means of separating the two main sections of the book. The figures would have appeared up-to-date and fashionable in 1650, and they might have injected an element of surprise to the reader perusing such a well-known text. As with the compositional deviations from the norm in Mu'in's illustrations to this manuscript, the pendant figures of a standing man and woman offer an unexpected element that must have been intended to delight the patron.

The Illustrations

Despite Mu'in's debt to his master Riza in many aspects of pictorial composition, palette, and subject matter, his individuality shines forth in the 1650 *Shahnameh*. The following section of this article will analyze each illustration stylistically and will propose where the known dispersed pages were placed in the original manuscript as well as the placement of others that have not yet surfaced.

1. *The Divan of Tahmuras*, fol. 8a.
   The David Collection (fig. 15)

Tahmuras was the great-grandson of Gayumars, the first king in the *Shahnameh*. He ruled for only thirty years, but accomplished a great deal, teaching people crafts and domesticating animals. Although Tahmuras tamed the *div*s and captured Ahriman, the incarnation of evil, Mu'in has not chosen to portray him in a moment of drama or action. Instead, the beardless King Tahmuras is seated on a platform throne at the right, attended by two musicians and a cupbearer. Kneeling in the foreground at the left, one of the members of the divan, or council, gestures to Tahmuras with open hands, while two other men kneeling behind him drink wine. Two more cupbearers holding long-necked flasks stand behind them with heads inclined toward the enthroned king. This scene takes place at the beginning of the short chapter on Tahmuras.

The purple, fuchsia, and peach hues of the walls, floor-coverings, and one musician's robe are typical of Mu'in's paintings throughout most of his career. The blue mural in the niche with a bird in foliage

recalls the wall painting in Mu'in's image of the *Old Man Who Fell from the Roof*, which is dated 1050 / 1640-1641.[26] The figure wearing a turban with a *taj*, or vertical extension around which the turban cloth is wrapped, reflects the social category of the *Shahsevan*, or people strictly loyal to the shah, common in the first half of the 17th century. Although this composition is not innovative, it contains many of the traits associated with Mu'in Musavvir's manuscript illustrations. Moreover, the choice of episode is unique not only in Mu'in's work, but also in the 17th-century *Shahnameh*s listed in the Cambridge website.

2. *Faridun Binds Zahhak in the Presence of Shahrnavaz and Arnavaz*, fol. 13a.
   The David Collection (fig. 16)

This scene depicts Faridun's victory over the evil king Zahhak while the two sisters of Jamshid, the previous shah, observe from the side. Zahhak knew that the young Faridun would defeat him because he had dreamed that an Iranian prince with an ox-headed mace would overpower him. While the battle raged between Zahhak's army and the citizens of his realm, he slipped into his palace, intent on murdering the sisters of Jamshid. Instead he encountered Faridun, who bashed his head with his ox-headed mace. Then, in response to a heavenly message, Faridun refrained from killing the evil king and instead bound and took him to hang in a cave for eternity. In the illustration, Zahhak's empty throne awaits Faridun at the right while his mace lies in the foreground. The sisters of Jamshid, among the few women who appear in the illustrations to this manuscript, raise their forefingers to their lips in the gesture of astonishment.

The palette of this scene closely resembles that of the previous illustration, with its purple ground, violet throne, and bright red passages. Although the impassive facial expressions and the women's poses are standard fare in the work of Mu'in, he has added some subtle touches to this illustration, notably the minor variation of the background of the wall painting – white in the throne chamber and gray in the room to the left. This suggests that the sisters stand