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MINIATURE FROM A COPY OF AL-SARAI'S *NAHJ AL-FARADIS* (THE PATHS OF PARADISE)

IRAN, HERAT; C. 1465

LEAF: 40.8 × 30 CM

On this painting, signed by Ali al-Sultani, Gabriel points to a gigantic angel, who in turn points to the Angel with Seventy Heads.

The manuscript was written in Middle Turkish with the Uighur alphabet, which was used in Timurid Central Asia. It was commissioned by Timur's great-grandson Abu Said and in many respects is a copy of a manuscript that was made for Timur's son Shah Rukh in around 1437. The latter manuscript is now in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris. Both manuscripts have Ottoman Turkish notes at the top of the pages.

Scholars traditionally assumed that there was no studio in Herat under Abu Said capable of producing book art on a high level. These miniatures refute this assumption and explain how there could be an artistic renaissance during the reign of Husayn Bayqara (r. 1469-1506)

in which Iran's greatest painter, Bihzad, also played a part.

“The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel” (verso)

Published in:

recto

Eleanor Sims: “The Nahj al-Faradis of Sultan Abu Sa’id ibn Sultan Muhammad ibn Mirranshah: an illustrated Timurid ascension text of the “Interim” period” in *Journal of the David Collection*, 4, 2014, cat.no. 5, fig. 19, pp. 124-125;

Daniel C. Waugh: "The David Collection: Journal of the David Collection. 4" in *The Silk Road*, 2014, 12, Featured museum, I: fig. 3;

verso

Eleanor Sims: “The Nahj al-Faradis of Sultan Abu Sa’id ibn Sultan Muhammad ibn Mirranshah: an illustrated Timurid ascension text of the “Interim” period” in *Journal of the David Collection*, 4, 2014, cat.no. 6, fig. 21, pp. 126-127;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, cat.no. 27;

Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen: *Muslimernes Muhammad - og alle andres*, København 2020, p. 71;