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A COPY OF FARID AL-DIN ATTAR'S *MANTIQ AL-TAYR*

WESTERN IRAN; C. 1400

LEAF: 16.5 × 11.2 CM

The Sufi poet Farid al-din Attar's *Conference of the Birds* is a frame story whose central figure, a hoopoe, is a kind of spiritual leader for a number of other birds. The first miniature (fol. 37v) is from one of the book's explanatory anecdotes about how the devout Arab Sheikh Sanan falls in love with a Christian maiden from Rum (Byzantium).

It has not yet been determined whether the manuscript is Jalayirid or early Timurid, but the skilled artist endeavored to imbue the scene with local color. For example, the Madonna-like maiden is found in an exotic building with a church tower. Despite its small format, the depiction is monumental.

*Sheikh San'an and the Christian maiden* (detail of fol. 37v)

Fol. 30v, "A king shoots an apple on his favourite's head"

Fol. 104v, "Majnun sneaks into Layla's encampment disguised as a sheep"

Fol. 104v, "The Wazir's son appears before the king" (fol. 138v)

Published in:  
Palais Galliera, Paris 1970, (part of) lot 112;

fol. 37v,

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 13;

Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Sufisme: islams mystiske vej*, Davids Samling, København 2011, pp. 44-45;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, cat.no. 55;