

# Comparative Study of the Miniatures of “Khosrow and Shirin”, Where the both Present, Based on Khamseh, The Story by Nizami Ganjavi

Hoda Zabolinezhad

Department of Painting, Urmia University, Iran.

## Keywords:

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**Abstract.** Persian literature and Iranian painting are types of traditions that have developed alongside each other. The vivid descriptions that poets conveyed in their texts were often brought to life through paintings, leading to a rich tradition in Iranian artistic creation. The story of Khosrow and Shirin, written by Nizami Ganjavi, is renowned for its vibrant use of color. Nizami demonstrates a deep understanding of color psychology and symbolism, utilizing colors to inform the space and evoke emotional and mental states. This indicates his comprehensive knowledge across various artistic disciplines. However, it is important to note that the painter is not merely illustrating the text; instead, the artist creates the work based on their mental understanding and emotional state, which influences the final visual representation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In Persian literature, storytelling and characterization have a special estate. The poet often transfers their intended philosophical and ethical concepts through story layers and characterization, and advice the reader. Prior to 6<sup>th</sup> century, mystical Ghazal entered into Persian literature by Sanaei, and after him, it has been continued by poets such as Khaghani and Nizami and reached to its peak by Attar and Molana. Prose or verse story literature has a main and major share in Persian literature. Nizami is one of the greatest geniuses among the field and the content depth of his story plots, characterization, together with its effective emotional burden has been loved by lovers of Persian language and literature from the 6<sup>th</sup> century up to now. Khamsah of Nizami story is one of the greatest masterpieces of Persian literature and one of the main sources that draw the attention of imager artists in various eras and schools of Iranian painting. Nizami not only was a skillful poet but was also a full-scale artist. He creates imagery techniques through his poem in the best way possible, and creates volumes by exact description and creates rhymes by Iranian music. Among the five stories of Khamsah, “Khosrow and Shirin” has a special beauty and delicacy and has drawn the attention of many Persian literature experts through its most beautiful and sweetest story. Some of the various scenes of this lovely story including “A scene from the main hero of story”, “Khosrow and Shirin”, “Shirin saw image of Khosrow”, “Bath of Shirin in pond”, “Khosrow and Shirin party”, “Khosrow going to Shirin’s palace”, and etc. have drawn the attention of painters and have been painted by many in various eras and in different styles. Therefore, the basis of this research is the relationship between literature and Iranian painting, in showing the masterpieces of literature in pictures, according to the illustrations of “Khosrow and Shirin” (images in which both of them exist), and Nizami’s poems, and to show how is the transfer of literary text to the observer.

## 2. LITERARY REVIEW

Many books have been written in connection with Persian literature and art of imaging some of which are the works of Bazil Gary, *Hamgami-ye Naghashi Ba Adabiat Dar Iran* written by M. Ashrafi, *An introduction to Iran miniatures* written by Arthur Pop, *Behzād* written by Abdollah Bahari, *Iranian Painting and imaging* written by Shila. R. Kanbai works of Aliakbar Tajvidi and Mohammadali Karimzadeh-ye Tabrizi, *Iranian painting* written by Rooein Pakbaz and etc.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a fundamental type and data were collected with the library or documentation method, data are analyzed through the qualitative method.

### 3.1. Internal Connection of Persian Literature and Iranian Painting

With no doubt, in line with the Iranian painting masterpieces which are exactly produced according to the literary masterpieces, a technical and structural similarity between poem and painting is available. The painter knows the color as a lover and beloved placed in an appropriate position with the best way possible to create a special lovely scene. Dr. Seyedhossein Nasr presents a beautiful interpretation of colors in Iranian art. As light is the symbol of God when it has not been broken up, colors are a sign of the existence of various centers; each one will incite in human spirit with a state corresponding to its example and qualitative real.<sup>i</sup>

### 3.2. Lāleh Larjani

The painter will think about the subtlety of plan and create equivalents in his work composition by the emotional state of characters for the rhyme of the poem. Like other arts, the imaging techniques are the most important features and the weight of speech, tone, and rhyme are the tools of expression. In fact, by using imaging techniques the poet creates a visual image in mind of the audience, and the painter uses it too. The poet analogizes face to the moon, the night to Lazuli, sun to golden shield, day to yellow ruby, height to cedar, lip to bud, and similar things, and the painter tries to find a physical equivalent for these and use them. <sup>ii</sup> M. Moghadam Ashrafi

In Persian poem, using simile and metaphor is a way to create imaging techniques. In describing nature directly, using natural simile and metaphor is an evident affair, but at the time of describing cases out of nature area, like emotions, ethics, and human features, using natural descriptions will lead to the colorfulness of the poem and manifestation of an image of emotional states.

The adherence and connection between literature and painting can be realized in their verb. Two verbs of imaging and writin and words and phrases of them in the Persian language are two actions of painting and writing. Therefore, in the era of advancement of Iranian painting, at the same time with the peak of lyric poetry of Persian classic literature which was after the decline of lyric and depth of content of literature, Iranian painting has been deviated from the path of movement of Persian literature moving to new subjects, and finally the adherence was lost. This does not mean that the Iranian painting is definable only alongside the Persian literature and has no independence. These works have their natural values and image quality and can transfer literary meanings and story alone. A fact for proving this claim is the illustrated sheets separated from the written version and exhibited independently in various reputable museums throughout the world causing admiration of all people and experts.

### 3.3. Iranian Painting

Iranian painting prior to Islam has a tendency to create an ideal world relevant to religious insights of Zoroastrianism and is moreover considered as a wholly religious artistic painting. After Islam, according to the prohibition of configuration in Islamic rules, the painter has an eye on the supernatural world and achieving pure aesthetics was his ideal goal. Imitating from nature, three-dimensional space, light and shadow, shape and color of objects have never appeared in Iranian painting as presented in Western painting, and if the painter paid attention to his surrounding world, he never looked for creating the material world. He paints the supernatural space imagined in his imagination through code and allegory and application of special methods, and by relying on mysticism and Islamic thoughts especially of Shaikh-al-Ishraq and Suhrawardi's which had roots in Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Manichaeism rituals. The supernatural world the Iranian artist observes is the world of Ideal, and his ideal goal is to illustrate a part of this supernatural world. Thus, the Islamic counselors identify arts such as painting, poem, and music in relation to retelling Small Secrets, and their attempt to create a picture of the aspects of God's secrets; secrets that make the human ready to understand larger aspect of it which is the Great Secret; in a world higher than the material world, and in the Ideal world they give the place of Small Secrets to the hierarchy of reality <sup>iii</sup> Seyed Hossein Nasr. With a face and material, shape and color. Its face is, therefore, a thing other than the material world; the material has a soft body, which is the resurrection of the body and has time and place and motion; but we know its special time and place and motions are different to what is in the material world. This world is a formal level of Garden of Eden or Heaven which is the main source of face and shape and color and aromas of the material world giving pleasure and happiness to human life and is a memory of noble experiences and eternal happiness of human life. The world of the ideal itself has face and material, thus, the Iranian painting cannot be considered as a wholly sacred art with all elements exhibiting a meaning beyond reality.

Due to the fundamentals of pure aesthetics, the painters avoid using light/shadow for creation of a supernatural space (based on imaging techniques), moreover, no shadow causes darkness to bright colors. They even do not show the darkness of night in their scenes, therefore the whole space is full of light making the whole page illuminate equally. The source of light is God's nature and is liberated of any shadow and darkness which are symbols of filthiness and ugliness. The painter uses the blue sky for showing the night, and the existence of the moon, stars, torch, and candle and their light has the least effect in the creation of light/shadow in the illustration. Furthermore, he uses the same time method in the scenery to display a place during the day and night at the same time. He opens the doors for the observer and forces him to see the scene beyond the walls, halls, and saloons, and to be aware of all the realities that are happening at the same time. The observer has appeared in the role of an omniscient and the interesting point is that sometimes these events have no relation with each other in terms of the story's plot. Iranian painter is not looking to simulating a real character in face-making, hence he imagines the faces based on a general pattern and considers the emotional states of the characters as the base and origin of real face making technique. For that reason, mannerism and symbolism from the oldest times became the fundamental basis of Iranian illustration art, forming the supernatural world as the core for Iranian art's pure aesthetics. This art is an absolute form and according to the beauty and the composition of parts, Iranian art is known as visible music.

### 3.4. Sources of Khosrow and Shirin Story

Nizami said that he wrote the story based on the versions poem of the city of Barda in Azerbaijan. He only changed the layout and didn't add anything to it. The Information of this story is mentioned in books such as *Almahāsen* and *Alezzad* written by Jāhez, *Ghorarolakhbār* written by Saalebi, *Sorkholayoun* written by Ebneh Nabati, *Khoday Namak*, *Shāhnāme* written by Ferdowsi, *Tarikh* Tabari, and etc. In *Shāhnāme*, Ferdowsi paying attention to the nature of martial arts and the epic of the story merely paid attention to the history of the events and battles of Khosrow, and thus paid no attention to his love life with Shirin. Of course, as Nizami writes at the beginning of the story, the reason for this negligence of Ferdowsi was his old age which was 60 then:

"As was in 60 years old of his life/the dagger was fallen from the youth's hand  
Loving the one at 60 years old/no speech should be said due to lacking profit<sup>iv</sup> " Nizami

### 3.5. History of the Characterization

Nizami's heroes all were human characters and he tried not to create non-human characters in his works. His characters have been created well and he creates a human image with all emotional and ethical features which are far from stereotypes i.e. wholly positive or wholly negative, and this indicates the depth of his awareness of internal layers and features of the human's mind. Khosrow Parviz, the protagonist of the story, was a philanderer, falling in love every now and then and used to leave the kingship for pleasure. But he also was chivalric. He once saw a beautiful woman in a pool and turned his face not to disturb her. When the farmers and peasants went to his father Hormoz shāh, and complaint regarding his actions, he used to accept his mistakes and asked for forgiveness. He was also so too brave; he once fought a lion in front of Shirin with no weapon and defeated it. Shirin, the heroine, is the best female character ever shown in Persian literature. She is a smart girl and has nothing less than men. She is a sports lover and does horse riding and hunting with other girls. She has grown in such an environment. When she sees the painting of Khosrow Parviz painted by the famous painter Shāpour, who is also someone close to the king, she falls in love at first sight. She rides free with Shabdiz without considering her unwise actions and goes through the destiny looking for her man of life. But when Khosrow came to her palace for asking her hand, she ordered to close the gates, not for her fear, but for not being able

to control her limitless love for him. Iranian woman never deviates from the right path and never loses her honor. Due to her expedient gesture, she did not reject him while closing the door against Khosrow, yet prepared food and acted hospitably towards him. She told him that he had no other choice unless marrying her, and Khosrow as the powerful king of Iran never had such thought in his mind to break the door and get her by force. He but tried to get her by pleasant talks and then by crying, neither of which was successful. Shirin was raised by a woman, Mahin Bānu, who had taught her not to answer whoever asked for her heart; but to figure out her future by her wisdom and not through her heart.

Nizami's women are confident and powerful enough to be seen as participants in the illustrations. there is no display of a calm woman, in these images, nor a silent beloved together with her maid in a scene of seeing her lover, or as a dancer for giving pleasure to the audience, or being a servant doing chores in a corner. The woman has come from the margins to the center of the scene and has an active role in the illustration. Hundreds of images painted by the painters show this subject matter.

### 3.6. Imaging Features of the Story

"Khosrow and Shirin" poem is full of color, and this is due to the special status of the story and the environment the story happens in. This issue is evident by comparing the story of "Leili and Majnoon" in a desert and dry environment of Saudi Arabia.

Nizami in every place of the story expresses his interest in the amazing effects of color by using colorful words. He knows color psychology and color symbolism and uses them forming the environment and the impact of emotional states. Like a skillful painter, Nizami considers identity and character for colors, and selects colors thinking about them. He knows specific features of cold and warm colors and creates perfect images using colorful hues. This point is also interesting and needs to be paid attention to that, the beginning of this romantic story is because of the presence of a painter, Shāpour, whom Nizami named as second Māni. Khosrow fell in love with Shirin by the way Shāpour described her to Khosrow, and Shirin fell in love with Khosrow's illustration Shāpour painted.

In general, Persian poets like painters use some common fixed patterns in describing their story characters that are repeated in all descriptive literature masterpieces. For women characters, for example, the poets analogized face to the moon, eye to garnet, hair to lasso, eyebrow to bow, lip to bud, height to cedar, tooth to a pearl; they also speak about black hair, red face, and pale teeth. In "Khosrow and Shirin", Nizami uses this simile and metaphor to describe the beauty of Shirin and other female characters such as Maryam and Shekar-e Esfahani, servant and maids with various tones and expressions.

In describing men, there are some fixed patters such as chivalry, braveness, rivalry, and also beautiful face and handsome body. Except for the description of the face and body of characters, Persian poems are full of description of nature, and beautiful gardens such as Firdows-e Barin that is house to the heroes of the story and is full of flower, grass, and trees with fruit, singing birds and beloveds meeting.

In "Khosrow and Shirin" Nizami mentioned the word "*painting*" 78 times and the word "*painter*" 8 times. The word *color* with various combinations and meanings has been repeated in the story many times; it sometimes means similar, and features of appearance, and in some cases, it means painting to show the emotional state of the scene.<sup>v</sup> Tāhere Mehrāvar. In "Khosrow and Shirin" the color black has been used more than any other color in some cases in order to convey the special meaning of cruelty, sin, and evil, darkness and filthy. Nizami knows it the best color and believes there is no color above it. This color is used in a symbolic way of showing the color of death and oppressed pain. Black color naturally has two opposite qualities; on one side is color of nonexistence and darkness and on the other side it has an allegorical and symbolic meaning; as Dr. Nasr has said it is a symbol of nature of ever existence and allegory of God's nature; some mystics also knew it as dark color.<sup>vi</sup> Lāleh Larijani. Nizami used this color to describe the color of hair, eye, face, skin, night, stone, and etc. And also used some symbols such as squirrel and sage to express darkness and blackness which are opposite to symbols of light. He used this color to transfer the meaning of mental and emotional states of sadness and mourning. In general, although the black color has been mentioned in this story more than any other colors, according to the quality used by the poet for this color, it had not placed the story in darkness and black atmosphere.<sup>vii</sup> Farjani, Azam Kasiri

The next color mostly used is red to describe the color of the face, flower, cloth, wine, fiery, etc. After red, green has the most application in the story. This color is a symbol of life, greenness, happiness, goodness, and show the greenness of nature. White is used in the story many times, and in most cases, it has been used as the opposite to black and to express the day and night, and in other cases is used for hair color and etc. Yellow has been used to describe the color of flowers, face, sun, wave, etc. The poet has also used words such as sun and gold similar to yellow.

Nizami has used some words to describe blue colors such as indigo, azure, turquoise, and bruise to describe the color of the sky, water, and cloth. Purple has been used to describe wine and cloth. Therefore, according to the imaging features of this story and Nizami's profession and mastery in describing all the details together with various application of colors in conveying emotional states and description of scenes, and according to the acceptability of story by everyone, it can be understood why the stories had drawn attention of painters as of the beginning of growth of Iranian painting. With no doubt, hundreds of paintings remaining from those days displaying the various scenes of this love story prove this issue.<sup>viii</sup> Pakbaz

### 3.7. "Khosrow and Shirin" Miniatures

Iranian painter like Iranian poet follows determined and contractual formal patterns in the creation of his image i.e. the moon for human face, almond eyes like amaryllis, small lips like a bud, bow-like eyebrows like two woven hairs.

Space in Iranian painting like Iranian poem has a same and connected atmosphere, and as said earlier, a nature full of trees and flowers is a symbol of Ideal world and architectural landscaping also is full of decorative details. Observance of the principle of non-realism is the main pillar of Iranian image art that creates one of its best appearances in coloring images. Iranian painters proved that they are skillful and master in coloring their works. In these images, whole space is considered as a colorful composition and based on visual knowledge and style of the artist, the colors have exactly filled up the small spaces, and exactly where they should, and are exactly in connection with surrounding colors and the whole color of space. This issue shows that Iranian painter knows the feature of colors well and is familiar with the arrangement of a composition.

### 3.8. Shirin saw Khosrow's Painting for the First Time

In all images relevant to this scene, as said in the story, the scene painted displays the outdoor space. Shirin away from her maid is looking at Khosrow's image, while we can't understand her exact feelings at the moment. The maids in all images are



amazed and chatting together. The composition of these images seizes the eye of the observer to the main character of the scene Shirin, who is looking toward Khosrow's image.

Figure. 1: This image is the only image in this era that includes calligraphy. The composition and execution are a bit cold and similar to the tradition prior to Behzād. The composition is linear, and Shirin and her maids are almost in one line, Shirin is ahead of others. Her face has been painted once again in India. The similarity of this image with illustrations of Golchin-e Iskandar Sultān in Shirāz is remarkable.

Figures. 2 and 3, include drinking wine in the natural scenery together with maids. Composition of these images are in a circular form, and the focal points are Shirin and Khosrow.

Figure. 4 does not belong to Iran, and there is no information in this respect before the researchers. The characteristics of Chinese painting and paying attention to nature is fully observable here. A comparison of this image with other images of this part of the story which have been painted, provide us with valuable information regarding Iranian painting and methods of painting out of Iran in illustration of a common subject.

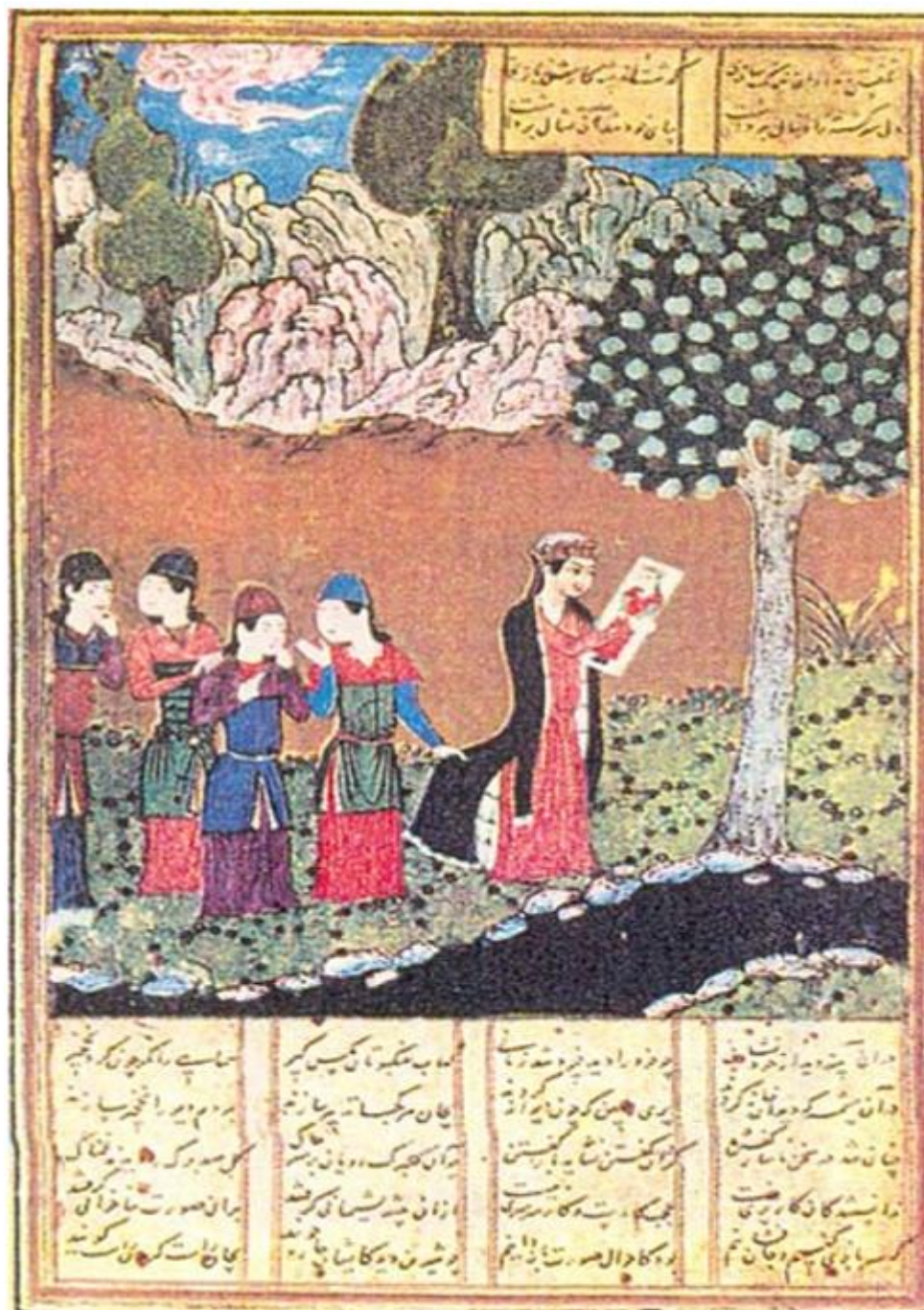


Figure 1. Aghā Mirak?, *Shirin sees Khosrow's painting for the first time*, 847 AH (1468 AD), Herāt School.



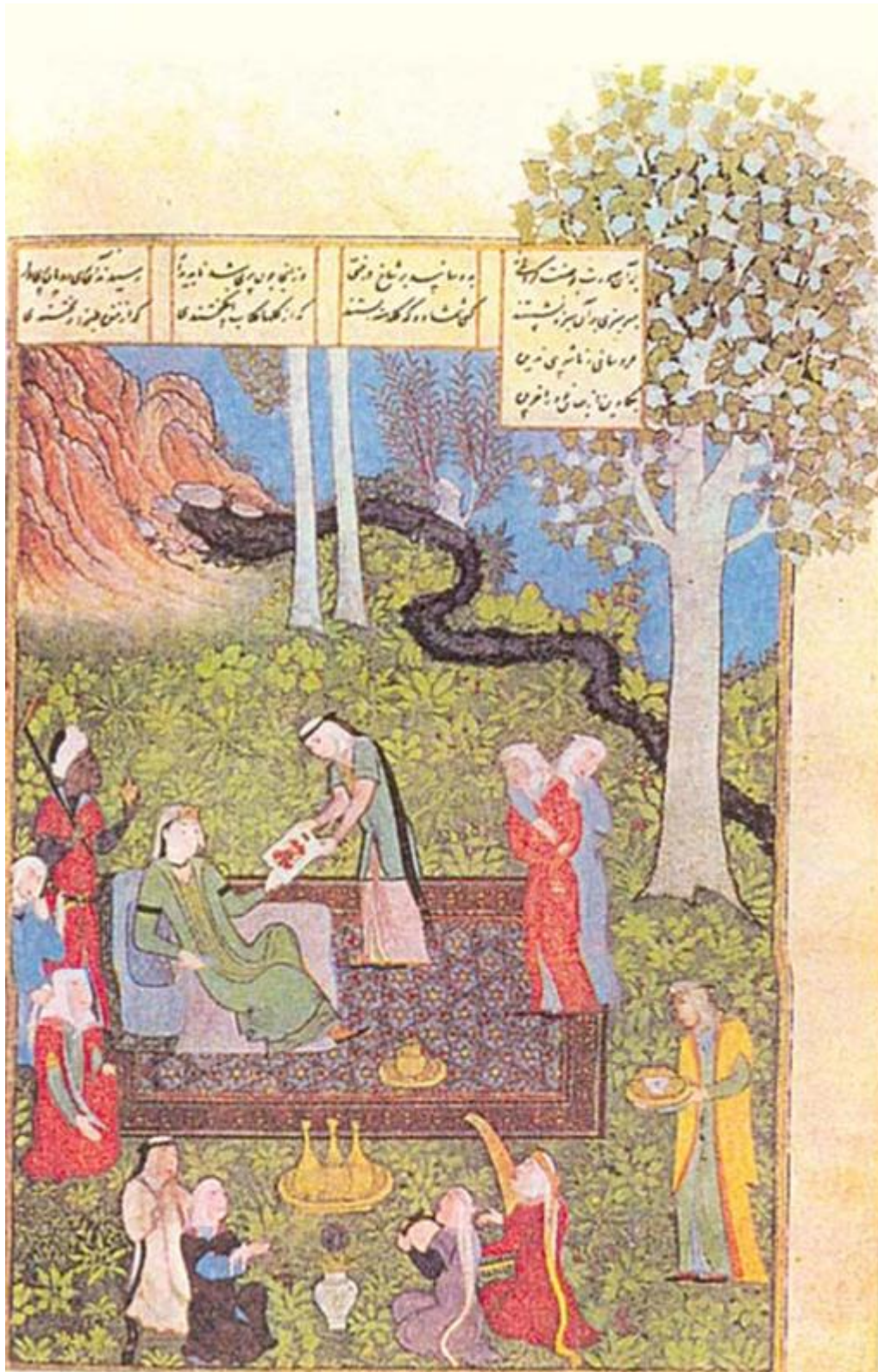


Figure 2. Aghā Mirak, *Shirin sees Khosrow's painting for the first time*, 900 AH (1521 AD), probably Herāt School.



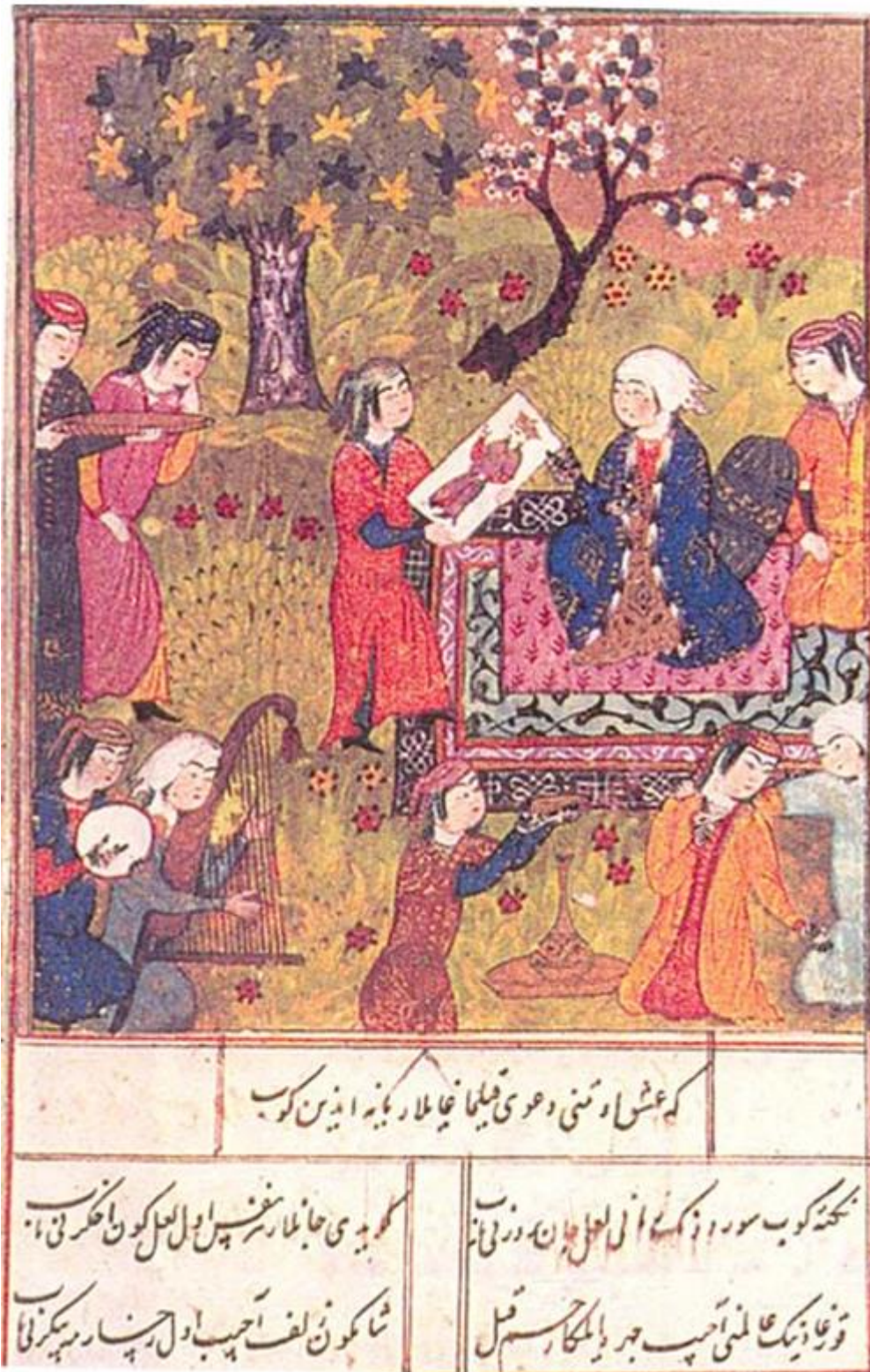


Figure 3 ?. Shirin see Khosrow's painting for the first time, 900 AH?, school?





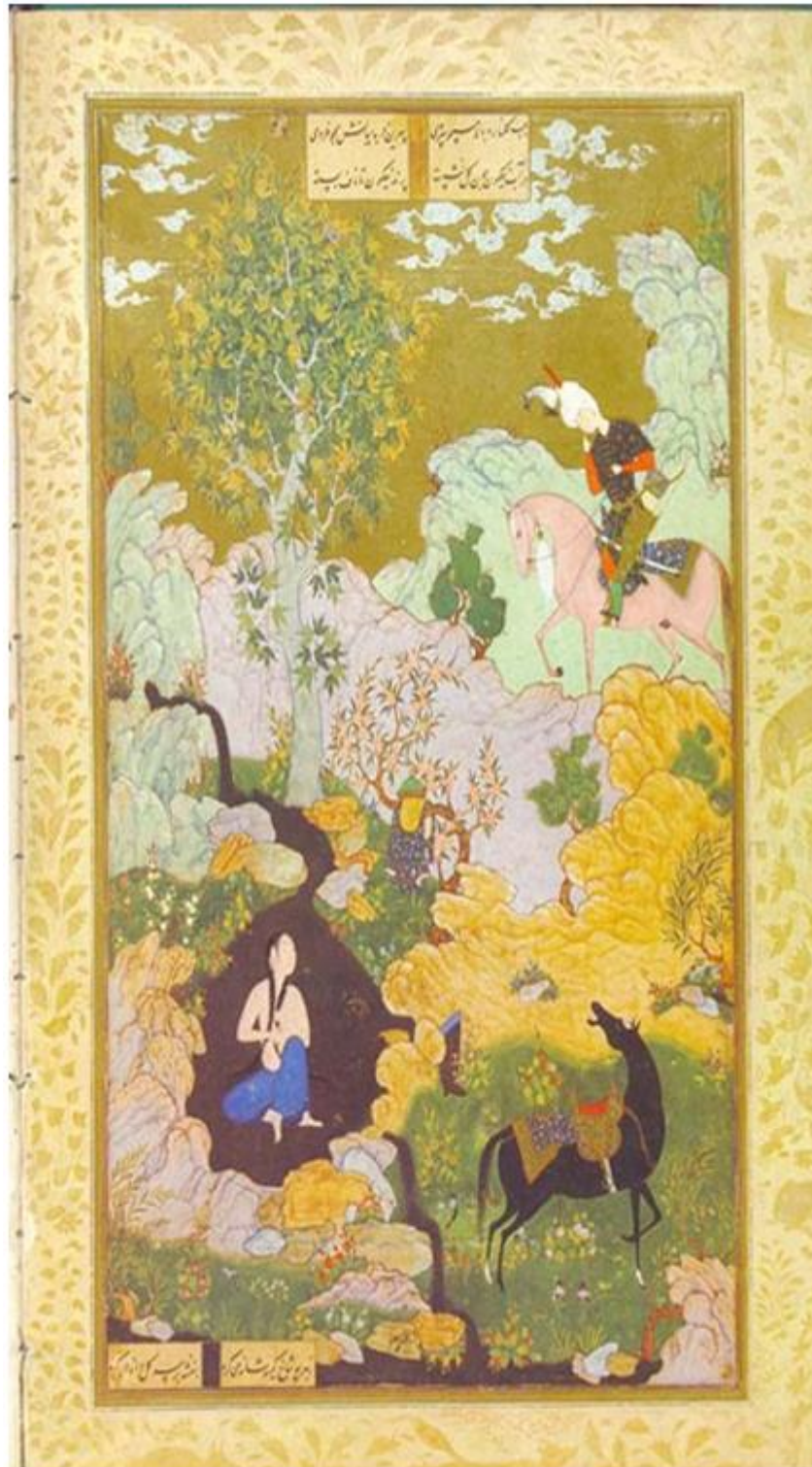


Figure 5 Sultān Muhammed-e-Naghash, *Shirin bathing in the pool and Khosrow watching*, from *Khamseh-ye Shāhtahmāsebi*, 946 AH(1567 AD), Tabriz School.



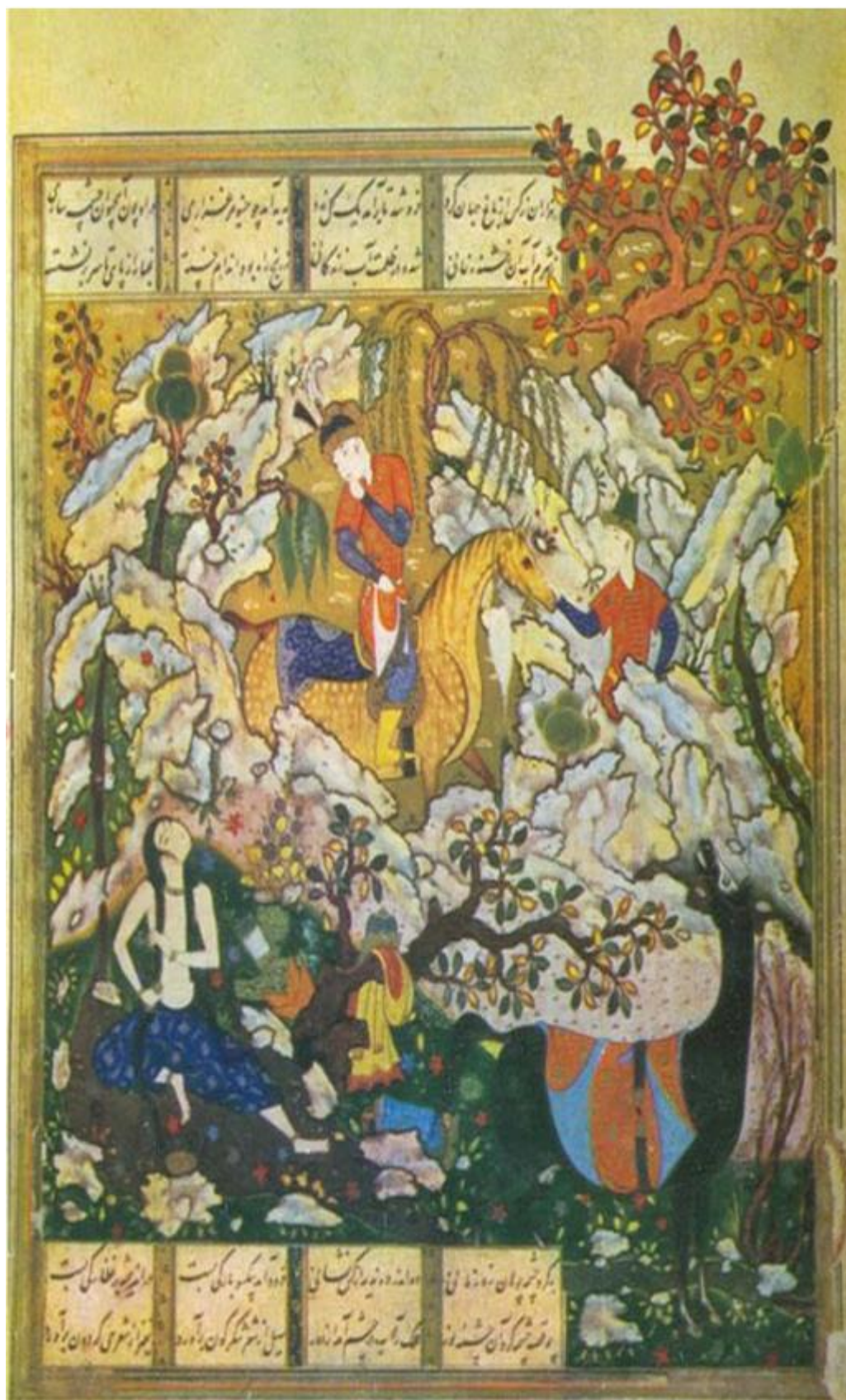


Figure 6?. *Shirin bathing in the pool and Khosrow watching*, Safavid period, 992 AH (1613 AD), Shirāz School.

Shirin taking bath in the pool and Khosrow watching (Figures. 5 and 6): As said earlier, nature has a special status in Iranian painting. In illustrations with this theme, the painter has described nature more than the poet. In this part of the story, Nizami has concentrated on the narration of the event more than describing the nature and the scenery.

Therefore the painter has considered this part of the story as a good occasion for creating a perfect supernatural world scene based on the contents of the story i.e. a beautiful scene of empty nature with two main characters of the story. In the whole history of Iranian painting, although painter paid special attention to the creation of natural scenes and space around human characteristics, sometimes exaggerated, creation of scenes without a human body is less and rare, and in most scenes, may character are shown. According to the contents of this part of the story, empty space without strangers is needed. <sup>ix</sup> Pakbaz

Therefore, in most images, we saw two human bodies, Khosrow & Shirin, in the whole space of the image, of course without interrupting the natural space. Therefore, according to the above explanation, it can be concluded that the Iranian painter, consider general contents of the work in their illustration based on literary works, and paid attention to it based on their artistic tradition and criterion and adhere to formals determined in Iranian painting traditions prior to considering the text of work.

All elements in Iranian painting have allegoric and symbolic meaning viz. the pool that Shirin bathed in is the appearance of life, rebirth, and recommencement of Shirin's life since that day; the trees in the scenery are usually symbols of Khosrow and Shirin or the tree of love seeded in their hearts. The rocks are under the influence of Chinese painting, however, got more similar to Iranian forms within these years. The quality of the mountains is in a way that one cannot believe they may scratch a foot or break head. These rocks are the symbol of the impassable way of love and hardships Khosrow and Shirin may confront in their quest.<sup>x</sup> Zabolinezhad

In all these illustrations, Shirin has sat her upper body covered with her long hair, while the cloth is closed around her waist. In the text, nothing has been mentioned regarding Shirin's position i.e. been seated or stayed still.; the only fact mentioned about her is the blue color of her clothing. In most images, therefore, the color of her clothing is blue, and in some white, green and red.

In some cases, Shirin is on the right side of the frame and in some cases on the left, while Khosrow is mostly in the above one-third angle on a horse with his finger in his mouth as a sign of wonder by seeing Shirin. Shabdiz has been illustrated in all these images as well. The compositions in these images are in a circular form concentrating on Shirin, after rotating the whole space following Khosrow's gaze. Therefore by comparing these images, all of them with common content, one can understand about the style and manner of art in different eras, schools of art in Iranian painting, and even the special working style of each painter. By comparing two images with a 46 years interval, one belonging to Tabriz School and another to Shirāz, one can understand the common features and differences in thought and imaging techniques between the two schools of art, working characteristics of the two artists, and finally, the effect of one on the other.

Figure. 5 which belongs to the *Khamseh-ye Shāhtahmasebi* collection is painted in 946 AH (1567 AD) by Tabriz School painter, Sultān Mohammad-e Naghash. Figure. 6 belongs to the Safavid era, 992 AH (1613 AD), and is in Shirāz School technique. In Figure. 5, as said earlier, we can see a mountainous environment full of rocks and nature covered with grass and flower. Shirin has hung her scarf, crown, clothes, and boots on a branch of a tree, and is relaxing inside a pool combing her long hair. The position of Shirin in both images is similar.

In Figure. 5, the frame is wider thus more space is devoted to the natural space. Nature is soft and calm, and the texture of the mountains and rocks is soft with smooth waves. Colors are used smoothly with no extreme contrast, and the artist avoids integration of colors. Mountains are in light green, purple, blue, and yellow, and form the main part of the space of the image. But according to the imaginative illustration made by Sultān Mohammad, a narrow pool from the right side of the image, beneath the rocks, is flown and passed beside a large plane tree, and has reached the main pool created by the stones, and on the other side passes through the rocks.<sup>xi</sup> Zabolinezhad Everywhere is full of flowers, grass, plants, in red, green, blue, and white, and some small symbolic trees on some side. And one is the symbol of a character with contents to transfer a message or a story to the observer, and thus is familiar with the code and symbols of Iranian painting. On the right side, exactly in the direction of Shirin's location inside the pool, a beautiful plain tree has gone towards the sky i.e. probably a symbol of Khosrow here. A bit lower the plain tree, and above the pool, a small tree covered with blossoms, on which Shirin has hung her clothes and crown, is a symbol of Shirin and probably the new love for Khosrow in her heart. In the upper left part, in the direction of where Shabdiz stays, Khosrow on his white horse in contrast to the black night has put his finger in his mouth as a sign of wonder, staring at Shirin, while Shirin is looking at Shabdiz which has suddenly seen a stranger. Sultān Mohammad uses the same color scheme and painting for Shabdiz. Color and the imaging technique of Shirin's clothes on the tree creates a rotation in the scene in the direction of Khosrow's gaze on Shirin's face. Except for Shabdiz's movement against Khosrow's horse, finally, the whole space of the image has come into calmness and silence, which was considered by the painter from the beginning.

In Figure. 6, in Shirāz School, we see a different space which is absolutely taken from a different type and thought. This image which is painted with an interval of 46 years after Sultān Mohammad's and in Shirāz School's technique and characteristics, reveals that the painter has with no doubt observed Sultān Mohammad's illustration and has been under its impact. Except for the previous image, this image shows a moment the gazes of both of them interweave. In this image, mountains and rocks contain a wholly symbolic meaning and show the spiritual state and the internal wonder of the heroes after suddenly witnessing each other. In these images, rocks are painted with irregular and broken lines around Khosrow and are moving towards him. Colors of the rocks are yellow, purple, blue, and pink, and the artist has used them alternately. Above Khosrow's head, among the rocks, there is a narrow path on which two branches of a weeping willow, meaning their love toward each other, are interwoven. Both trees are ornamented with green, orange and yellow leaves. The larger tree is at the end of the upper-left side of the frame and the smaller tree which is more curved is near Shirin who as in the previous image, has placed her clothing on it. The shape and color of Khosrow's attire and his servant are exactly the same which shows the content of story i.e. Khosrow is not meant to be known with his sumptuous outfit and thus not noticed by Shirin. The reason for the presence of a servant in this image is to break the silence between the lover and beloved.<sup>xii</sup> Mahvān The composition of this image is in a circular form and the focal point is Shirin and the gazes of the heroes on each other. One of the major differences between these two images is the location of the verses of the poem. A characteristic of Shirāz School is to choose a correct place for locating the verses in composition, in comparison to other Iranian painting schools. Therefore, the position of verses here is better than in Sultān Mohammad's painting from Tabriz School. In a comparison between the both illustrations, it can be understood that Sultān Mohammad has paid attention to the description of the space out of the story, and in Shirāz School, the painter has paid attention to the internal space and spirits of heroes i.e. the difference in thoughts, presentation of common subjects, and the artistic viewpoints of the two schools and eras

In another illustration relevant to this subject matter from the Zand era (1751-1794 AD), we can perceive remarkable changes in Iranian painting through the time. There is no spatial composition and those many colors in the creation of the natural poetic scene in this work. The painter instead has tried to create the depth and volumes that have not been succeeding in this subject matter. Thus he has created a crowded scene with a weak human body arrangement, removing of which not only will keep the image uninterrupted but will also help to achieve a balanced image.<sup>xiii</sup> Pakbaz Body of Khosrow with his big horse seems imposed on the composition, although his finger is in his mouth as the tradition. The painter has shown no skill in designing Khosrow's hand and his anatomy. The interesting point is that contrary to the storytelling and Iranian painting tradition, in this scene, Khosrow has not looked at Shirin, and her gaze is towards a point out of the framework.

Figure. 7 displays Khosrow and Shirin riding horses while standing in front of each other at the back of the hill. On the right side of the image, Khosrow and his accompanies are seen hunting, and on the left side, animals are around Shirin. In this image, contrary to the one belonging to the next era, Khosrow and Shirin are seen standing calmly at their places and do not participate



in the act of hunting. While in Figure. 9, Khosrow riding on Shabdiz is in the center of the image with a sword in his hand, cutting a deer, and a bit ahead of him, at the front plane of the image, Shirin is riding Golgon bending to catch a gazelle with a bow.

Figure. 8 belongs to the Turkmen School while illustrated at the beginning of Safavid era and Tabriz School; thus it has fewer signs of Tabriz School and we see a simple image of this school.



Figure7?. Khosrow and Shirin both riding horses, Timurid period, 825 AH (1446 AD), Shirāz School.



Figure 8?. Khosrow and Shirin in hunting, Timurid period, 855 AH (1476 AD).



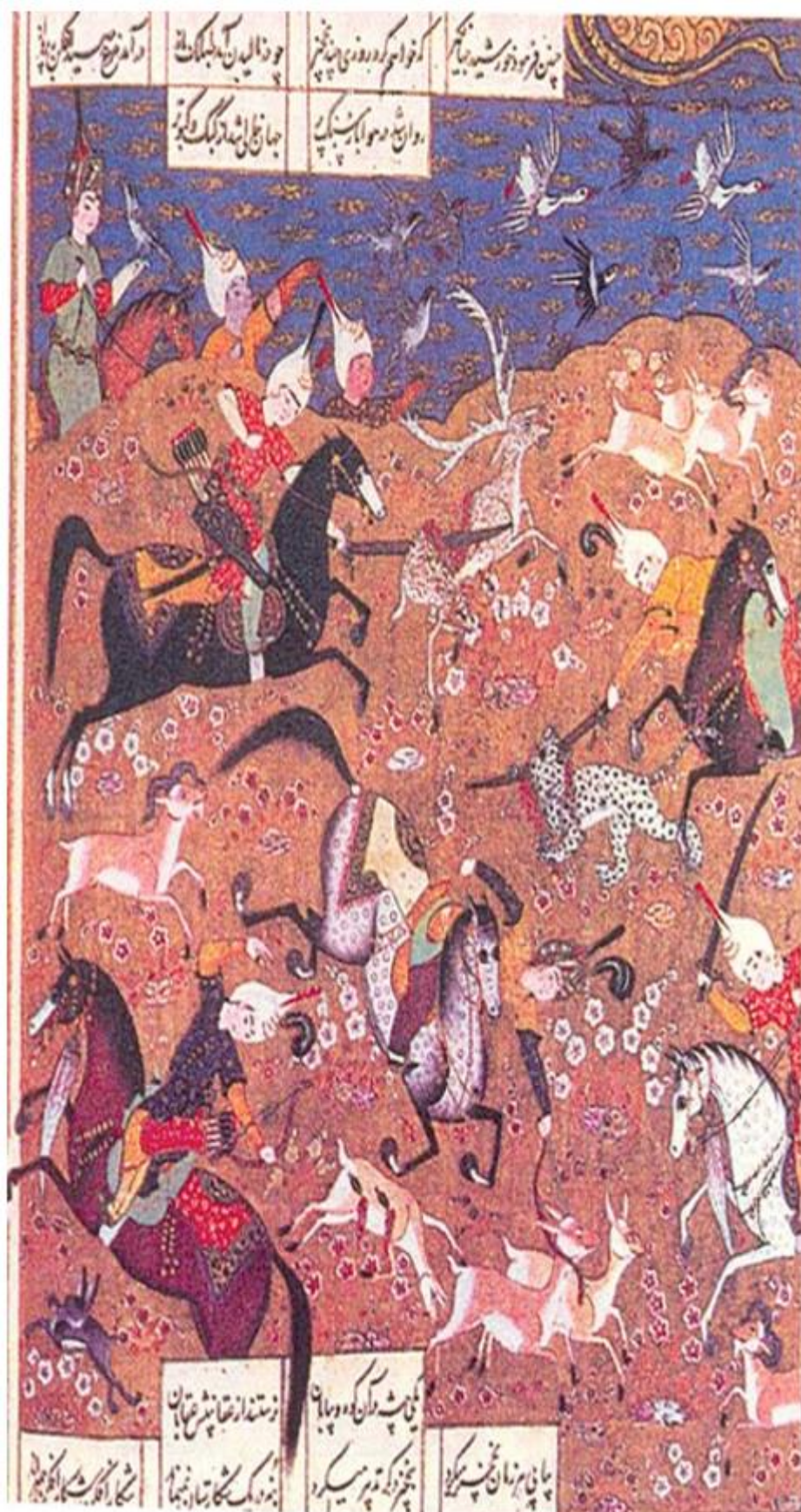


Figure 9?. Khosrow and Shirin in hunting, Safavid period, 939 AH (1560 AD), Shirāz School.





Figure 10?. Polo-playing of Khosrow and Shirin, Safavid period, 10<sup>th</sup> AH (17<sup>th</sup> century), Shirāz School.





Figure 11?. Killing a lion before of Shirin's eyes, Timurid period, 815 AH (1436 AD), Shirāz School.



Figure 12?. Killing a lion before Shirin's eyes, Timurid period, 836 AH, (1457 AD), Herāt School.



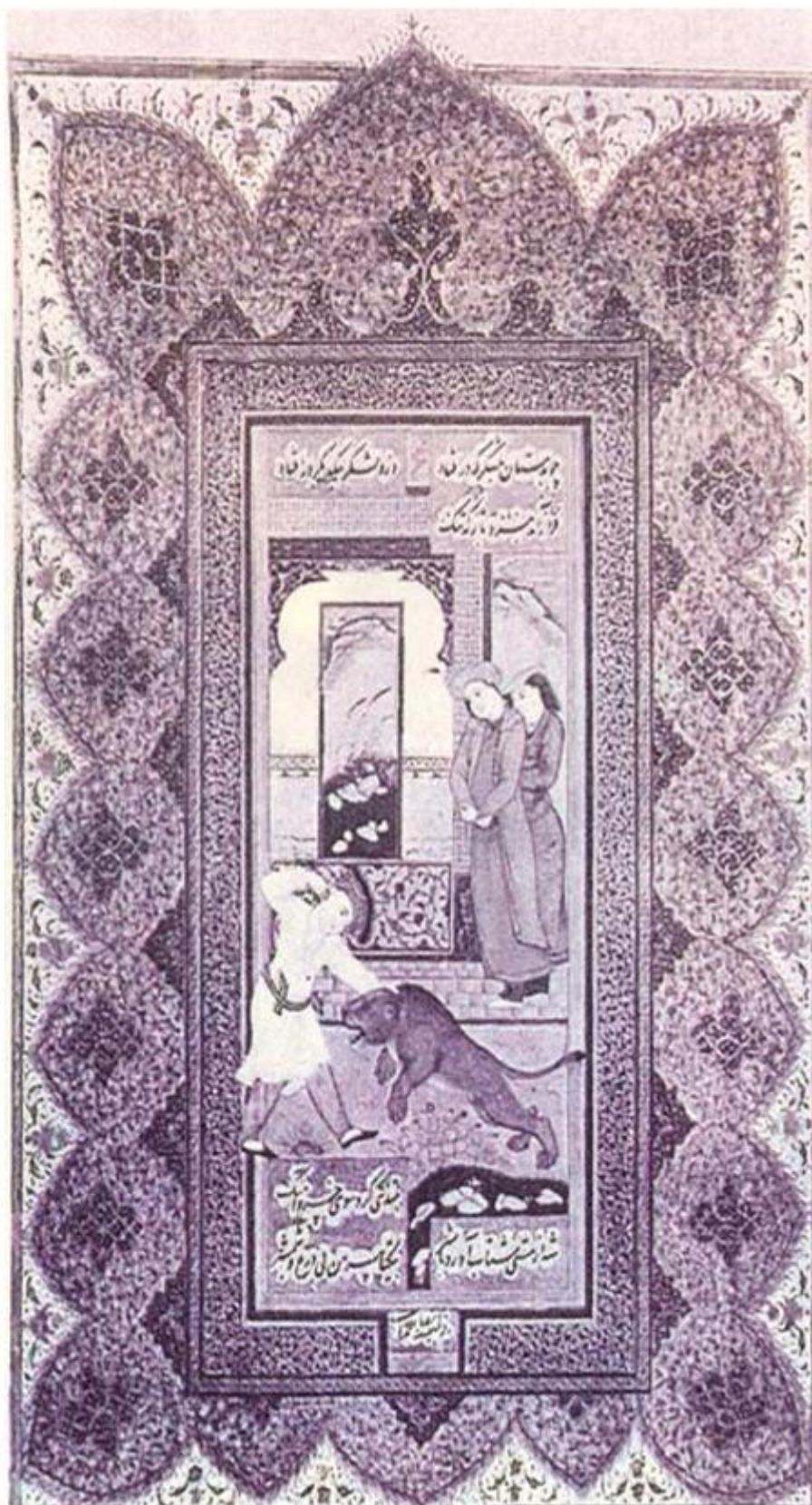


Figure 13. Reza Abbasi, Killing a lion before Shirin's eyes, Safavid period, 1032 AD (1653 AD), Isfahan School.





Figure 14. Aghā Mirak, Khosrow and Shirin storytelling in a banquet, Safavid period, 946-48 AH (1569 AD), from Khamseh-ye Shāh Tahmāsebi, Tabriz School.

Polo-playing of Khosrow and Shirin (Figure. 10): In this part of the story, Shirin together with 72 other girls is playing polo with Khosrow and his servants. The emphasis of the poet is on the sameness and equality of Shirin with Khosrow. In figure. 10, according to the content of the story at this part, which is polo fight ground, we see an exciting and mobile hence simple scene. It conveys the poet and artist's intention to the observer. The composition of this image is in symmetry and the main part of framework includes the foreground i.e. game field. Shirin and girls have scarves, and against them are Khosrow and his companies. The state of Shirin and maids has been painted in a way which wholly reveals their skill and agility in playing. Contrary



to the narration of the story which schemes Khosrow on Shabdiz and Shirin on Golgoon, here Shirin has been painted on Shabdiz and Khosrow on another horse. The main character's horses are painted larger than other horses viz. the greatness and rank.

Killing a lion before the eyes of Shirin (figures 11-13): According to the story, Khosrow killed a lion, outside a party, with no weapon just by a fist being drunk while Shirin was observing this scene. All the images have shown the outdoor scene, and probably as per an image tradition, in all of them, Khosrow is on the right side and the lion on the left. Khosrow holds the lion with his left hand and is trying to hit it with his fisted right hand. This scene shows a part of Nizami's skill in symbolization. In fact, the lion Khosrow killed is a symbol of his internal lion. Khosrow is analogized to lion many times in the story, and now using a power caused by love, fights with himself and wins.

Figure. 14 Khosrow and Shirin storytelling and banquet: According to the story, except Figure. 14 which is probably an outdoor location of the palace, other images happen in natural scenery or tent, while Khosrow and Shirin are talking with companies or listening to music. Figure. 14 is an illustration in the *Khamseh-ye Shāhtahmāsebi* collection, painted in second Tabriz School by Aghā Mirak. In comparison to works of other painters of the era, it is evident that his works are masterpieces in Iranian painting. According to this illustration, in addition to the artistic features of the Tabriz School, the informal characteristics of Aghā Mirak's technique could be determined all over the illustration. He was a student of Bihzād the most reputable painter of his era in using color and preciseness in details i.e. the decoration of architectural elements, ornamentations of clothing, and most import of all, giving various positions to characters of his images. He used to limit himself to a borderline in imaging the human faces and thus created ideal types for men, women, and youth by changing small details in the faces following the Herāt School in this respect. His ability and skill in the creation of the court scenes, the attraction and the poetic effect that he gave to his scenes could not be ignored.

Khosrow at the door of Shirin's palace (Figures. 15 and 16): according to the story, in all the images, the outdoors of Shirin's palace can be observed while she is at the roof of the palace or behind a window speaking to Khosrow who is waiting out of the palace.

Khosrow is on his horse asking Shirin for entrance to her palace. Contrary to the explicit expression of the story regarding the fact that this visit has occurred during the day, most images such as Figure. 16 of Bihzād, displays the night and also night and day at the same time. Figures. 15 and 16 are similar illustrations under the Turkmen and Herāt Schools. Comparison of the two images, in addition to revealing the formal features of the two styles of painting, shows the main impact of Persian literature in creation of imaging techniques and the mental image of these two artists. In Figure. 15, Shirin's palace has been shown in the best way possible at night. The palace with its details is too high and Shirin stands at the top of the palace, behind a window. The presence of the angels at the above right side and the golden and silver trees aside the roof show Shirin's status in a material and spiritual aspect, like Shirin's palace, is a part of heaven located on earth.

Shirin looking at Khosrow from an upper window of the palace places her hand under her chin thinking and listening to speeches of her servant hoping him to convey a message from Khosrow, while the angels are thinking about the destiny of the event. At the lower right part of the picture, out of the spiritual environment of the palace, during the day, Khosrow stays on his black horse, stretches his hand as a sign of question asking the reason for the gates being closed. He and his black horse display their nobility and high rank while standing at the lower side of the frame, which reveals the spiritual atmosphere of the image. The singers and the companies at the lower part of the scene show the banquet held by Shirin for Khosrow. An interesting arrangement that the painter used to convey his message with, was that all the windows of the palace were open except the one in front of Khosrow, demonstrating that although Khosrow is sensitive enough, there would be no place for him in the palace. Another arrangement made by the painter in presenting the love between these two people is using the same color clothing for them; which is not seen in other images. Both of them have undershirts in blue, a shirt in green and a red shawl on their shoulders. At the lower part of the image, in front of the entrance, there are two trees, one strong, symbolizing Khosrow and the other full of maze symbolizing Shirin. Here, the workers are working without paying attention to what is happening outside.

Figure. 16: this image shows Khosrow and his companies waiting on the horsebacks at the behind of closed gates of Shirin's palace at night. The painter in this image has emphasized the main content of the scene by locating the wide gate in front of the observers' eyes. The shape of the gate leads the attention of the observer to the balcony of the palace Shirin sits in and watches Khosrow. On the left side of the image, beside Shirin and above Khosrow's head, there are two trees. On the left side is a high cedar and the other one is small fruit tree with twisting branches which may be signs of Khosrow and Shirin. The inscription above the palace which is in Ragha calligraphy in white on a blue background includes perfect description of the palace and the date of finishing the painting: in the month Rajab of 895 AH (1516 AD). According to the simple and geometric composition, the colors and the diversity of the status of the characters, it can be concluded that this image is an artistic work of Bihzād in Herāt School.

Khosrow and Shirin's Wedding (Figure. 17): this image shows Khosrow and Shirin reaching each other at last at the center of the framework, as a sign of an end to the distance between the lovers. In the composition of this image the servants, Khosrow and Shirin form a triangle in which the bride and the groom are at the top, where the observer's eyes would immediately fall on. Although in some books, it has been mentioned that this image has been painted by Sheikhzādeh, a student of Bihzād, the formal characteristics of Bihzād's works which are simple geometric compositions, full of thoughts, trees, active and vigorous people, inscriptional calligraphy of the palace in three lines in admiration of the beauty of the palace just like Figure. 16, is determinable here.

Researchers also have mentioned that Darvish Khan-e Shāmlōo, a man of those days, was the model of Bihzād in painting Khosrow's face.

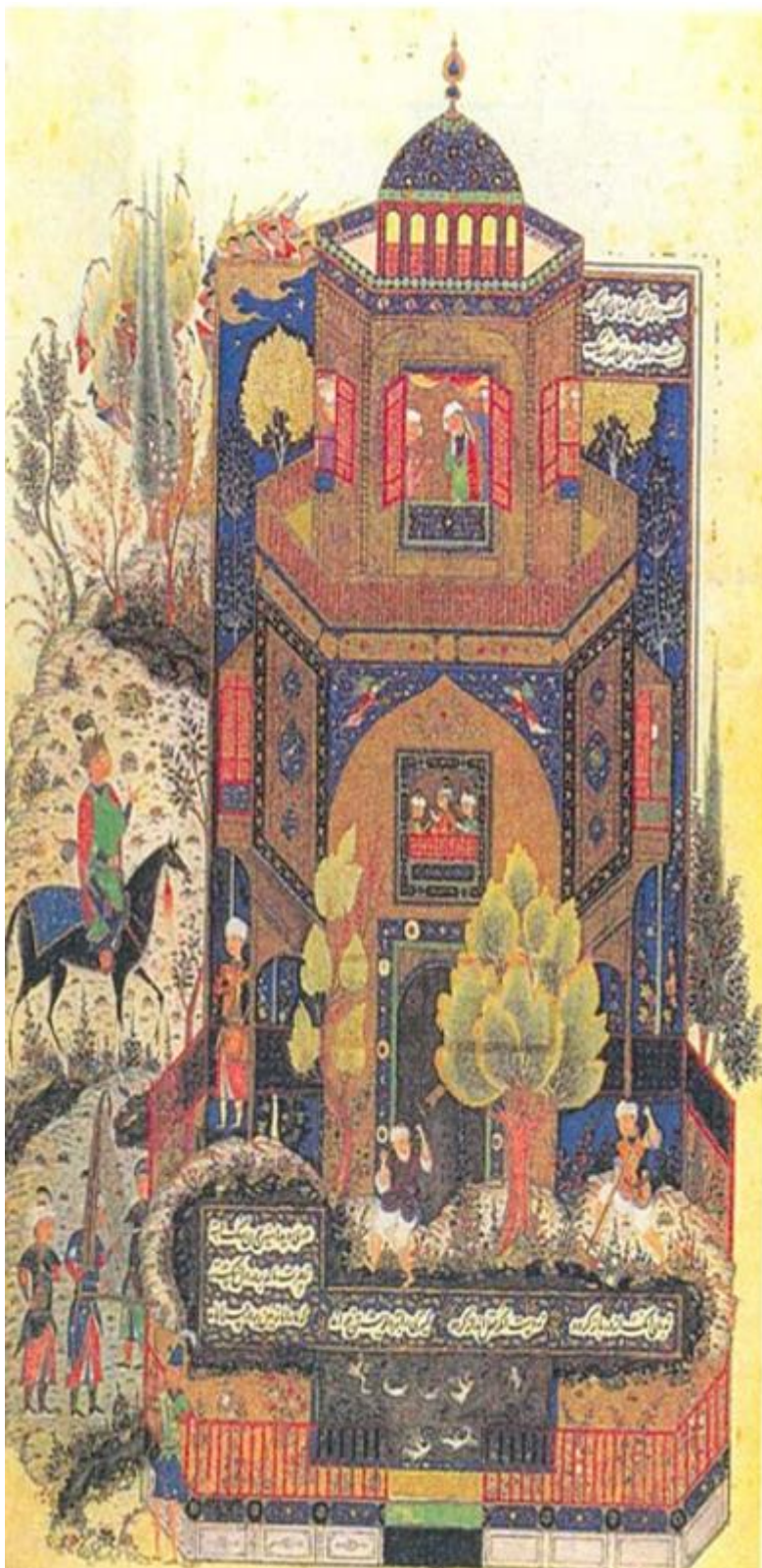


Figure 15?. *Khosrow at the door of Shirin's palace*, 9<sup>th</sup> AH (16<sup>th</sup> AD), Turkmen School.



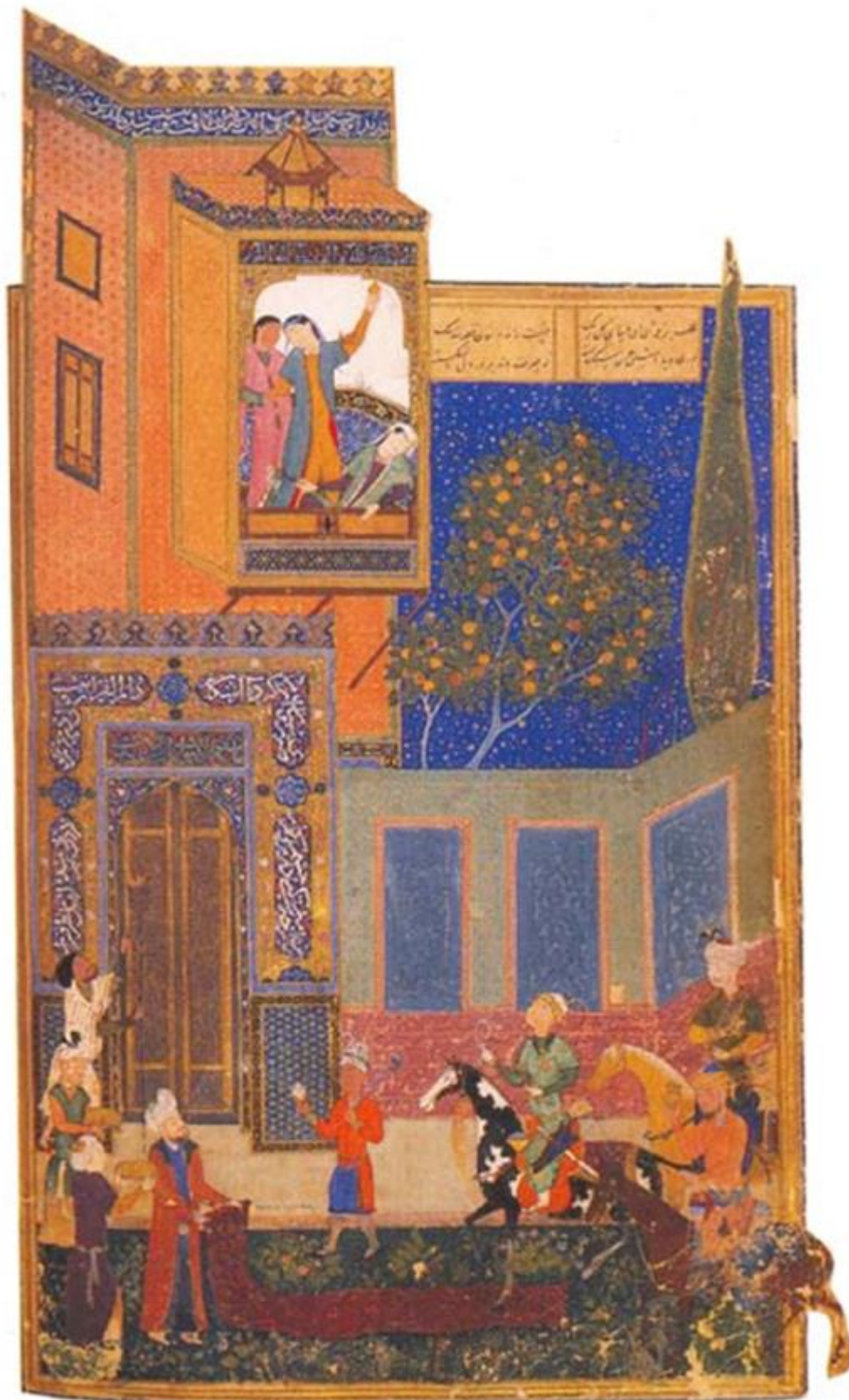


Figure 16. Bihzād, *Khosrow at the door of Shirin's palace*, Safavid period, 10<sup>th</sup> AH (17<sup>th</sup> AD), Herāt School.

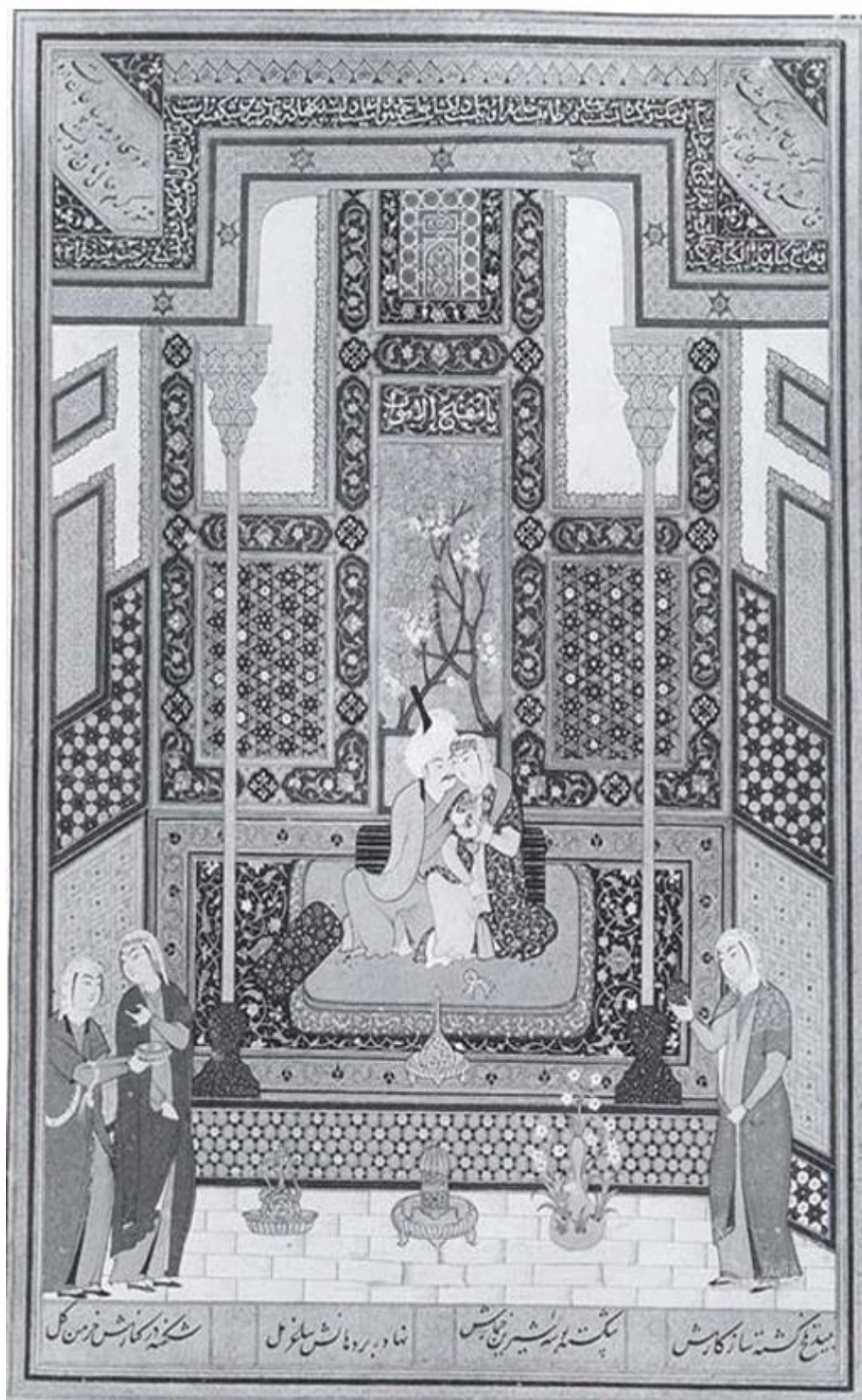


Figure 17. Bihzād, *Khosrow and Shirin's Wedding*, from *Khamseh-ye Shāh Tahmāsebi*, Safavid period, 931 AH (1552 AD), Tabriz School.



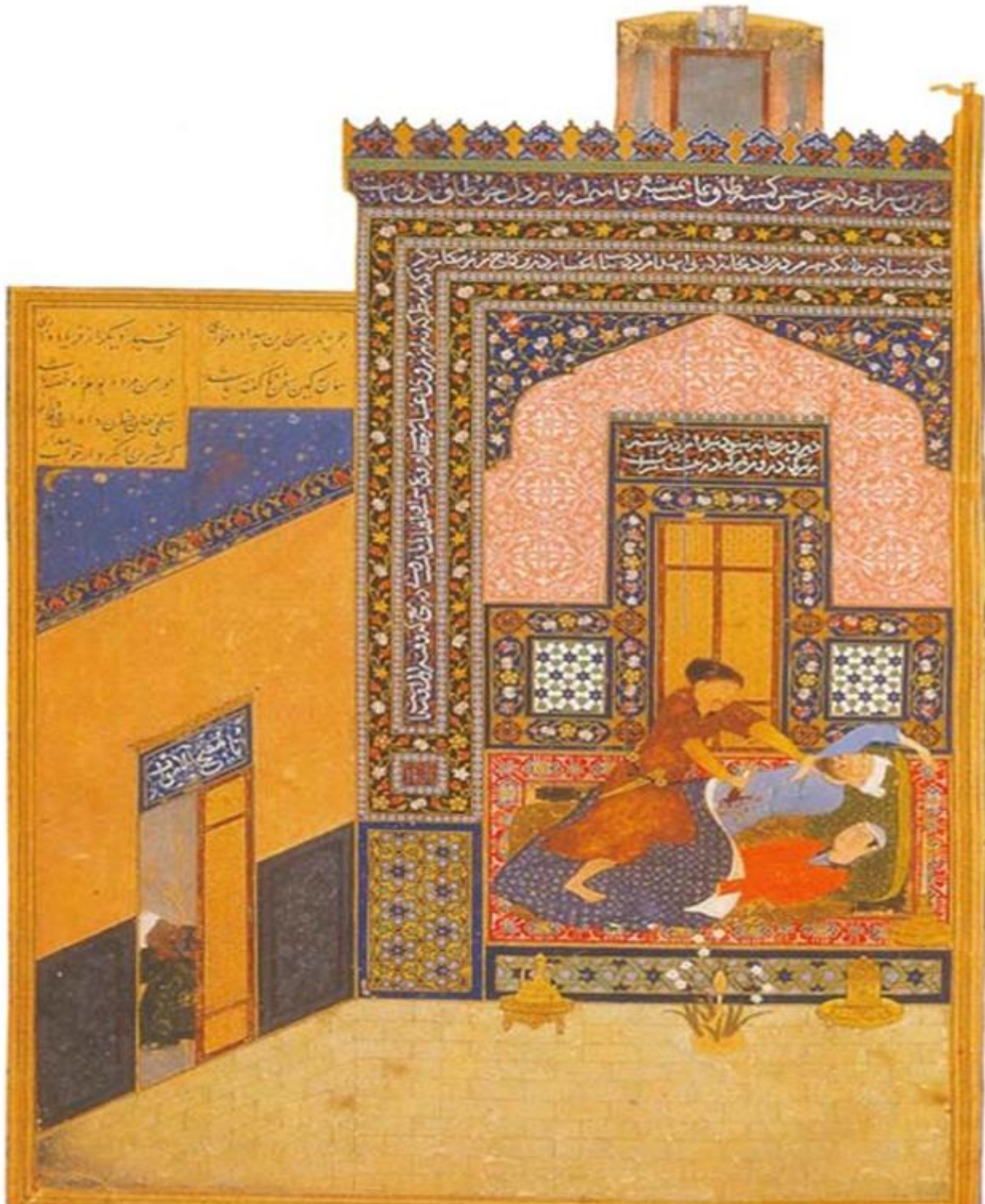


Figure 18 Bihzād, Shirooyeh kills Khosrow, from *Khamseh-ye Shāh Tahmāsebi*, Safavid period, 896 AH (1517 AD), Tabriz School.



Figure 19?. Funeral of Khosrow, Safavid period, 900 AH (1521 AD), Turkmen School.



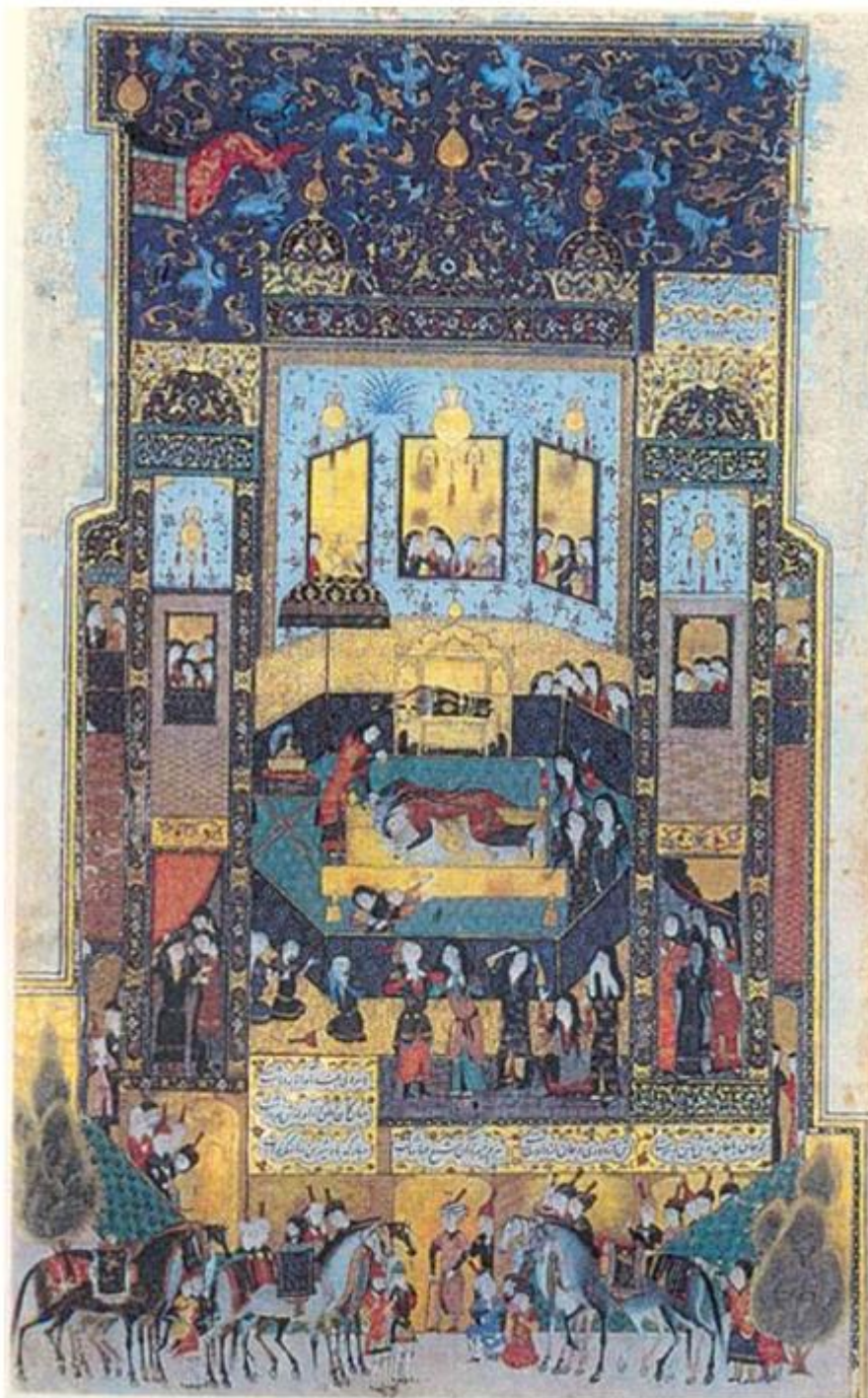


Figure 20?. *Shirin's Death*, from *Khamseh-ye Shāh Tahmāsebi*, Safavid period, 900 AH (1521 AD), Tabriz School.



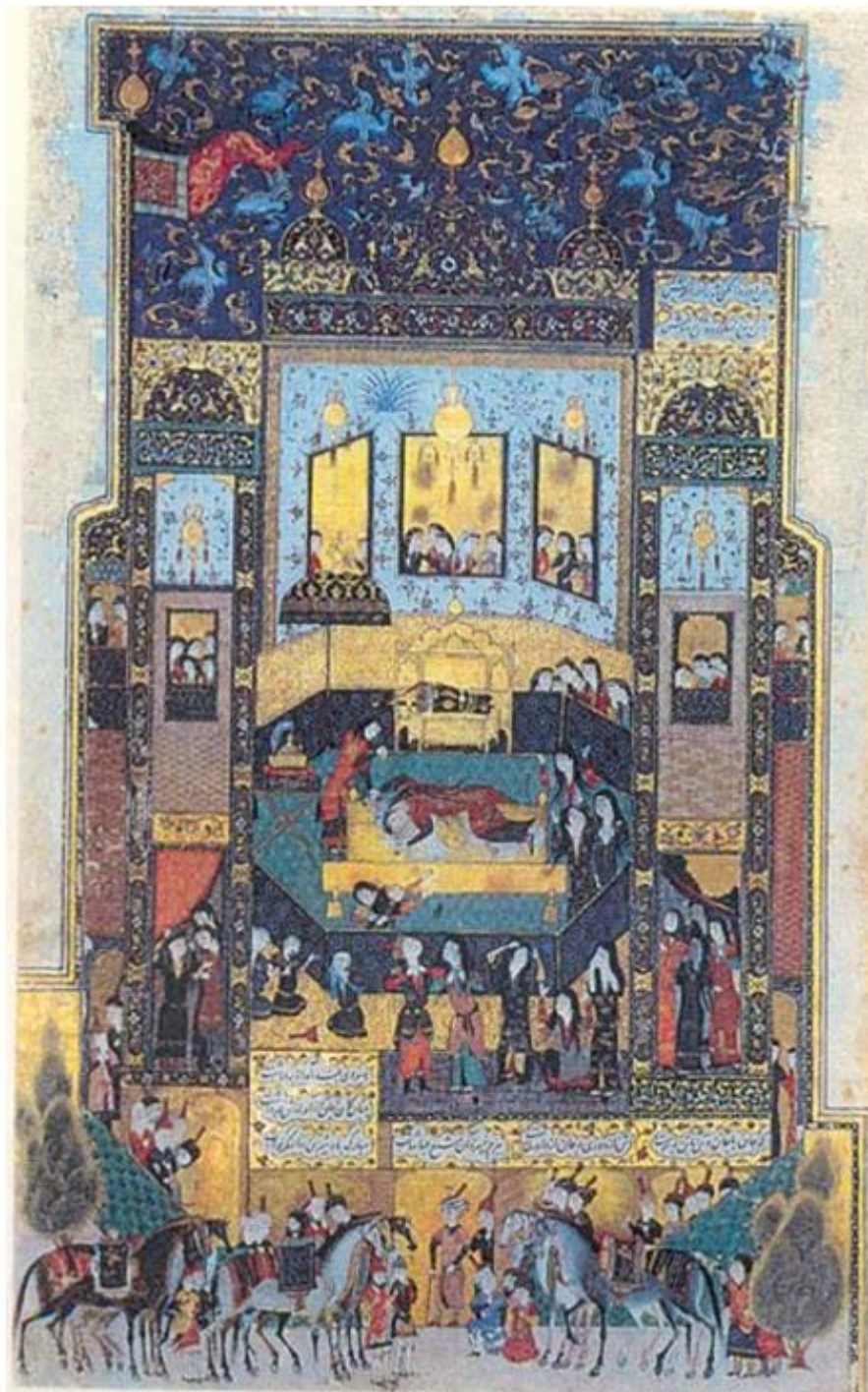


Figure 21?. *Khosrow's Death*, Safavid period, 1034 AH (1655 AD), Shirāz School.

The tragedy of Khosrow and Shirin's death (Figures. 18-21): These images include the scenes of Khosrow being killed by Shirooyeh (his grandson), Khosrow's funeral and Shirin's death, showing the various mental images of artists from various schools, styles, and historical eras, and how they have imagined the tragic end of the story. In Figure. 18, the painter has shown Khosrow's death by his son, Shirooyeh. He was in love with Shirin and thus went to Khosrow's room at night and put a dagger in his body and killed him. The artist paints the status of Khosrow and Shirin in the best way possible. While Shirooyeh has put the dagger in Khosrow's body with his right hand, puts his left hand around his neck, and Khosrow's reaction is pushing the killer's hand and stretching out his right hand as a sign of pain. Khosrow's face in this state is full of pain and his silent cry is opposite to the calmness and beauty of Shirin's face who is not aware of this accident and is sleeping at the right side of the bed. She only finds out what has happened beside her when she wakes up in the morning. Three verses of the story tell the damage occurred to Khosrow and the silent pain he tolerated because he didn't want to interrupt Shirin's sleep.<sup>xiv</sup> Jzfari, Moazzeni Calligraphic lines of the inscription above the rooms show that the world is insensitive and unjustified, which are not Nizami's verses. The composition and the location of the elements, small details, and using colors and also the name of Bihzād at the lower part introduces its creator. Though, Sarkisian in 1939, has said that this image is made by Ghāsemali.

Figure. 19 is an image belonging to the beginning of the Safavid era and the Turkmen School exhibiting the simplicity of this school. The people attending the funeral are arranged from the left to the right side of the image going toward Khosrow's tomb. The line of Khosrow's coffin leads the attention of the observer towards Shirin who is following the coffin with sadness.



Figure. 20 is an image from Tabriz School and belongs to *Khamseh-ye of Shāhtahmāsebi* and has been painted at the same time with the image of Turkmen School. This image shows the scene after Shirin's suicide upon Khosrow's body. The lifeless body of Shirin is in the golden part of the image. Besides, Khosrow's coffin and the other people in the scene arranged in a parallel form create a ring around them while mourning. Status and movements of the humans in this image shine off the diversity of states and movements of bodies that have been shown in servants and the companies.

Figure. 21, belongs to the 11<sup>th</sup> century and Safavid era in Shirāz School, which shows an interesting arrangement revealing the knowledge of the mental effects of colors. In this image i.e. the scene of the killing of Khosrow by Shirooyeh, red is used as a sign of anxiety, excitement, and blood. Khosrow, Shirin, Shirooyeh, the companies' attire, the leaves of trees are wholly painted in red in the background sky.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Nizami in fact, in his poems, has proved that he is an artist who owns knowledge and style in all artistic aspects. He provides the painter with color codes and scenery creating in his poets by a full description of the details. Of course, the painter is not only the painter of the text, but he also uses his understanding from the text to recreate the painting. As said earlier, Iranian painting like Persian literature and poem has its specific rules and regulations that a painter of literary works must consider.

It can be said that since the 6<sup>th</sup> AH, when the story has been narrated by Nizami in rhyme, due to the popularity of the work among people, and also its special imaging features, hundreds of illustrations have been painted from it in various periods of Iranian painting, all of which were not special equally. From the aspect of the characteristics regarding the form, artists who have achieved a balance between the text and image by relying on their visual knowledge and creativity, and have created masterpieces in this field are Bihzād, Mirzā Ali, SheikhZadeh, Aghā Mirak, Mir Mussavar, Sultān Muhammed, Ghāsemali, and etc. from Herāt school, second Tabriz School, and some from Turkmen and Shirāz Schools. There are more illustrations for sure, but the images paid attention to in this essay are only the scenes in which Shirin and Khosrow are together in a scene, and thus only three painters have been considered and named in the text.

According to the remaining images and also the development and growth of the special features of Iranian painting in Herāt and second Tabriz Schools, it can be concluded that the masterpieces of illustration of this valuable version of Persian literature, including the images of *Khamseh-ye Nezami*, is from Sultān Hossein Baighara's era (Herāt School) and *Khamseh-ye Shāhtahmāsebi* (second Tabriz School).

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