one of the great Persian poets. He was born in 689 A.H./1290 A.D. and died in 753 A.H./1352 A.D. His works include his *Diwan*, *Khamsa* (including *Humay u Humayun*, *Gul u Nawruz*, *Kamal-nama*, *Rawdat al-Anwar* and *Gawhar-nama*) and other compositions of less importance. Iraj Dehghan, "KH°ADJU," *Encyclopedia of Islam* IV, 909-910.
- ¹¹ Hatifi, °Abd Allah was a Persian poet and nephew of °Abd al-Rahman Jami. He was born in 858 A.H./ 1454 A.D. and died in 927 A.H./ 1521 A.D. He was known for his *Khamsa* which was famous in the Ottoman Empire and India; proofing his widespread fame. *Khamsa* of Hatifi included *Layla and Majnun*, *Shirin and Khusruw*, *Haft manzar*, *Timur-nama* and *Fotuhah-e Shahi*. Hatifi died before completing the last work. Michele Bernardini, "HATEFI, °ABD-ALLAH," *Encyclopedia Iranica* XII, 55-57.
- ¹¹ Sheila R. Canby, *Persian Painting* (British Museum Press, 2004), 44.
- ¹² Hatifi, °Abd Allah was a Persian poet and nephew of °Abd al-Rahman Jami. He was born in 858 A.H./ 1454 A.D. and died in 927 A.H./ 1521 A.D. He was known for his *Khamsa* which was famous in the Ottoman Empire and India; proofing his widespread fame. *Khamsa* of Hatifi included *Layla and Majnun*, *Shirin and Khusruw*, *Haft manzar*, *Timur-nama* and *Fotuhah-e Shahi*. Hatifi died before completing the last work. Michele Bernardini, "HATEFI, °ABD-ALLAH," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* XII, 55-57.
- ¹³ Canby, *Persian Painting*, 44.
- ¹⁴ This story was written by Gurgani in about 446 A.H./ 1054 A.D. Amin Badawi, *Al-Kesah fi al-Adab al-Farisi= The Story in Persian Literature* (Cairo, 1964), 229-232.
- ¹⁵ Badawi, *Al-Kesah*, 232.
- ¹⁶ Badawi, *Al-Kesah*, 237.
- ¹⁷ Badawi, *Al-Kesah*, 232-257; Ramadan Metwali, *Kesat Yusuf wa Zulykha= The Story of Yusuf and Zulykha* (Cairo, 2008), 203-239.
- ¹⁸ Metwali, *Kesat Yusuf wa Zulykh*, 226.
- ¹⁹ Graber, *Mostly Miniatures*, fig. 29.
- ²⁰ B.W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings* (London, 1952), fig. 25.
- ²¹ Priscilla P. Soucek, "Nizami on painters and painting," *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Richard Ettinghausen (New York, 1992), 15-18; Chelkowski, "NIZAMI GANDJWI," *Encyclopedia of Islam* III, 77-78; Yolter-Yildirim, "A 1498-99 Khusraw Va Shirin: Turning the Pages of an Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005), 95-104.
- ²² B. W. Robinson, *Persian Drawings From the 14th through the 19th Centuries* (London, 1965), fig. 29

Love Stories and Lovers' Scenes in Persian Painting

- Soucek, "Nizami on Painters and Painting", fig. 4,5; Yolter-Yildirim, "A 1498-99 Khusraw va Shirin", fig. 9.
- ²³ Ernst Kühnel, *Miniaturmalerei Im Islamischen Orient* (Berlin, 1923), fig. 68; Robinson, *Persian Paintings*, fig. 14; Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, fig.6; Ernst J. Grube, *The Classical Style in Islamic Painting* (1968), fig. 62; S. C. Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts* (London, 1976), fig. 25.
- ²⁴ Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, fig. 7; Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig.57; Graber, *Mostly Miniatures*, fig. 20, 23.
- ²⁵ Robinson, *Persian Paintings*, fig. 21; Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 91; Yolter-Yildirim, "A 1498-99 Khusraw va Shirin", fig. 11
- ²⁶ Robinson, *Persian Paintings*, fig.15; Yolter-Yildirim, "A 1498-99 Khusraw va Shirin", fig. 12
- ²⁷ Laurence Binyon, "Persian Painting", *Journal of Royal Society of Arts* 79 (1930), 57; Chelkowski, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* III, 78.
- ²⁸ Graber, *Mostly Miniatures*, fig. 36 in other scenes Majnun was led by an old woman to the camp of Layla: Zaki M. Hasan, *Funun al-Islam= Arts of Islam* (Cairo, 1948), fig. 135; Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts*, fig. 28.
- ²⁹ Hasan, *Funun al-Islam*, fig. 131; Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, fig. 49; Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts*, fig. 30.
- ³⁰ Hasan, *Funun al-Islam*, fig. 117.
- ³¹ Hanaway, "Bahrām", Vol. III, Fasc. 5, 514-522
- ³² Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 63
- ³³ Hasan, *Funun al-Islam*, fig. 116
- ³⁴ Although this scene was repeatedly depicted by various painters and in various regions, they all maintained the same features and the paintings were generally conservative. Shirin was depicted inside water which covers the lower half of her body while her long hair descends to cover her breasts.
- ³⁵ Bihzad, Kamal al-Din, was a famous Persian painter. He was born in Herat in 854 A.H./1450 A.D. and became a leading painter at the court of sultan Husayn Mirza and his vizier Mir Ali Shir Nawa'i. Then he moved to Tabriz, where Shah Isma'il made him director of the royal library. Then he worked under the patronage of his son, Shah Tahmasp till his death. Bihzad gained fame and was known for his innovative ideas of paintings and his introduction of a greater measure of realism or naturalism in the Persian painting. For more details about Bihzad see: Vera Kubickova, *Persian Miniatures*, trans. R.Finlayson-Samsour (London, n.d.) 27-28; Zaki M. Hasan, *Al-Taswir fi al-Islam 'ind al-Furs= Painting in Islam at Persia*, (Cairo, 1936), 48-53; Eric Schroeder, "The Persian Exhibition and the Bihzad Problem", *Bulletin of the Fogg Art Museum*, 7, 1 (Nov., 1937), 3-14; Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, 20-21; Muhammad Mustafa, "Al-Taswir al-Irani fi al-'srin al-Timuri wa al-Safawi", in *Derajat fi al-Fan al-Farisi= Studies in Persian Art*, (Cairo, 1970), 20-23; Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts*, 16-18; Canby, *Persian Painting*, 74-75; David Rice, *Islamic Art* (London, 1991), 222-226; Hasan al-Basha, *Mawsu'at al-'emara wal-Athar wal-Funun al-Islamiyya III* (Cairo, 1999), 63-69; David J. Roxburg, "Kamal al-Din Bihzad and Authorship in Persianate Painting", *Muqarnas*, 17 (2000), 119-146; Naglaa Hasan al-Sarraf, *Al-qiam al-faniyya li-a'mal Bihzad fi funun al-kitab*, (MA Thesis, Helwan University, 2004), 82-90.
- ³⁶ This painting was representing the seduction of Yusuf. It is a painting from Būstān of Sa'di that was dated 893 A.H./1488 A.D. and preserved in the General Egyptian Book Organization in Cairo (Adab Farsi 908).
- ³⁷ Pl. 3 was attributed to the Qazwin style and produced between 1572 and 1581 A.D. and pl. 4 was attributed to Shiraz style and produced in 988A.H./1580 A.D. Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 78; Robinson, *Persian Paintings*, fig. 25.
- ³⁸ Pl. 5 was attributed to Heart and was produced in 813 A.H./1410 A.D. Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 15.
- pl. 6 was attributed to Turkoman period during late 15th century. The latter is now preserved at Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. <http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=F1907.275>
- ³⁹ Pl. 7 was attributed to Samarkand or Heart and produced in 813 A.H. /1410 A.D. Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 14.
- ⁴⁰ Pl. 8 was attributed to Heart style and was produced during the beginning the 15th century. Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig. 16.
- ⁴¹ Muhammadi is known as the son and pupil of Sultan Muhammad. We don't know when exactly he was born but it was probably between 933 A.H./1526 and 937 A.H./1530 A.D. . He grew up in Heart and by the age of thirty he was fully active and enjoyed a high reputation. Muhammadi, like most of the painters working in the second half of the sixteenth century, was most concerned with single paintings depicting individuals. He also made album paintings for the *Haft Awrang* of Ibrahim Mirza, a manuscript produced in 1580 including *Gulistan* and *Bustan* of Sa'di, *Divan* of

Hafiz and other minor works. For more details about Muhammadi see: Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (London, 1961), 155-159; David Rice, *Islamic Painting: A Survey* (London, 1971); Anthony Welch, "Painting and Patronage under Shah Abbas I", *Iranian Studies* 7, ¾ (1974), 466-370; B.W. Robinson, *Studies in Persian Art II* (London, 1993), 63-83; Abolala Soudavar, "The Age of Muhammadi", *Muqarnas*, 17 (2000), 53-72; Canby, *Persian Painting*, 92-94.

⁴² Abolala Soudavar, "The Age of Muhammadi", 53

⁴³ This painting was attributed to Muhammadi and was produced in about 1575 A.D. It is now preserved at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, Pl. 46; Soudavar, "The Age of Muhammadi", fig. 27.

⁴⁴ Robinson mentioned that this painting is preserved in Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library in Istanbul (R. 1012ff 2a) but Soudavar said that it is preserved at Keir Collection in Surrey. Robinson, *Studies in Persian Art II*, 68; Soudavar, "The Age of Muhammadi", 54.

⁴⁵ Robinson, *Studies in Persian Art II*, 69.

⁴⁶ Pl. 10 was attributed to Bukhara style and was produced in about 957 A.H. /1550 A.D. Grube, *The Classical Style*, fig.48.

Pl. 11 was attributed to Heart during the 16th century and it is currently preserved in Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/a-young-man-offering-a-cup-of-wine-to-a-girl-13883>

Pl. 12 was attributed to Qazwin style in about 1590 A.D. and it is currently preserved at Freer art Gallery.

<http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.316>

⁴⁷ Riza °Abbasi was a leading artist at the court of the Safawid Shah °Abbas I. He was the son of the court artist Ali Asghar. Sources mentioned that Riza abandoned, or at least rebelled, his art in mid-career (between 1013 A.H./ 1604 A.D and 1019 A.H./ 1610 A.D.) and took up distinctly lower-class companions. In 1019-44 A.H./ 1610-35 A.D. he resumed his court employment and introduced a ponderous figural style, a palette of half-tones and multi-figure compositions to his oeuvre. His works strongly influenced contemporaries and followers throughout the 11th/17th century. For more details about Riza °Abbasi see: Gary, *Persian Painting*, 159-170; Rice, *Islamic Painting*, 154-185; Anthony Welch, "Painting and Patronage", 478-482; Abolala Soudavar, "Riza-e °Abbasi and Asfahan Painting" in *Persian Courts* (New York, 1992), 261-301; Sheila R. Canby, "RIDA °ABBASI", *Encyclopedia of Islam* III, 509-510; Sheila R. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer: Drawings and Paintings of Riza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan* (London, 1996), 19-22; Ahmad Hasan Ahmad, *Al-Qiam al-Fanniyya fi Rusum al-Kitab lil-madrassa al-Safawiyya al-Thanya bi-Iran min Khilal A°mal Rida °Abbasi*, (MA Thesis, Helwan University, 1997), 140-144; al-Basha, *Mawsu°t III*, 86-97; Canby, *Persian Painting*, 98-101; Abolala Soudavar, "Le Chant Du Monde: A Disenchanted Echo of Safavid Art History", *Iran* 46 (2008), 269.

⁴⁸ The attribution of this painting to Riza °Abbasi is not certain but it was produced in 1620 A.D. following his style. It is preserved in Freer Art Gallery. <http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.315>

⁴⁹ This painting was attributed to Riza °Abbasi and produced in about 1019-24 A.H. /1610-15 A.D. It is now preserved in Freer Art Gallery. <http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=S1986.311>

⁵⁰ This painting was made by Riza °Abbasi between 1039 A.H./1629 and 1045 A.H./1635 A.D. It is preserved now in Seattle Art Museum. <http://www.corbisimages.com/stock-photo/rights-managed/IH100317/miniature-painting-of-a-bird-and-scene>

⁵¹ This painting was attributed to Riza °Abbasi in about 1040 A.H /1630 A.D. It is preserved in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. <http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/451023>

⁵² Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer*, 173; Ahmad, *A°mal Rida °Abbasi*, 312-313.

⁵³ This painting was attributed to Riza °Abbasi and produced in 1041 A.H. /1631 A.D. Kühnel, *Miniaturmalerei*, 79.

⁵⁴ Canby, *Persian Painting*, 98-91.

⁵⁵ This painting was attributed to Safavid period, c. 1630 A.D. but its painter was unknown. It is preserved in Freer Art Gallery. <http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/singleObject.cfm?ObjectNumber=F1954.28>

⁵⁶ Mu°in Musawir was Riza °Abbasi's most prolific and well-known student, who created numerous single-page figural compositions and contributed to several illustrated texts. He was active from 1040/1630 until the early 12th/late 17th century. He was highly influenced by his master and his style was marked with Western pictorial concepts that became increasingly popular among his contemporaries. Al-Basha, *Mawsu°t*, 100-103; Massumeh Farhad, "Isfahan: School of Painting and Calligraphy", *Encyclopaedia Iranica* XIV, 40-43

⁵⁷ Ahmad, *A°mal Rida °Abbasi*, 440- 441.

Love Stories and Lovers' Scenes in Persian Painting

- ⁵⁸ Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni was one of the followers of Riza °Abbasi. He was active during the end of 16th till mid 17th century. Al-Basha, *Mawsu't*, 98.
- ⁵⁹ Ahmad, *A°mal Rida °Abbasi*, 457-458.
- ⁶⁰ Afzal al-Husayni was a Persian painter who was active during the reign of Shah °Abbas II (1052-77 A.H./1642-66A.D.). He was famous for his paintings in the extensively illustrated *Šāh-nāma* of Ferdowsī That was made for Shah °Abbas II and now in the Leningrad Public Library. Half of its paintings were attributed to Afzal al-Husayni in addition to a number of single paintings following Isfahan style. P. P. Soucek, "Afzal Al-Hosayni," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, I/6, 600-601.
- ⁶¹ This painting was made by Afzal al-Husayni in 1057 A.H. /1647 A.D. It is preserved now in Victoria and Albert Museum. Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, pl. 68.
- ⁶² Muhammad Qasim was one of the followers of Riza °Abbasi who gained fame by 1071 A.H. /1660 A.D. He painted many single paintings and was very faithful to Riza's style. Al-Basha, *Mawsu't*, 99.
- ⁶³ This painting was made by Muhammad Qasim and it is now preserved in Harvard Art Museum. http://asianartnewspaper.com/sites/default/files/articles_additional/1950%20130%20LoversDalliance.jpg
- ⁶⁴ Canby, *Persian Painting*, 67
- ⁶⁵ Gary, *Persian Painting*, 138; Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts*, 23; Canby, *Persian Painting*, 83
- ⁶⁶ Robinson, *Persian Drawings*, 23; Welch, *Royal Persian Manuscripts*, 23
- ⁶⁷ Lisa Golombek, "Toward a Classification of Islamic Painting", in *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Richard Ettinghausen (New York, 1992), 23; Hasan al-Basha, *Mawsu't al-°emara wal-Athar wal-Funun al-Islamyia III* (Cairo, 1999), 81.
- ⁶⁸ Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer*, 77-94
- ⁶⁹ Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer*, 173; Canby, *Persian Painting*, 99.
- ⁷⁰ S.J. Falk, *Qajar Painting: Persian Oil Paintings of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (London, 1972), 18.
- ⁷¹ Canby, *Persian Painting*, 108.
- ⁷² Gary, *Persian Painting*, 168-170.
- ⁷³ Anthony Welch, "Worldly and Otherworldly Love in Safavi Painting" in *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars* (London, 2000), 301-317.
- ⁷⁴ Muhammad al-Saeed Abdel Moamen, *Al-Zawahir al-Adabiyya fi al-°asr al-Safawi* = Literary Phenomena during the Safavid Period (Cairo, 1978), 368.

قصص الحب ومناظر المحبين في التصوير الفارسي

يهدف البحث إلى دراسة مناظر المحبين في التصوير الفارسي منذ القرن الرابع عشر وحتى القرن السابع عشر. هذه المناظر يمكن تقسيمها إلى مجموعتين: الأولى مناظر تصاحب قصص الحب الشهيرة التي شاعت في الأدب الفارسي مثل قصة خسرو وشيرين، وليلى والمجنون، ويوسف وزليخة، وبهرام جور و أزدة وهي تصور مقاطع مهمة من تلك القصص. والمجموعة الثانية تمثل مناظر صاحبت الشعر الغنائي أو شعر الغزل أو أخرى ظهرت مستقلة تماماً عن أي نصوص. والمجموعة الأخيرة ظهرت في القرن السابع عشر وكانت تعكس التحرر. لذا يهدف البحث لدراسة المجموعتين من المناظر والمقارنة بينهما مع توضيح سمات كل مجموعة. كما يهدف أيضاً للوقوف على الأسباب التي أدت لظهور مناظر المحبين في كل فترة وتحولها من مناظر متحفظة إلى مناظر متحررة تنسم بالجرأة.