

Add. 25900

## خمسه نظامی

**Date** Copy dated 846 (1442/43)  
**Title** Nizāmī Ganjavī, *Khamsah*  
**Content** The five poems making up the *Khamsah* by Nizāmī Ganjavī (1140 or 41-1202 or 3), containing 19 whole-page miniatures, one (f [41r](#)) thought to date from the mid-15th century; 14 in the Herat later-Timurid style; and four (ff [234v](#), [245v](#), [250v](#) and [271v](#)) are Tabriz/Safavid work c. 1535-40. Three paintings ( ff. [121v](#), [161r](#) and [231v](#)) are attributed to Bihzad.

Illustrations:

([3v](#)) A prince and his retinue being entertained at night in a garden.

([4r](#)) Preparations for a banquet.

**Add. 25900, ff 5v-30v**

*Makhzan al-asrār*

Illustrations:

([18r](#)) Sulṭān Sanjar and the old woman.

**Add. 25900, ff 31v-100v**

*Khusraw u Shīrīn*

Illustrations:

([41r](#)) Shīrīn looks at the portrait of Khusraw watched by Shāpūr.

([44v](#)) Khusraw watches Shīrīn bathing.

([70r](#)) Farhād carries Shīrīn and her horse. Sculptures on the rocks.

([77v](#)) A servant laying a carpet before Khusraw's horse as he arrives at Shīrīn's castle. Inscription dated Rajab 895/1490 (not 898 as stated in Titley, 1977).

**Add. 25900, ff 101v-150v**

*Laylā u Majnūn*

Illustrations:

([110v](#)) Laylā and Majnūn at school. Inscriptions on the architrave and below.

([114v](#)) Majnūn at the Ka'bah with his father and other pilgrims. Inscriptions above door.

([121v](#)) Battle of the tribes watched by Majnūn. Ascribed to Bihzād in margin between verses.

([130v](#)) Majnūn with animals in the desert.

**Add. 25900, ff 151v-205r**

*Haft paykar*

Illustrations:

([161r](#)) Bahrām Gūr kills the dragon. Ascribed to Bihzād in margin between verses.

([173r](#)) Bahrām Gūr with the Indian Princess in the Black Pavilion.

([188r](#)) Māhān confronted by *dīvs* finds his horse transformed into a seven-headed dragon (story told by the Princess of Khvarazm).

**Add. 25900, ff 206v-319v**

*Iskandarnāmah*

Beginning with the *Sharafnāmah* (ff 206v-281r)

Illustrations:

[\(231v\)](#) Battle between Iskandar and Dārā. Ascribed to Bihzād in margin between verses.

[\(234v\)](#) Iskandar comforts the dying Dārā.

[\(245v\)](#) Nūshābah recognises Iskandar from his portrait. Inscription.

[\(250v\)](#) Iskandar visiting the hermit.

[\(271v\)](#) Iskandar lassoing Kintāl, the Russian champion.

Followed by the *Khīradnāmah* (ff 282v-319v).

**Language** Persian

**Physical description**

Material: Paper.

Foliation: 319 ff

Dimensions: Leaf 19.1 x 12.1 cm

Date: Colophon on f 30v: 846 (1442-43)

Script: Nasta'liq; 25 lines to a page in 4 columns

Decorations: 19 single paintings. First four pages richly illuminated. Decorated headings

Binding: European brown leather binding.

**Ownership** Acquired by James R. Ballantyne, Nov. 1837. Purchased by the British Museum from Mrs. Ballantyne 12 November 1864 (f 1r), or 30 August 1865 (f 320v).

**Bibliography** Ch. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1879-1883), [p. 570](#).  
Norah M. Tittley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts: a Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum* (London, 1977), p. 137.