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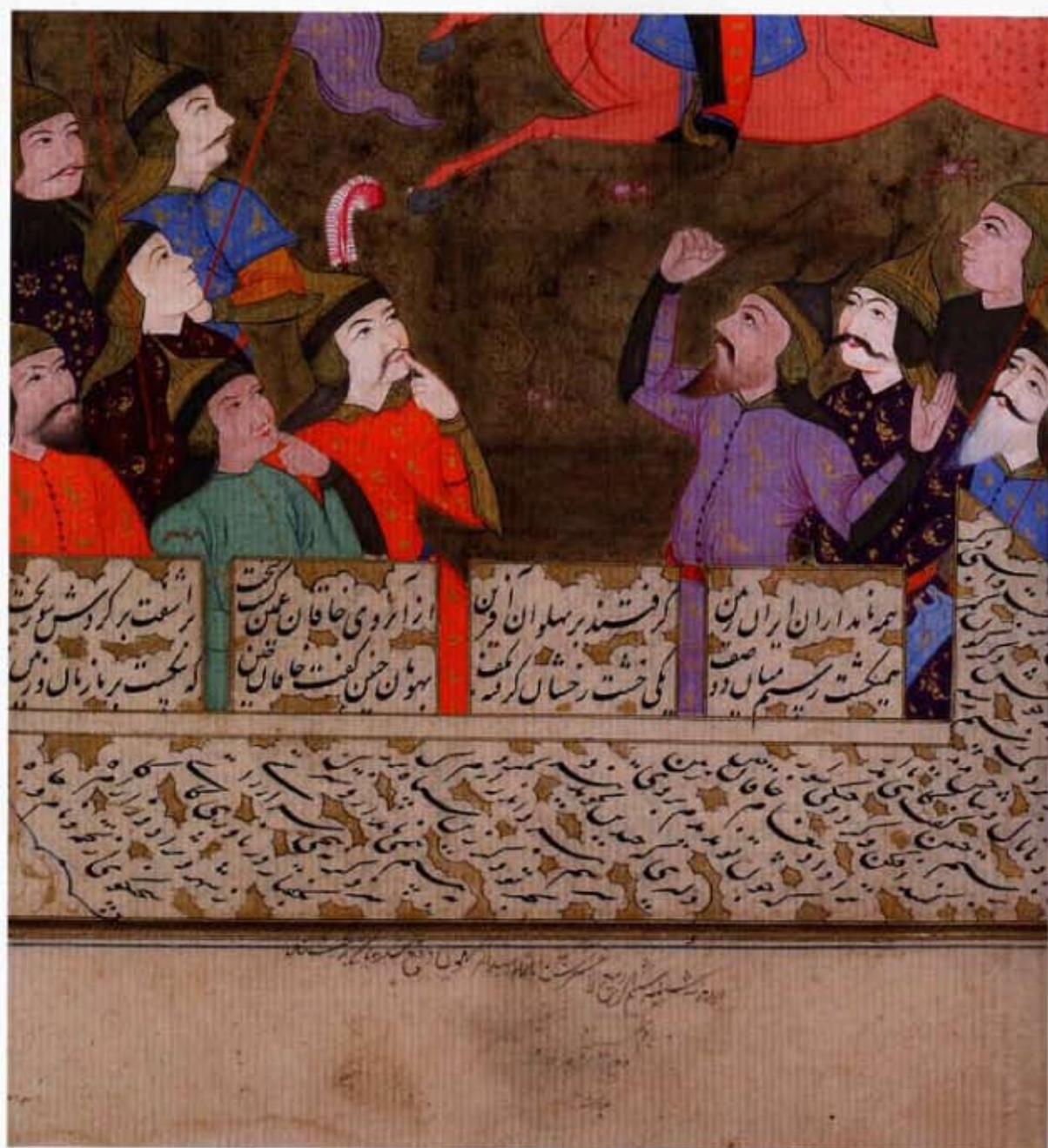


Fig. 1. Detail of *Rustam Overturns Chinghish*, fol. 109b, dated and signed by Mu'in Musavvir. "If there has been any short-coming, may it be forgiven." The David Collection, 217/2006.

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SHEILA R. CANBY

The Manuscript and its Context

In the summer of 2006, a bound manuscript of the *Shahnameh* that greatly enhances our knowledge of mid-17th-century Safavid art came to light in London.¹ It contains that rarest of combinations: the name of the patron, the name of the copyist, the place in which the manuscript was copied, the signature of the illuminator, and twenty-seven signed paintings by the artist, Mu'in Musavvir. In the summer of 2006, the manuscript was deaccessioned by the Cincinnati Historical Society, now the Cincinnati Museum Center, and was sold at auction in New York. A bookplate affixed to the interior of the binding reads, "Cornelius J. Hauck Collection, Cincinnati, Ohio."² The manuscript was acquired by the London art dealer Sam Fogg, who sold it to the David Collection in Copenhagen.

In addition to the wealth of information about its production, the manuscript's illustrations stand out for the originality of their compositions, one sign that Mu'in Musavvir had recently matured as an artist. Additionally, Mu'in Musavvir chose some unusual episodes to illustrate, suggesting that the patron as well as the artist contributed to the overall appearance of the manuscript. Even if the patron were a well-documented historical figure, which he is not, the motives for the choice of certain episodes as opposed to others were presumably personal or idiosyncratic and impossible to connect with known historical situations or events. Mu'in's willingness to include rarely illustrated scenes further underscores the freshness of his vision and confidence as an artist.

In its present state, the manuscript contains 355 folios, each with 29 lines of text within the inner borders and a band of continuing text written on the diagonal that forms a border on the outer three mar-

gins of each folio. This distinctive feature distinguishes this *Shahnameh* from the five other copies of the manuscript that Mu'in Musavvir illustrated.³ More significantly, the manuscript under discussion is the only one by Mu'in Musavvir in which the patron's name is mentioned. The colophon on fol. 355a states that the manuscript was produced on the order of the *navvab* Abu'l-Mahdi Husain in *dār al-'ibadeh-yi Yazd* (fig. 2). It is possible that this *navvab* is the same man as Mirza Shah Abu'l Mahdi, identified by Iraj Afshar as the patron of a garden near Yazd and a lake opposite the *khanqah* of Shah Khalil II in Taft. He may be identified with an anonymous vizier of Yazd who commissioned a building in Yazd in 1064 / 1653-1654 for which the poet Amin al-Din Zarkish composed a chronogram. Zarkish compares the vizier to Mani and Bihzad, which may refer to his reputation as a patron.⁴ The term *navvab* may simply be used as an honorific similar to "Excellency" or it may refer to a governmental role such as deputy. Thus, what position Abu'l-Mahdi Husain held in Yazd is not precisely clear. As Massumeh Farhad has noted, some of the most sumptuous illustrated manuscripts of the mid-17th century were commissioned by non-royal patrons.⁵ Farhad's suggestion that Mu'in Musavvir's patrons came from the class of high court officials is supported not only by the evidence in the colophon of this *Shahnameh* but also by the portrait from 1085 / 1674 of Navvab Mirza Muhammad Baqir and his son.⁶ This *navvab* is most likely the *munajjim bashi*, or chief astrologer, mentioned by Raphael du Mans and Chardin.⁷

In addition to the date of the completion of the manuscript, the 15th of *Rabi' I* 1060 / March 18, 1650, the colophon contains the name of the scribe, Muhammad Salih ibn Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad al-Kirmani, and states that it took him three years to



Fig. 2. Colophon, fol. 355a. The David Collection.

copy the manuscript. The inscription *dār al-'ibadeh-yi Yazd* implies that the scribe was working for Abu'l Mahdi Husain in Yazd, not Kirman and not Isfahan. Unfortunately, Muhammad Salih ibn Ghiyath al-Din is not readily identifiable. One calligrapher named Muhammad Jan al-Kirmani is attested, having copied a *Shahnameh* in 1012 / 1604, but even a cursory comparison of the two manuscripts indicates on the basis of handwriting style that the scribes are different people.⁸ Of the calligraphers named Muhammad Salih mentioned by Mehdi Bayani as masters of *Nastaliq*, none shares the same parentage or dates as

the copyist of this manuscript.⁹ The only scribe who might be identified with the copyist of the *Shahnameh* is the Muhammad Salih whose *Thuluth* inscription appears in the mihrab of the Masjid-i Shah (known as the Masjid-i Imam) in Isfahan.¹⁰ A shared identity of the designer of inscriptions for the Isfahan mosque and the calligrapher of the David Collection *Shahnameh* would confirm the itinerant nature of artists' lives in Safavid Iran. Moreover, a city such as Yazd, one of the major centers of silk-weaving in the 17th century, would have had the financial clout to attract calligraphers and artists from the capital.

The scribe of the 1650 manuscript seems to have followed a practice already established in the 16th century in which the copying and illuminating of manuscripts did not necessarily occur simultaneously and in the same location as the production of their illustrations. The best-known example of this practice, the *Haft Aurang* of Sultan Ibrahim Mirza, was copied over a nine-year period by five different scribes working at three or four different locations.¹¹ Since the illustration on folio 109b, *Rustam Overturns Chingish* (figs. 1 and 26), is dated the 20th of *Rabi' II* 1060 / April 22, 1650, just a few weeks after the completion of the copying of the text, the date in the colophon does not indicate the completion of the whole manuscript. Furthermore, two dispersed pages from this *Shahnameh* are dated to the 2nd of *Dhu'l Qa'deh* 1058 / December 18, 1648, and *Ramadan* 1059 / September-October 1649.¹² The date 1058 / 1648 appears on a colophon page marking the end of the Kay Khusrau chapter, before the start of the chapter on the reign of Luhrasp, a common break point in illuminated and illustrated *Shahnamehs*. It thus refers to the copying of the text. The date 1059 / 1649 is in the hand of Mu'in Musavvir and is found on the page with the miniature *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity* (fig. 3). It comes from an earlier passage in the text than the first colophon of 1058 / 1648, supporting the proposal that Mu'in Musavvir painted the illustrations after the completion of sections of the manuscript. Since the Rustam and Suhrab illustration also occurs earlier in the text than the picture of Rustam and Chingish, dated



Fig. 3. *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity*. British Museum, 1922,0711.02.

1650 (figs. 1 and 26), Mu'in must have produced the illustrations in the same sequence in which they appear in the epic.

Before turning to the illustrations, I would like to discuss the three illuminated *'unwans*, or headings, that mark the beginning of the preface, the beginning of the epic proper, and the beginning of the

Luhrasp section. Each of these contains the signature of the illuminator, *dhahhabahu Mulla Mu'in Shirazi* ("Mulla Mu'in Shirazi gilded [i.e. illuminated] it"), written in white partly on the narrow blue-and-white band separating the upper section of the illumination from the narrower section below it, and partly on the blue-and-white band below the section title (fig. 4). Although no other manuscripts with this illuminator's signature have yet been found, the incidence of signed illuminations in the Safavid period is extremely low and almost non-existent in the 17th century.

Even if Mulla Mu'in was not working in Shiraz, his *nisba* "Shirazi" signifies a connection with one of the major schools of manuscript illumination in the Safavid period. While the style of paintings of the Shiraz school in the Safavid period followed fashions that originated in Tabriz and Qazvin in the 16th and early 17th century, manuscript illumination from Shiraz reveals originality and a high level of technical perfection. In the mid-17th century, when the commercial production of illustrated manuscripts had abated in Shiraz, the "brand-name" for illuminators may have continued to be strong, even if, like the famous 16th-century illuminator, 'Abdallah Shirazi, they worked in the capital or other centers.

Mulla Mu'in Shirazi's illuminations conform stylistically to those of the Isfahan school in the 17th century. The opening *'unwan* (fig. 4) consists of two bands of decoration: the upper, wider one containing a central, lobed diaper-shaped medallion surrounded by a similarly shaped band of blue within a wider band of gold. Above the lobed edge of the gold band stylized quatrefoils with yellow, pink, and dull-gold elements appear to float on a ground of undulating gold vines and *saz* leaves. The smaller horizontal band above the text contains a central medallion on a blue ground in which the title is written in gold. Like the band above, this medallion shape is echoed in surrounding bands of gold and blue. In addition to the narrow blue-and-white borders that surround the main illumination, a somewhat wider band containing a zigzagging red scroll on a light-green ground unites the upper and lower sections of illumination. A rhythmically arranged scroll of vines



Fig. 4. 'Unwan, fol. 1b. The David Collection.

and *saz* leaves runs around the outer margins and the text is set within *tahrir*, or cloud shapes, on a gold ground. In addition to the 'unwans, Mulla Mu'min Shirazi would most likely have provided the decorated rubrics and gold passages surrounding the *tahrir*, thus working in tandem with the calligrapher.

Many elements of this illumination relate to earlier examples. The use of blue and gold, the inclusion of cartouches, overlapping layers of split-palmette leaf and vine scrolls in contrasting colors, and the flowers adorning the medallions all appear in 16th-century illumination from Shiraz, Tabriz, Qazvin,

and Herat. However, the larger scale of the elements, the presence of lotus blossoms, and a new palette including pink, yellow, and the dark red of the central lozenge and zigzagging border are indicative of the new style that developed in the 17th century. This type of illumination appears looser and less geometric than that of the early 16th century, and the colors are warmer than the sober blues and greens in early Safavid 'unwans and *sarlahs* (fully illuminated pages). Nonetheless, this illumination is an opulent beginning to a richly illustrated manuscript. Its palette and floral and vegetal motifs, moreover, recall the "Polonaise carpets" of the first half of the 17th century, indicating that this style of illumination reflects the taste of the times rather than existing in isolation.¹³

As stated previously, the manuscript contains 27 paintings, but at least fifteen others were removed from the manuscript as early as 1922 and certainly before 1941.¹⁴ The manuscript was rebound, probably after the removal of the fifteen paintings, but before its acquisition by Cornelius Hauck. A partial codicological study in 2008 points to the fact that several pages are now placed out of their original sequence, but a page-by-page textual study should uncover the total number of missing folios. Except for the folios at the end of the Kay Khusrau chapter, before the beginning of the chapter on the reign of Luhrasp, the dispersed illustrations all come from the most popular sections of the epic, featuring Rustam and heroes such as Iskandar, Siyavush, and Isfandiyar. Of the illustrations still contained in the manuscript, all are signed. The signatures on the first five paintings, folios 8a, 13a, 24b, 32a, and 39b, and on 44a appear on the painted surface, whereas all the other signatures are in the center of the lower margin. All but folio 109b (figs. 1 and 26) bear the signature *raqm-i kamineh Mu'in Musavvir* ("drawing [or work] of the humble Mu'in Musavvir"), while below the painting *Rustam Overturns Chingish* on folio 109b the inscription provides the date, Tuesday the 20th of *Rabi' al-Akhar* 1060, the phrase "If there has been any shortcoming, may it be forgiven," and the signature of Mu'in Musavvir. Why Mu'in should have inscribed this particular page with a date is unclear,

since it comes in the first half of the epic and of the extant illustrations of this manuscript. However, the composition of this painting and of numerous others in the manuscript reveals the degree to which Mu'in Musavvir departed from 16th- and early 17th-century prototypes to produce original interpretations of episodes in the poem.

By 1650, Mu'in Musavvir had been working for at least fifteen years. In an inscription on his portrait of Riza-yi 'Abbasi, he states that he had begun painting the portrait of his master one month before Riza died, in *Dhu'l Qa'deh* 1044 / March-April 1635 and he completed it forty years later in *Ramadan* 1084 / December 1673.¹⁵ Although he developed a distinctive style early in his career, the influence of Riza-yi 'Abbasi is evident in the compositions of his manuscript illustrations. Like Riza, he preferred to place the figures close to the picture plane and to limit the number of personages in his scenes. His palette is characterized by an intense fuchsia pink, often used for mountains and architectural passages, bluish lavender for the middle ground, and wine-red, frequently employed for robes and other articles of clothing. Unlike that of Riza, his draftsmanship, particularly evident in drawings and the treatment of clouds in his paintings, is painterly and sketchy. In his drawings he had a light touch, accentuated by the frequent use of brown ink. Although his drawings from the 1630s and 1640s incorporate figural conventions such as the very round-cheeked youths found in the work of Riza, he also developed his own types early in his career. Thus, men with very long moustaches with or without neatly trimmed, pointed beards populate all of his illustrations in the 1650 *Shahnameh*. While only four illustrations in the manuscript contain women, they are notably similar to one another, with their round faces framed by *hijabs* and tiaras or crowns and their heads tilted at an angle to their bodies (fig. 17).

If B. W. Robinson's attribution to Mu'in of some of the illustrations to a *Shahnameh* in the British Library produced between 1630 and 1640 is correct,¹⁶ his style evolved in minor ways from around 1640 to 1650. Both the British Library and the 1650 *Shahnamehs* contained a picture of Rustam killing the

White Div.¹⁷ The compositions are nearly identical, with the only differences being the smaller text blocks on the earlier page and the angling of the head of Rustam and Kay Kavus to the left rather than to the right. A snow leopard in the earlier page is replaced by a human figure in the later version, the earlier plane tree has become a leafy variety, and possibly the palette is different, but essentially the artist has only slightly modified his earlier illustration. Otherwise, the choice of episodes for illustration in the 28 images in the British Library *Shahnameh*, which were painted by several different artists, overlaps with that of the 1650 manuscript in only nine instances.¹⁸ A comparison with 17th-century illustrations of the same scenes included on the Cambridge University *Shahnama* Project website¹⁹ reveals that most of Mu'in Musavvir's compositions in the 1650 manuscript are highly original, even if he chose to depict the same episodes as many other artists in his period.

In some instances, Mu'in has illustrated a scene, but has deviated from the text either by depicting a figure differently than he is described or by adding figures. The painting *Isfandiyar Slays the Dragon* is a case in point (fig. 32). Whereas the story describes him approaching the dragon in a box with swords piercing its sides that is placed on a horse-drawn cart, he is portrayed on horseback shooting the dragon with arrows while two *divs* (demons) lie wounded and dying in the foreground. Although in the story Isfandiyar did emerge from the box, he polished the dragon off with a sword, not arrows, and nowhere are the *divs* mentioned. As a dramatic device, the *divs* heighten the sense of the extraordinary, but one wonders whether the artist had this in mind when he included them or if he was responding to a variant of the standard text.

As Shreve Simpson has noted, Mu'in Musavvir also combined two episodes in one in the painting *Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow*, now in the Harvard Art Museum.²⁰ The lower half of the composition illustrates the burial of five paladins in the snow, now detectable only by the standards and pennants sticking out of the snow, while above, Rustam and his companions search for the lost Iranians. By

combining two stages of the story, the artist has produced a more visually compelling composition than if he had painted one or the other episode alone or on successive pages. Moreover, no other 17th-century artist had attempted to depict the paladins lost in the snow, but had only shown Rustam and the companions hunting for them.

Mu'in Musavvir illustrated two of the single combats from the section on the Battle of the Twelve Rukhs on facing pages (figs. 30 and 31). Each of the combats of the Rukhs is depicted in a provincial Isfahan-style *Shahnameh* manuscript in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, also dated 1650, with two episodes per page on consecutive folios.²¹ Thus, the bunching of illustrations of certain sections of the epic was not unknown in the 17th century. However, the British Library *Shahnameh* of c. 1630–1640 mentioned above does not have any double-page scenes. What is more interesting in the 1650 manuscript is that Mu'in made no attempt to unite the two compositions by suggesting a single landscape. Not only is the ground in *Fariburz Defeats Kulbad* on the right violet, while on the left in *The Battle of Gurazeh and Siyamak* it is white with pink mountains, but also the horse of Kulbad is cut off by the inner margin and its hind quarters do not appear on the left.

A far more unusual and innovative double-page pair of images appears on the dispersed folios from the end of the reign of Kay Khusrau and before the start of the chapter on the reign of Luhrasp (fig. 12).²² The double-page opening consists of a portrait of a youth in European garb holding a hat and standing next to a small white dog. He tilts his head toward the left with a slight smile. On the left-hand page, a young woman whose feet face left bends back toward the right and holds a wine bottle out in the direction of the young man with her left hand while holding a wine-cup to the left, over the marginal ruling, with her right hand. The setting within the marginal rulings consists of vegetation and clouds painted gold in the style popularized by Riza-yi 'Abbasi. The outer margin includes birds, deer, foxes, and rabbits in landscape. This type of marginal decoration had been in use in Persian painting since the

early 16th century and continued to be popular until the end of the Safavid period.

Assuming that both figures are contemporary with the manuscript, they are highly significant for several reasons. Generally speaking, if such figures were not known to be from a *Shahnameh* manuscript, they would be identified as album pages, produced as pendants for insertion in an album. Because paintings were removed or moved around in albums, one can rarely be entirely certain that they were intended to be placed and viewed together. Such doubts do not exist with these paintings. The complimentary use of red and purple in the clothing of both figures sets up a pleasing resonance between the two images that is accentuated by their poses and gestures. B. W. Robinson has noted another version of the male figure, signed by Mu'in and dated 1652, and a further image in mirror reverse.²³ Additionally, Mu'in's portrait of Riza-yi 'Abbasi depicts the artist painting a picture of a standing man in European garb, wearing the same style hat as the one that the 1650 figure holds. In Riza-yi 'Abbasi's last painting, *European Giving a Dog a Drink* from 1634, the dog is the same variety as that in the *Shahnameh* figure and it also appears in a painting of a standing European by Riza from 1628.²⁴ This breed of dog, most likely a papillon, was not the only type that Europeans in Iran possessed in the 17th century, since a painting on the exterior wall of the Chihil Sutun in Isfahan portrays a European with an Italian greyhound. Rather, by 1650 the dog and the hat had become the accepted props with which an artist could suggest that a figure was European. Likewise, the pose of the woman with her arm outstretched and her veil spread like a cape appears in other works of the 17th century²⁵ and may ultimately refer back to a lost work by Riza.

What relevance did these figures have to the *Shahnameh*? They have no narrative connection with the epic, and function as bookends demarcating the end of the early section of the manuscript and the beginning of the later segment. Possibly they were inserted at the request of the patron. However, a more likely, though unverifiable, scenario would be that Mu'in Musavvir wished to introduce a novel

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 *divs* 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 *Shahnamehs* 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

in a separate chamber, without interrupting the flow of the action taking place on a terrace in the foreground. The scale of the terrace is implied by the purple floor color, which fills the vertical strips between columns of text. Finally, the swooping bird in the mural above Faridun's head emphasizes the focal point of the composition.

A *Shahnameh* of 1650 copied in Isfahan contains another version of this illustration.²⁷ Rather than minimize the number of figures to focus on the key elements of the story, the Isfahan artist has added soldiers and courtiers as observers. These figures detract from the drama of Zakhak's capture and point up the care with which Mu'in populated his scenes in order to present the crux of the narrative. Why Mu'in and the Isfahan artist should have chosen to depict this episode, as opposed to the hanging of Zakhak at Mt. Demavand, is unclear.

3. *Zal Comes to Rudabeh's Palace and Sees Her on the Roof*, fol. 24b.

The David Collection (fig. 17)

Zal, the ruler of Zabul, learned of Rudabeh, the beautiful daughter of his tributary, the king of Kabul, and after enlisting the help of her handmaidens, came to her palace. Here she has loosed her long, musk-scented locks, which the *Shahnameh* says reached the ground from her balcony. Zal chose to send up a lasso of his own and climb it to her chamber. Although a gatekeeper sits beside the door to the palace, he appears unaware of Zal's conversation with his charge. Meanwhile, the handmaidens stand in an upper chamber with wine and incense, ready to greet the lover of their mistress.

This composition, with a prince on horseback conversing with a princess on a balcony or second-storey terrace of a palace, has a long history in Persian painting. Early 15th-century images of Khusrau at Shirin's palace from the *Khamseh* of Nizami were copied and adapted to other manuscripts such as the *Shahnameh* through the 15th and 16th centuries. Mu'in has included trees and other vegetation here, not only to suggest the landscape outside the palace, but also to echo the description of Rudabeh as "A cypress over which the full moon

shone."²⁸ The balcony extending into the right-hand margin may be unfinished and serves no pictorial purpose. Nonetheless, this is one of Mu'in's favorite architectural elements, found in many of his illustrations.

Another version of this illustration from a mid-17th-century manuscript produced in Isfahan²⁹ contains many of the same elements: the gatekeeper, the handmaidens, and other servants, but Zal is greeted at the door by a duenna rather than preparing to climb up a rope to Rudabeh's chamber. The style of the Isfahan miniature conforms to that of the Windsor *Shahnameh*,³⁰ a style that was in favor at the court of Shah 'Abbas II and at the courts of the most powerful figures in his government. However, despite its reference to an archaic rendering of the prince at the palace of his beloved, Mu'in's painting depicts the story less ambiguously than its fashionable Isfahan counterpart.

4. *Rustam Kills the White Elephant*, fol. 32a.
The David Collection (fig. 18)

As a boy, Rustam and his father Zal traveled to Sistan. After a night of revelry Rustam was awakened from his sleep by people shouting that the local chief's white elephant had broken loose and was on a rampage. Armed with his grandfather Sam's mace, Rustam went forth to confront the beast, but the gatekeeper attempted to stop him. Rustam responded by striking the gatekeeper on the head, smashing his way through the gate, and felling the elephant with a mighty blow to the head. In the painting, Rustam, dressed in his nightclothes and without turban or shoes, has just landed his mace on the elephant's head, as the gatekeeper lies bleeding next to the open gate.

Mu'in has retained the palette of purple, red, and violet here while adding another trademark element, the stormy sky with clouds depicted in his characteristic watercolor technique. Moreover, the sagging flesh of the elephant's legs and belly anticipates Mu'in's later animal drawings. The twisting bark of the tree also will appear often in Mu'in's manuscript illustrations. While the text of the *Shahnameh* implies that Rustam emerged from a walled palace or

city to combat the elephant, Mu'in has depicted a yurt-shaped tent with its dome extending into the upper margin and one of its ropes attached to the tree.

Illustrations of this popular episode are found in 17th-century *Shahnamehs*, including the mid-century manuscript in the Gulistan Palace Library. There the artist has emphasized the rage of the elephant and has included several figures that it has trampled. Most other Safavid renderings of this scene include numerous figures and a detailed architectural setting. By contrast, Mu'in has limited the figures to two men and the elephant, and has chosen to illustrate the minute after Rustam has subdued the elephant. The prototype for this composition may thus be an illustration of Khusrau defeating the lion from the *Khamseh* of Nizami rather than a *Shahnameh* image.³¹

5. *Rustam Lifts Afrasiyab up by His Belt*, fol. 39b.

The David Collection (fig. 19)

Still young and beardless, Rustam had acquired his tiger-skin cuirass and his magnificent horse, Rakhsh, by the time of this episode. He is portrayed on the battlefield effortlessly lifting the archenemy of the Iranians, Afrasiyab, by his belt into mid-air. Unfortunately, the weight of the Turanian king was too great. The belt snapped and Afrasiyab crashed to the ground, where he was surrounded by his troops and saved.

In keeping with his other illustrations in this manuscript, Mu'in has focused sharply on the protagonists while clustering the onlookers along the horizon and below in the foreground. The vertical format of the picture surface and the use of the lavender ground as a backdrop for the action emphasizes Rustam's feat of lifting Afrasiyab straight up in the air with one hand. While versions of this illustration in other 17th-century *Shahnamehs* depict the same moment of the story, in most of them Rustam and Afrasiyab are placed in the midst of the army on the battlefield. Here the figures holding battle horns at the top of the image as well as those wearing helmets imply a battle without overpowering the primary significance of the story and its illustration.

6. *The Death of Afrasiyab*, fol. 41a.

The David Collection (fig. 20)

This painting is out of place in the manuscript and has been inserted near where *Rustam Kills the White Div* was removed. (See Appendix I.) Afrasiyab was finally caught by the Iranians and brought before Kay Khusrau. After reminding Afrasiyab of all the noble and royal Iranians he had executed, Kay Khusrau beheaded him. Through the splattered red-brown blood Afrasiyab's white moustache is visible, attesting to his advanced age at the time of his death. The treatment of rocks that swoop toward the moody sky is typical of the work of Mu'in, as is the grouping of figures around the periphery of the image. Unlike the first five illustrations in the manuscript, this one is signed in the border below the outer marginal lines.

7. *Rustam Kills the Dragon with the Help of Rakhsh*, fol. 44a. The David Collection (fig. 21)

One of the most dramatic and attractive paintings in the manuscript, this illustration depicts Rustam slicing the back of a dragon that has coiled itself around Rakhsh as the horse bites him. The episode was the third of seven so-called courses that Rustam endured as he traveled through Mazandaran to rescue Kay Kavus, who had been taken captive by the White Div. Unwittingly Rustam had chosen to sleep near a dragon's lair. Twice the dragon emerged and Rakhsh awakened Rustam, who chided the horse because he could not see the dragon. The third time, as he was about to become very angry at the horse, Rustam noticed the dragon and both man and horse attacked and killed it.

Maintaining his customary palette of pink, purple, bright blue, and red, Mu'in has effectively contrasted the writhing blue dragon with pinkish Rakhsh and the purple ground behind him. Here the dragon's head is almost obscured as it is tucked in between the horse's saddle and its own back. Mu'in's drawings of dragons attacking other animals and a painting of a man attacked by a dragon indicate his abiding interest in the monsters.³² Despite the quarter of a century separating the David Collection *Shahnameh* and the single-page painting of a man



Fig. 5. *Rustam Kills the White Div.*
Whereabouts unknown.

attacked by a dragon in the British Museum, Mu'in continued to show his dragons with a single branch-like horn, flaming shoulders, and a long, flattened gold snout.³³ Unlike other mid-17th-century renderings of this episode, Rustam dominates the scene and the dragon threatens to constrict Rakhsh like a large snake.

8. *Rustam Kills the White Div.*

Whereabouts unknown³⁴ (fig. 5)

This illustration is the first in the chronological sequence of the *Shahnameh* to be removed from the David Collection manuscript. It portrays the final stage of Rustam, who rescued Kay Kavus from the White Div. Kay Kavus was blinded while being held captive and the only cure was the blood of the liver of the White Div. Here, Rustam eviscerates the *div* whom he has apprehended in a cave while his king stands tied to a tree at the right. As mentioned earlier, this composition differs minimally from an earlier version attributed to Mu'in in a *Shahnameh* with illustrations by various artists.³⁵

9. *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity.*

British Museum, 1922.0711.0.2, signed and dated by Mu'in Musavvir *Ramadan* 1059 / September–October 1649 (fig. 3)

This painting illustrates the tragic meeting between Rustam and his son, Suhrab, when Rustam has mortally wounded the young soldier only to find, when he removed Suhrab's armor, that his armband contained the amulet that Rustam had given Suhrab's mother. After their first and only tryst, Rustam had never seen Suhrab's mother again, so his realization that he had killed his own son came as a terrible shock to him. Although this is the second in the sequence of images known to have been removed from the manuscript, it appears after a substantial gap in the narrative, suggesting that other illustrations, yet to come to light, may have been removed from the folios between the previous painting (no. 7) and this one. This image is of particular significance because it is the first dated page from the manuscript, but is dated nine months later than the first colophon in the manuscript. Whereas 16th-century versions of this scene show the two protagonists in the company of several or many other figures, in the 17th century, most of the illustrations of this episode revolve around the two main figures and their horses and grooms.

10. *Garsiwaz and Gurwi Slay Siyavush.*

The Israel Museum, 582.69³⁶ (fig. 6)

Also removed from the manuscript, this painting illustrates the execution of Siyavush at the hands of the Turanian Gurwi under orders from Garsiwaz. Siyavush was an Iranian prince, the son of Kay Kavus. He decided to leave Iran and go to the court of Afrasiyab because his stepmother had become enamored of him and then denounced him. In Turan he fell in love with and married the daughter of Afrasiyab. His good fortune did not last, however, because jealous courtiers turned Afrasiyab against him and he was doomed. Here the ringleader Garsiwaz has ordered Gurwi to murder Siyavush. Gurwi dragged him out into the countryside by his beard and then beheaded him, allowing his blood to run into a bowl.

The reason for excising this illustration from the manuscript probably has more to do with the popularity of the scene than with the innate qualities of the painting. Such well-known episodes would pre-



Fig. 6. *Garsiwaz and Gurwi Slay Siyavush*. The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 582.69.

sumably have sold better than the more obscure images such as *The Divan of Tahmuras* (no. 1, fig. 15).

11. *Faramarz Slits Surkha's Throat*, fol. 74b.

The David Collection (fig. 22)

Surkha, the son of Afrasiyab, led the Turanian army in battle against the Iranians with Faramarz at their

head. Faramarz succeeded in unhorsing Surkha and then caught him when he fled. He took Surkha, bound, to Rustam, who ordered that he be killed on the plain just as had happened to Siyavush. Here, like Siyavush, his head is held back by a soldier who beheads him over a bowl that catches his blood. While the soldier has been identified as Faramarz, the text does not specifically state that Faramarz committed the deed. The painting contains more figures in the foreground and middle ground than many of Mu'in's illustrations, but it conforms to his norms of palette and landscape treatment and includes the beardless and mustachioed faces found in every painting in this manuscript. The two grooms with tall caps closely resemble those in the painting of Rustam and Suhrab (no. 9, fig. 3) and serve as a framing device for the murder taking place before them. Riza had used the same device in his depiction of the meeting of the Mughal ambassador, Khan 'Alam, and Shah 'Abbas I, known by a later copy.³⁷ Since Mu'in copied single figures from Riza's composition,³⁸ he would have been familiar with the original and may well have derived the idea of where to place the grooms and horses from Riza's work.

12. *Giv, Son of Gudarz, Finds Kay Khusrau in Turan*, fol. 78a. The David Collection (fig. 23)

The venerable Iranian Gudarz was told in a dream that the only person who could find Kay Khusrau, the son of Siyavush and heir to the Iranian throne, was his own son, Giv. He traveled in Turan alone for seven years until finally in a meadow near a famous forest he spied the royal youth. Here they discuss how they will escape from Turan and Afrasiyab's attention. Although Giv was not an old man, Mu'in has given him a white beard, more fitting for Giv's father. The greensward in the foreground with pairs of deer and foxes presents a suitably idyllic setting, while the mountains in the background allude to the terrain through which the two Iranians must pass before reaching safety. While Giv is typical of Mu'in's style with his moustache, fretting brows, and slight forward cant, Kay Khusrau recalls youthful figures by Riza from the beginning of his career in the 1590s. The clenched fist of Kay Khusrau's right hand



Fig. 7. *Kay Khusrau Sends Rustam to India*. The Israel Museum, 626.69.

featured often in Riza's early portraits, and the round cheek and short neck also appear in his works.³⁹

13. *Kay Khusrau Sends Rustam to India*.

The Israel Museum, 626.69⁴⁰ (fig. 7)

Shortly after Kay Khusrau's return to Iran and coronation, Rustam came to him and explained how the Turanians had seized Zabulistan, his own kingdom, and how he wished to regain it for Iran. Kay Khusrau heartily agreed that Rustam and the other great paladins should muster an army and march on Zabulistan, in what is today Afghanistan, but was considered part of India in the *Shahnameh*. Although this page is not immediately in the sequence from which *Rustam Kills the White Div* (no. 8, fig. 5) and *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity* (no. 9, fig. 3) were removed, it is another image featuring Rustam and as such would have been more saleable than some of the more obscure miniatures.

14. *The Turanians Led by Piran Defeat the Iranians*, fol. 91a. The David Collection (fig. 24)

Most *Shahnameh* manuscripts contain a preponderance of battle scenes, since the war between the Iranians and Turanians is the subject of so much of the prehistoric section of the narrative. However, Mu'in Musavvir preferred single combats in which

the protagonists could be portrayed large-scale and a few onlookers and attendants would populate the periphery of the main action. This painting is an exception in his work and an unusual choice of episode for illustration. Although the Iranian and Turanian soldiers are not differentiated by their costume, the figure that holds the standard at the right is most likely Fariburz, the Iranian. As Firdausi describes it, the battle was a bloodbath on both sides, but the Turanians prevailed despite great loss of life on their side. The horses and their mounts dashing left and right convincingly evoke the melee and confusion of the battlefield, while the trumpeters blow their horns at the upper left, in keeping with the description in the text.

In the *Shahnameh*, this battle follows a better-known Turanian attack on the Iranian camp at night when most of the Iranians were drunk, a scene often found in 16th-century manuscripts. An illustration of this episode, attributed to Pir Beg, does appear in a 17th-century *Shahnameh* with contributions from a range of artists, including Mu'in Musavvir.⁴¹ However, Mu'in's works date to the 1690s and the colophon of the manuscript is dated between 1663 and 1669, so Mu'in's composition in the David Collection *Shahnameh* is more likely to be the prototype for Pir Beg's work.

15. *The Envoy of Kay Kavus Asks for Sudabeh's Hand from Her Father, the King of Hamavaran*, fol. 102b. The David Collection (fig. 25)

The page with this illustration is out of order and originally should have appeared in the chapter on the reign of Kay Kavus. The story takes place early in the reign of Kay Kavus, following a battle with the King of Hamavaran in which the Iranians were victorious. Having sued for peace, the King of Hamavaran gave generous tribute to Kay Kavus. The Shah then learned that the King of Hamavaran had a beautiful daughter and sent his envoy to request her hand in marriage. Although the King bemoaned the loss of his only daughter, Sudabeh herself stated her wish to marry Kay Kavus, and her father agreed to the union.

The one other illustration of this episode listed

but not illustrated in the Cambridge Shahnama Project dates to the second half of the 17th century and is described as Kay Kavus asking to marry the daughter of the King of Hamavaran. It is not explicit about whether the painting depicts the Iranian envoy at the court of Hamavaran or if it shows either the envoy with Kay Kavus or the person telling Kay Kavus about Sudabeh before the envoy leaves on his mission. The same problem exists here. The king is seated on a backless throne while an elderly, bearded man dressed in a green robe kneels before him. Graybeards in this role are often considered sages in Persian painting, a status that the robe of green, the color of Islam, may support. Behind him stands an official who carries a bow and arrows, while pairs of young female musicians and male servants are arrayed at the edges of the scene. The two birds in the mural behind the king "converse," perhaps an echo of the discourse taking place between the king and the kneeling man.

16. *Rustam Overturns Chinghish*, fol. 109b.

The David Collection (figs. 1 and 26)

The lower margin contains a signature and date: "on Tuesday the 20th of *Rabi' II* 1060 [April 22, 1650] it was completed. If there has been any shortcoming, may it be forgiven; the most humble [illegible] speck of dust Mu'in Musavvir drew it."

Chinghish, a soldier in the army of the Khan of Chin (China), announced his aim to challenge Rustam to avenge the death of one of his compatriots. When he encountered Rustam on the battlefield, Rustam lifted Chinghish's horse up by its tail so that he fell to the ground and Rustam subsequently beheaded him. Here Mu'in has chosen to present the most dramatic and unusual moment of this episode with the horse and Chinghish upside down and about to meet their fate. Kay Khusrav and three soldiers watch from the horizon while below more men gesticulate and observe the rout.

The discolored, brown ground is most likely the result of the action of verdigris in pigment that would have originally been green. Although illustrations of this scene are fairly common, they almost always depict Rustam chasing Chinghish and grab-

bing his horse's tail. Mu'in's decision to show Chinghish and his horse upside down in mid-air is utterly novel. Since Mu'in would have had access to other illustrated manuscripts if he had wished to find a prototype, his must have aimed for originality in his composition, even when his style remained conservative and mostly unchanging.

17. *Rustam Pulls the Khaqan of Chin from the Elephant*. Harvard Art Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Francis H. Burr Memorial Fund, 1941.293 (fig. 8)

Before the David Collection manuscript came to



Fig. 8. *Rustam Pulls the Khaqan of Chin from the Elephant*. Harvard Art Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Francis H. Burr Memorial Fund, 1941.293.

light, this illustration was identified as Rustam dragging the Khaqan of Chin from his elephant. The painting would have appeared immediately before folio 114b, since this image represents the Khaqan in the moment of his being pulled down, while the next illustration shows him only seconds later, slightly lower on the side of the elephant. The text is a variant,⁴² but this passage does appear in some versions of the *Shahnameh*. Mu'in Musavvir shows the Khaqan of Chin dressed as a soldier in this illustration, whereas he is crowned in the next. Despite these anomalies, the two illustrations would have followed one on the other in the original manuscript.

18. *Rustam Drags the Khaqan of Chin from the Elephant*, fol. 114b. The David Collection (fig. 27)

In the battle against the army of the Khaqan of Chin, Rustam finally confronted the king on his white elephant. He captured the Khaqan with his lasso, pulling him from the elephant and dragging him to his soldiers, who bound him. In this painting, Rustam has just lassoed the Khaqan, but has not yet bound him. Soldiers are arrayed along the horizon line, including two like the jockey, wearing Indian-style turbans, a reference to the Asian origin of the Khaqan and his supporters.

Among the distinguishing characteristics of this illustration is the gray color of the elephant, despite the fact that it is described as white in the text. Certainly Mu'in deliberately chose to deviate from the customary way of depicting the elephant, since a white elephant appears in folio 32a, *Rustam Kills the White Elephant*. Additionally, the scale of the jockey on the elephant's back is disproportionately small, even if he is intended to be a child. Likewise, Rakhsh is large by comparison with the elephant, but small in relation to Rustam. The anomalies of scale serve to emphasize the key figures in the narrative, while the choice of painting the elephant gray may have more to do with Mu'in's interest in novelty.

19. *Div Akvan Carries Rustam to the Sea*.

The Israel Museum, 554.69⁴³ (fig. 9)

Kay Khusrau summoned Rustam and asked him to find and kill a *div* who had been taking the form of



Fig. 9. *Div Akvan Carries Rustam to the Sea*. The Israel Museum, 554.69.

an onager and savaging herds. Rustam set out on his quest and eventually lay down to sleep in a meadow. The *div*, Akvan, spied him and dug around where Rustam was sleeping, picking him up along with the earth on which he was resting. The *div* then gave Rustam the choice of being dashed on the mountains or thrown into the sea. Cleverly Rustam chose the mountains, knowing that Akvan would do the

opposite and he would be able to survive. This episode often appears in illustrated *Shahnamehs* because it not only reaffirms the strength and cunning of Rustam but is also humorous and colorful.

20. *Bizhan and the Wild Boars*, fol. 121b.

The David Collection (fig. 28)

One of the subject populations complained to Kay Khusrau that wild boars were destroying their orchards. In response, he sent the young Bizhan to combat them. When Bizhan found them in the forest, he shot them with arrows and then beheaded them. While the boar in the foreground has been shot with arrows, the one next to it has been stabbed or sliced. Bizhan is depicted jamming his dagger into a boar's neck. Although Bizhan had traveled to the forest with Gurgin, Mu'in has included only Bizhan in this painting. Moreover, the forest vegetation found in many illustrations of this episode is absent here, represented by only one tree on the mountain-side.

21. *Rustam Rescues Bizhan from the Pit*.

The Israel Museum, 626.69⁴⁴ (fig. 10)

The Turanian king Afrasiyab ordered Bizhan to be cast into a black pit because Bizhan had been consorting with his daughter, Manizheh. When his plight was discovered by Kay Khusrau, the shah dispatched Rustam to locate and rescue the young Iranian. With the help of Manizheh, who lit a flame near the pit so Rustam could find it at night, Rustam lowered a rope into the pit and Bizhan was pulled to safety. In this painting, Manizheh stands to the side of the flame, veiled and wearing white while Rustam in his customary tiger-skin cuirass and leopard-skin helmet rescues Bizhan as three soldiers observe at the right. This is one of the most popular episodes in the *Shahnameh*, illustrated in fifty known manuscripts from the 17th century alone.

22. *Bizhan Beheads Human*, fol. 136b.

The David Collection (fig. 29)

As the Iranians and Turanians massed for battle, Bizhan fought long and hard against Human. Finally Bizhan bested his foe and beheaded him. Here



Fig. 10. *Rustam Rescues Bizhan from the Pit*. The Israel Museum, 626.69.

Human's head is visible hanging from Bizhan's saddle, ready to be carried back and presented as a trophy to the Iranian army. This scene is very common in illustrated *Shahnameh* manuscripts. However, Bizhan is repeatedly shown in the act of slitting Human's throat, whereas Mu'in has chosen the moment after he has beheaded Human. The compo-

sition is somewhat awkward because Human's body is slightly too large for the space it occupies, so that his headless torso appears to lean against Bizhan's horse's legs while at the other end Bizhan stands on Human's right leg.

23. *Fariburz Defeats Kulbad*, fol. 144b.

The David Collection (fig. 30)

This is the right half of a double-page opening, depicting two of the single combats between the Iranians and Turanians, called the Battle of the Twelve Rukhs. The commanders of the opposing forces decided that lives would be spared if, instead of a full-scale battle, they chose twelve warriors to fight their counterparts from the enemy ranks. Fariburz was pitted against the Turanian Kulbad. At first Fariburz shot arrows at his foe, but when they failed to stop him, he unsheathed his sword and split Kulbad in two from his head to his waist.

Mu'in has chosen to depict the moment when Fariburz cleaves his enemy in two. The raised shield, the arc of the arm and sword of Fariburz, the horses racing at full tilt toward one another, and the foiled attempt of Kulbad to land a blow on Fariburz add dynamism to the scene. The unmoved expressions on all the figures' faces, however, counteract this. As ever in Mu'in's illustrations, emotion is not expressed through physiognomy.

24. *The Battle of Gurazeh and Siyamak*, fol. 145a.

The David Collection (fig. 31)

In the narrative, the combat of Gurwi and Giv takes place after that of Fariburz and Kulbad and before that of Gurazeh and Siyamak. Unlike the scene on the facing page, Mu'in has not chosen to illustrate the defining moment of the combat. Rather, the two soldiers, each wounded by an arrow, dismounted and clutched each other before Gurazeh threw his foe to the ground and killed him. Here, the figures have grabbed each other's belts, as if wrestling. The arm of Gurazeh on Siyamak's shoulder is the only intimation that Siyamak will be overcome.

The symmetry of the pyramid formed by the two warriors is echoed in the disposition of figures on the horizon to the right and left of a jutting rocky out-



Fig. 11. *Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow*. Harvard Art Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Francis H. Burr Memorial Fund, 1941.294.

crop, and the grooms and horses in the foreground. Again the crowded composition has the peculiar consequence that the foot of Siyamak rests on the hat of his groom. Despite the narrative proximity of this episode to the single combat on the previous page, Mu'in has made no attempt to suggest unity of place. Instead, the ground in this painting is white while in the one on the facing page it is purple. The lack of continuity from one page to the next results in a somewhat jarring double-page opening. On the other hand, Mu'in has managed to illustrate two of the single combats in this epic battle. By placing



12. Double-page finispiece, standing man and standing woman. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, MSS 1000.1 and 1000.2.

them opposite one another, he has given the impression of unceasing conflict.

25. *Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow.*

Harvard Art Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Francis H. Burr Memorial Fund, 1941.294 (fig. 11)

This page was removed from the manuscript and would have appeared just before the end of the first section of the *Shahnameh*. At the end of his reign, Kay Khusrav gave up his throne and disappeared in the mountains. Worried about his fate, five paladins went in search of him. When they decided to sleep, a storm blew up and covered them in snow. Several days had passed when Rustam set out in search of the paladins. As mentioned above, this illustration shows two episodes of the story, Rustam's search and the snow burying the paladins, whose standards are all that remains visible.

As with so many of the illustrations to this volume, Mu'in has shown his creativity through the composition of this painting while working with a limited palette and repeating his standard figural types. Instead of placing figures of secondary importance in the background, he has lowered the horizon and arrayed Rustam and his fellow paladins along it, gazing out and contemplating the loss of their king and friends. Unbeknownst to him, the bodies of the lost men lie under the snow at the foot of the mountain range, visible only by the tips of their standards.

26-27. *Double-page finispiece, standing man and standing woman.*

The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, MSS 1000.1 and 1000.2 (fig. 12)

Removed from the manuscript, these folios appear at the end of the reign of Kay Khusrav and separate that chapter from the beginning of the chapter on

the reign of Luhrasp. As mentioned above, this is a common break point in *Shahnamah* manuscripts. The recto side of the folio with the painting of the man contains one of the colophons of the manuscript, with the date the 2nd of *Dhu'l Qa'da* 1058 / December 18, 1648, while the verso side of the painting of the woman consists of one of the signed 'unwans in the manuscript, marking the beginning of the reign of Luhrasp. Further discussion of these images appears on pages 60–61.

28. *Luhrasp and his Sons*. Private collection⁴⁵ (fig. 13)

When he abdicated his throne, Kay Khusrau designated Luhrasp to succeed him. Luhrasp asked for and received the fealty of the great lords. The first chapter in this section begins with a passage on Luhrasp and his two sons, Gushtasp and Zarir, and two grandsons of Kay Kavus, whom Luhrasp favored over his sons. Most likely his own sons are the youths depicted here seated at the right, wearing gold crowns, though the text does refer anonymously to the grandsons of Kay Kavus.

Mu'in has presented a classic courtly scene with Luhrasp enthroned in an alcove that opens to a tiled terrace on which his sons and two musicians are placed in the foreground. Two male cupbearers stand at the right, while two female servants attend the king with incense. Mu'in's standard murals with birds and vegetation in blue have been varied slightly to include water birds in red in the two niches above Luhrasp. While the subject of the illustration is not the most dramatic, the enthronement may be doubling as both an illustration and a subject fitting for a frontispiece.

29. *The Third Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Slays the Dragon*, fol. 149b.

The David Collection (fig. 32)

Gushtasp became shah of Iran when his father, Luhrasp, abdicated and went to a retreat in Balkh, where he practiced the new religion of Zoroastrianism. In the ongoing war with the Turanians, Gushtasp's daughters were taken prisoner. He entreated his son, Isfandiyar, to travel deep into Turanian territory to rescue his sisters. Like Rustam, Isfandiyar



Fig. 13. *Luhrasp and his Sons*. Private collection.

underwent seven stages on the way to finding his sisters. While this painting is intended to illustrate Isfandiyar's victory over the dragon, it does not follow the text of the *Shahnameh*. Instead of hiding inside a box with swords extending from it, Isfandiyar has peppered the dragon with arrows. Additionally, the story does not mention two *divs*, but here the two demons lie in the foreground, felled by Isfandiyar's arrows. Mu'in appears to have relied on a variant of the better-known story of Isfandiyar and the dragon.

Mu'in's fondness for compositional elements

extending into the margin takes the form here of the tip of the dragon's tail attached, we are to assume, to the beast's hindquarters, which are hidden behind the right-hand marginal text. The figures along the horizon and Isfandiyar are consistent with comparable soldiers and heroes in other works by Mu'in. The *divs*, on the other hand, despite their red and purple pigmentation, have realistically soulful expressions.

30. *Kay Khusrau Kills Shida, Son of Afrasiyab*, fol. 157a. The David Collection (fig. 33)

The painting is out of place in the manuscript, suggesting that it may have been bound into this section when the painting of Isfandiyar and the simurgh was removed. The image shows Kay Khusrau administering the *coup de grace* with his dagger through the heart of Shida after he has picked him up and dashed him to the ground. The episode occurs during the last great battle between the Iranians and Turanians. The pictorial elements in this illustration are consistent with those in other scenes of combat in this manuscript, with the onlookers placed on the horizon and in the foreground, the grooms and horses of the combatants placed to either side of them, the distinctive sky, and the use of purple for the jutting crag in the background.

31. *The Fourth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar and the Witch*, fol. 186b.

The David Collection (fig. 34)

In Isfandiyar's encounter with a witch, she first took the form of a beautiful woman. He sang and drank with her, but realized that she was a witch and slipped a metal chain around her. At this point she metamorphosed into a lion, but Isfandiyar threatened her with his sword. Finally she reverted to her original identity, a frightful hag. The scene depicted here appears to be the moment before Isfandiyar hit her on the head and she turned to dust. The composition conforms to the enthronement scenes in this manuscript, except that Isfandiyar is seated before a tent, part of an encampment. An illustration by Mu'in of the same episode from a *Shahnameh* of 1066 / 1655⁴⁶ presents the more traditional version of this scene in which Rustam cleaves the witch.

32. *The Fifth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Kills the Simurgh*. Private collection (not illustrated)⁴⁷

In this painting, Mu'in Musavvir has depicted the mythical simurgh swooping dramatically down on an armored casket with sword blades protruding from its sides in which Isfandiyar was hiding. The simurgh attacked it and met its end when it was impaled on the blades. At the upper left on the pinnacle of a rocky crag sits a nest containing two young simurghs. In the foreground, a gray demon converses with a warrior, suggesting that Mu'in thought it appropriate to add demons to the illustrations in this section of the manuscript. Additionally, he has replaced the chariot of the story with a casket, perhaps to keep the composition from becoming too crowded or busy.

33. *Rustam and Isfandiyar Hand-wrestle*.

Private collection (not illustrated)

In the build-up to the final battle between Rustam and Isfandiyar, each man boasted of his valor and strength. Gushtasp, the shah and father of Isfandiyar, had bid him to find Rustam and return with Rustam in chains to the court, knowing that the prince would fail. In their conversation, Isfandiyar grasped and squeezed Rustam's hand, but the warrior did not flinch. In turn, he squeezed Isfandiyar's hand until the prince's face turned red and blood oozed from his fingernails. In the painting, the two seated protagonists face each other and engage in their hand clinch. Characteristically, despite the teeth-gnashing and face-reddening described in the text, Mu'in's figures have remained impassive. The short yellow curtains and centrally placed pole identify the setting as the interior of a tent.

34. *Rustam Kills Shaghad and Dies*,

fol. 211a. The David Collection (fig. 35)

One of the most poignant stories in the *Shahnameh* concerns the death of the great hero Rustam and his horse, Rakhsh. Shaghad, Rustam's half-brother, married the daughter of the King of Kabul, a satrap of Rustam's father, Zal. When the King decided he would no longer pay his annual tribute, he and Shaghad began to plot the downfall of Rustam,

knowing that he would come to Kabul to collect the tax. They ordered a deep pit to be dug and had sharp spikes placed in it. Then these were concealed. When Rustam arrived, he and Rakhsh fell into the pit and were impaled. Rustam realized that Shaghad was watching his demise hiding behind a tree, so with his last gasp Rustam shot an arrow that pierced the tree and killed Shaghad.

Mu'in has made the most of the narrow format of this page, squeezing Shaghad between the barren tree and the right-hand margin. The artist may have intended to alter Shaghad's pose, since his left hand appears in an anomalous position, perhaps because of its proximity to the margin. Also, the passage between his leg and the tree is either unfinished or else part of the tree was stripped of its bark. Rustam and Rakhsh, set off against the black pit, fit neatly between stepped text blocks. Although blood pours from Rakhsh, Rustam's wounds are less obvious, perhaps to emphasize his heroism, even in death. In the 1066 / 1655 *Shahnameh* in the Chester Beatty Library,⁴⁸ Mu'in has reversed the placement of the figures, with Shaghad behind the tree on the left and Rustam on the right, shooting at a less acute angle. While the figure of Shaghad is depicted in a more assured manner, the composition is less dramatic than in the David Collection version.

35. *The Hanging of Faramarz*, fol. 214b.

The David Collection (fig. 36)

Bahman succeeded his grandfather, Gushtasp. To punish Zal, the father of Rustam and ruler of Zabul, Bahman had Zal chained and plundered his palace and lands. Learning of Zal's fate, his grandson Faramarz decided to go to war against Bahman. The armies fought for three days, but the tide turned against Faramarz and he was left battling, wounded and alone. When Faramarz was brought before Bahman, the shah showed him no mercy, ordering that he be hanged upside down while still alive.

Here Bahman in his jeweled crown and robe of gold observes on horseback as Faramarz is hoisted with a noose around his neck, suspended from a hook. Mu'in has not followed the text by showing him upside down. Rather the action centers on the

mounted archers firing at the torso of Faramarz. Instead of figures watching the execution from the horizon, as in most of Mu'in's illustrations, all of them except the king are engaged in killing their enemy. A simplified version of this composition appears in the John Rylands Library *Shahnameh* of 1650 (Pers. 909).

36. *Iskandar Comforts the Dying Dara*.

Whereabouts unknown⁴⁹ (not illustrated)

When the Iranian king Dara was defeated in battle by Iskandar, known in the West as Alexander the Great, he sued for peace. Two of his ministers, however, thought that they could gain land and favors from Iskandar if they murdered Dara. When news of their deed reached Iskandar's ears, he rushed to be with Dara. He was unable to save his foe, who was also his half-brother in the *Shahnameh*, but did try to comfort him. The scene portrays Iskandar holding Dara in his lap while soldiers, elderly sages, and two bareheaded youthful mourners observe with sad expressions. A groom similar to the one in several of the David Collection *Shahnameh* illustrations stands with two horses in the right background next to an imposing leafy tree.

37. *Iskandar's March into the Gloom and Khizr's Discovery of the Water of Life*.

Private collection (fig. 14)⁵⁰

In his quest for the source of eternal life, Iskandar took the advice of the sage, Khizr, who set out with him in the Land of Darkness. At one point, the two became separated and Iskandar eventually reached a mountaintop, where the angel Israfil warned him of his impending death. Khizr, meanwhile, found the Water of Life, which he bathed in and drank. As in the image of *Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow* (no. 25, fig. 11), Mu'in has combined the two parts of this story in one image. In the foreground, Khizr and another sage kneel beside the darkened pool that is the Water of Life while two horses wait behind them at the left. At the right, Iskandar's troops are ranked beside and behind the king, all looking up, not down at Khizr. The ground has been painted black to suggest the Land of Darkness, and in the



Fig. 14. *Iskandar's March into the Gloom and Khizr's Discovery of the Water of Life*. Private collection.

background the mountains appear misty and less jutting than Mu'in's usual crags. The painting is a beautifully rendered evocation of the moment of Khizr's enlightenment and Iskandar's intimation of mortality.

38. *The Death of Iskandar*, fol. 237a.
The David Collection (fig. 37)

Although Alexander the Great sacked the Achaemenid capital at Persepolis and put an end to that great dynasty, he was transformed in the *Shahnameh* into a

Persian king. Scenes such as this of his death in Babylon enjoyed popularity in the late 16th century, perhaps in response to the depiction of this incident in the *Haft Awwrang* of Jami produced for the Safavid prince Sultan Ibrahim Mirza.⁵¹ The illustration does not follow the text closely, since Firdausi did not describe the king as lying in the lap of a prince when he died. Mu'in has included three bareheaded youths holding kerchiefs, two of whom have laid their crowns on the ground. They gaze at the dead king, who lies crowned on his coat of mail beneath a parasol. Oddly, since Iskandar's youth is emphasized in the text, he has been portrayed with a white beard. Two soldiers frame the central figural group while horses and two grooms stand in the foreground. The landscape conforms to Mu'in's others in this manuscript.

39. *Ardashir Recognizes his Son Shapur Playing Polo*, fol. 243b. The David Collection (fig. 38)

Ardashir had ordered his minister to kill his beloved, the daughter of Ardavan, unaware that she was pregnant. The minister, who had this knowledge, hid her and her son, Shapur, until the boy was seven years old. At that point, to the joy of Ardashir, he confessed what he had done. The king then ordered his son and one hundred other boys to be brought together to play polo, stating that he would recognize his own son when he saw him.

Here, Ardashir looks admiringly at his son, who is about to run faster than the other boys to hit the polo ball, even though it came close to the king. The boy holding the polo ball, the only one not wearing a crown, is the groom whom Ardashir asked to send the ball in his direction to see how the boys would react. On the basis of dress, the boy in the golden robe and crown is the most likely candidate to be identified as Shapur. Interestingly, the boys are not playing polo on horseback, but play a game akin to hockey. The figure with the moustache next to the king is presumably his minister, while the other figures are servants or attendants. As in many of Mu'in's illustrations, the composition consists of two parts, the king and horsemen on the right and the boys on the left.

40. *Bahram Gur Kills the Lions to Gain the Throne*, fol. 258b. The David Collection (fig. 39)

Bahram, the son of Shah Yazdegird, was sent to live in Arabia as a small child. As he grew, he gained a reputation as an excellent hunter with an eye for the ladies. When he learned of his father's death, he returned to Iran with an army, but the Iranians refused to accept him as their king until he had proved himself. They challenged him to take the throne from two lions that were chained to it. As Bahram approached the throne, ox-headed mace in his hand, one of the lions burst its chains and charged at him. He smashed the mace onto its head and felled it, then turned to the other one and also did it in. After that he sat on the throne as the new shah of Iran.

Here Bahram polishes off the second lion, while soldiers and either an archmage or his companion, Khusrau, look on in amazement. The golden throne with the crown on the seat dominates the upper half of the composition. Painted in two tones of gold, the throne is decorated with trees and bushes of the type found in the murals in many of the illustrations in this manuscript. Several other mid-17th century *Shahnamehs* contain illustrations of this scene with the action taking place inside a palace or with a smaller throne, but the lions, throne, and ox-headed mace are all iconographically necessary and are found in all images of this very popular scene.

41. *Anushirwan Enthroned with Buzurgmihr, Before the Introduction of Chess*, fol. 295b. The David Collection (fig. 40)

Anushirwan received an embassy from India that brought many opulent gifts, including a chessboard and chessmen. The ambassador said that if Anushirwan could figure out how the game was played, the Indians would pay tribute to Iran, but if he failed, then the Iranians would have to pay tribute to India. Anushirwan handed the game to his sage advisor, Buzurgmihr, who spent a day and a night puzzling over the game until he discovered how to play it.

This illustration appears to depict the moment when Buzurgmihr, in the company of the archmages, explains the game of chess to Anushirwan. Presum-

ably the figure kneeling in the foreground and wearing a green-and-gold robe is Buzurgmihr, who has the tools of a scribe lying beside him. In Anushirwan's hand is a blue sheet, most likely a letter to the Indian king. This setting of Anushirwan's palace is more complex than in other illustrations of interiors in this manuscript. Moreover, the faces of the archmages are more individualized than elsewhere. As mentioned above, one wonders if Mu'in did not include veiled portraits of the patron and his associates here. Without more historical information about Abu'l Mahdi Husain, one cannot extrapolate a further significance of this particular moment in the text in relation to the patron, but the inclusion of a scene concerned with the efficaciousness of a royal advisor may have referred in a flattering way to the patron. As the penultimate illustration in the manuscript coming from the story of one of the last major kings of pre-Islamic Iran, this painting may have functioned similarly to a finispiece, which could have implied contemporary relevance as well as narrative veracity.

42. *The Battle of Sa'ad-i Vaqqas and Rustam-i Hurmuzd*, fol. 350a.

The David Collection (fig. 41)

The last chapter of the *Shahnameh* recounts the reign of Yazdegird, who was ultimately defeated by the Muslim Arabs. This illustration depicts Sa'ad, the son of Vaqqas, who was sent by the caliph 'Umar to attack the Iranians. Yazdegird appointed Rustam, the son of Hurmuzd, to lead the army against the Arabs. After waiting in vain for an auspicious day to start the battle, Rustam and his forces took on the Arabs. For three days they fought in the desert. Rustam and Sa'ad battled on a mountainside, both eventually on foot. At first, Rustam had the upper hand, but when a cloud of dust obscured his vision, Sa'ad attacked him with his sword, slaying him with a mighty blow of the sword to his head.

In this painting, Sa'ad is at the end of a line of Arabs on camelback, wearing a green-and-gold robe and slashing the head of Rustam on the left. Despite incorporating many elements used throughout the

manuscript, such as the groom at the left with his trademark hat, Mu'in has adhered closely to the description of the battle in Firdausi's text. Perhaps faithfulness to the narrative was necessary in order to avoid seeming ambivalent or too pro-Iranian on the subject of the victory of the Muslim Arabs over the Zoroastrian Iranians.

Conclusion

With its wealth of names and dates, the David Collection *Shahnameh* still has secrets to divulge. A glance at the two appendices to this article enables one to see how illustrations have been placed erroneously in the rebound manuscript. The second appendix shows where the catchwords on the verso do not match up with the first word on the following recto. Even after having identified fifteen dispersed pages, one cannot be sure that other folios were not also removed from the manuscript. Despite these outstanding questions, the information that is found in this manuscript contributes to our understanding of the teamwork involved in producing such a book. The calligrapher Muhammad Salih ibn Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad al-Kirmani most likely decided on the novel format of the manuscript with the marginal band of text running around three sides of each page. The illuminator, Mulla Mu'min Shirazi, would have produced the illuminated 'unwans that open the manuscript, and the later chapter on Luhrasp and would have embellished the text with gold and decorated rubrics. Following the calligrapher and illuminator, Mu'in Musavvir would have produced the illustrations. The maker of the now-lost binding would have completed the job by

arranging the text paper in quires, sewing them together, and encasing them in a binding.

Does this manuscript mark a major step in Mu'in's career? The internal evidence suggests that Mu'in came into his own as a manuscript illustrator of high status with this *Shahnameh*. Instead of working as part of a team of painters, as in the British Library *Shahnameh* of c. 1630-1640, Mu'in executed and signed every miniature in the David Collection manuscript. After this manuscript he embarked on an even more ambitious project, the two-volume *Shahnameh* of 1655, now shared between the Chester Beatty Library and the Aga Khan.⁵² His painting style did not change markedly from around 1640 until 1655. Yet clearly he found patrons who favored his work and preferred his style to that of his contemporaries working at the Safavid court, such as the artists of the Windsor Castle *Shahnameh*. At this stage of our knowledge, the presence of the names of the patron, scribe, and illuminator and Mu'in's signature on every illustration appears to indicate a level of control that he had not enjoyed before, when he was part of a team of artists illustrating a manuscript. Even if Mu'in used a very limited palette and range of figures, his choice of episode and his customary faithfulness to the text, with a few lapses, provide interest and originality. Despite its missing pages, the David Collection *Shahnameh* in its present state proclaims the pride of authorship and ownership embodied within it. The manuscript demonstrates that Isfahan, the capital, was not the only source of artistic excellence and innovation, and that at least one citizen of Yazd had the wealth and influence to attract leading artists of the book to produce a first-rate illustrated *Shahnameh*.

Appendix I: Folio Chart

This appendix lists the folios with illustrations by Mu'in Musavvir in the David Collection *Shahnameh* by folio number and those that have been removed by their present or last-known location or collection. As explained in the footnotes, the columns to the right have the reference in Warner and Warner's translation of the *Shahnameh*, but in its Internet, not printed, form. The next three columns indicate when

the same illustration appears in two manuscripts that are close in date to the David Collection manuscript. The last column relies on the Cambridge Shahnama Project website for a count of other 17th-century versions of the same miniature.

When the manuscript was foliated, the numbering in pencil contained two mistakes: the numbers 44 and 271 each appear on two folios. The numbering used in this article reflects the correct sequence, and thus the total is two folios larger than indicated when the manuscript was sold.

Folio no.	Subject	WW ref ⁵³	IOL ms. 1256 ⁵⁴	JRL Ryl. Pers. 909 ⁵⁵	17th-century versions ⁵⁶
8a	The Divan of Tahmuras	v. 20			
13a	Faridun Binds Zahhak in the Presence of Shahrnavaz and Arnavaz	v. 59-60		29a	3
24b	Zal Comes to Rudabeh's Palace and Sees Her on the Roof	v. 164	42b		4
32a	Rustam Kills the White Elephant	v. 232		49a	10
39b	Rustam Lifts Afrasiyab up by His Belt	v. 300	70b	59a	11
41a	The Death of Afrasiyab	v. 1395	321b	255a	14
44a	Rustam Kills the Dragon with the Help of Rakhsh	v. 341-342		63b	13
Soth	Rustam Kills the White Div	v. 354	79a	66a	32
BM	Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity	v. 503	102b	85a	16
IM	Garsiwaz and Gurwi Slay Siyavush	v. 663-664			
74b	Faramarz Slits Surkha's Throat	v. 693			2
78a	Giv, Son of Gudarz, Finds Kay Khusrau in Turan	v. 717-718			6
IM	Kay Khusrau Sends Rustam to India	v. 783			
91a	The Turanians Led by Piran Defeat the Iranians	v. 850-855			
102b	The Envoy of Kay Kavus Asks for Sudabeh's Hand from Her Father, the King of Hamavaran	v. 385			1
109b	Rustam Overturns Chinghish	v. 964	189a		6
HA	Rustam Pulls the Khaqan of Chin from the Elephant	v. 996			

114b	Rustam Drags the Khaqan of Chin from the Elephant	v. 1003	196b	16
IM	Div Akvan Carries Rustam to the Sea	v. 1055		
121b	Bizhan and the Wild Boars	v. 1074		4
IM	Rustam Rescues Bizhan from the Pit	v. 1124-1125	220v	50
136b	Bizhan Beheads Human	v. 1182-1183	276b	17
144b	Fariburz Defeats Kubad	v. 1235	229a	4
145a	The Battle of Gurazeh and Siyamak	v. 1236-1237	229bB	1
HA	Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow	v. 1441		2 (search), o (lost)
DK	Double-page finispiece, man right page, woman left page	After v. 1444		
Priv. coll.	Luhrasp and his Sons	v. 1445		2
149b	The Third Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Slays the Dragon	v. 1593-1594		13
157a	Kay Khusrau Kills Shida, Son of Afrasiyab	v. 1306-1307		12
186b	The Fourth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar and the Witch	v. 1596-1597		6
Priv. coll.	The Fifth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Kills the Simurgh	v. 1598-1599		5
Priv. coll.	Rustam and Isfandiyar Hand-wrestle	v. 1676		
211a	Rustam Kills Shaghad and Dies	v. 1739	307b	24
214b	The Hanging of Faramarz	v. 1754	310a	4
Soth	Iskandar Comforts the Dying Dara	v. 1802-1803	317b	5
Priv. coll.	Iskandar's March into the Gloom and Khizr's Discovery of the Water of Life	c. 1340		6
237a	The Death of Iskandar	c. 1358		3
243b	Ardashir Recognizes his Son Shapur Playing Polo	c. 1396		
258b	Bahram Gur Kills the Lions to Gain the Throne	c. 1486-1487	460b 359a	2
295b	Anushirvan Enthroned with Buzurgmihir, Before the Introduction of Chess	c. 1717-1718		2
350a	The Battle of Sa'ad-i Vaqqas and Rustam-i Hurmuzd	c. 2069-2070	486a	8

Abbreviations:	BM British Museum	IM Israel Museum, Jerusalem
	DK David Khalili Collection	Soth Sotheby's
	HA Harvard Art Museum	Priv. coll. Private collection

Appendix II: Catchwords and lacunae

Catchwords can be found on almost all verso sides of the folios in this manuscript. Many of these must have been written well after the manuscript was produced, as they are in the outer border and in different script from those closer to the text blocks. However, in some instances the catchwords do not correspond to the first word on the next page. These anomalies suggest lacunae, which are evident anyway

because of the number of known illustrations that have been removed from the manuscript and dispersed. The following list gives folio numbers of pages with catchwords that do not tally with the first word on the following page, and notes on shadows of thumbpieces where no thumbpiece is present on the opposite page. Thumbpieces were used only on folios with illustrations. The point of this list is to start the codicological work on the manuscript in order to determine if more pages were removed than those known from published examples.

Folio	Does not tally with first word on following page	Thumbpiece shadow without thumbpiece on preceding or following folio
13b		× – thumbpiece shadow different shape from shadows on surrounding folios
31b	× – rubbed catchword does not tally with first word of 32a, which contains the illustration of Rustam and the white elephant	
40b	× – does not tally with first word of 41a, which contains the illustration of the death of Afrasiyab and is out of place in the ms. and has been inserted here; catchword on 40b corresponds to first word on 42a	
44b	×	
45b	×	
54b	×	
71b	×	
81b	×	
83b	×	
90b	(×) – possibly does not tally with first word on 91a, which contains an illustration	
101b	×	
102b	×	
104b	×	×

107b	×	
108b	× – plus 2 worm holes on this folio, not visible on adjacent folios	
110b		×
111b-130		× – pages with shadows of thumbpieces without corresponding thumbpieces: 113b, 128b, and 129a
119b	×	
145b	×	
147b	×	
149b	× – possibly should precede 170a	
158b	×	
163b	×	
166b	×	
169b	×	
173b		×
174b		×
176b	×	
177b		×
178b	×	
180b	×	
187b		×
197b	×	
198b	×?	
212b		× – thumbpiece, no illustration
218b	×	
220b	×	
231b	×	×
255b	× (probably – catchword rubbed out)	
289b	×	

Illustrations by Mu'in Musavvir in
the David Collection *Shahnameh*, 217/2006.
Average leaf: 35.2 × 21.8 cm.



Fig. 15. *The Divan of Tahmuras*, fol. 8a. The David Collection.



Fig. 16. *Faridun
Binds Zakhak in
the Presence of
Shahrnavaz and
Arnavaz*,
fol. 13a.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 17. *Zal Comes to Rudabeh's Palace and Sees Her on the Roof*, fol. 24b. The David Collection.



Fig. 18. *Rustam
Kills the White
Elephant*,
fol. 32a.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 19. *Rustam
Lifts Afrasiyab
up by His Belt*,
fol. 39b.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 20. *The Death of Afrasiyab*, fol. 41a. The David Collection.



Fig. 21. *Rustam
Kills the Dragon
with the Help of
Rakhsh*, fol. 44a.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 22.
*Faramarz Slits
 Surkha's Throat*,
 fol. 74b.
 The David
 Collection.



Fig. 23. *Giv*,
Son of Gudarz,
Finds Kay
Khusrau in
Turan, fol. 78a.
 The David
 Collection.



Fig. 24. *The Turanians Led by Piran Defeat the Iranians*, fol. 91a. The David Collection.



Fig. 25. *The Envoy of Kay Kavus Asks for Sudabeh's Hand from Her Father, the King of Hamavaran*, fol. 102b. The David Collection.



26. *Rustam
Overturns
Chinghish*,
fol. 109b.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 27. *Rostam
Drags the
Khaqan of
Chin from the
Elephant*,
fol. 114b.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 28. *Bizhan and the Wild Boars*, fol. 121b. The David Collection.



Fig. 29. *Bizhan
Beheads
Human*,
fol. 136b.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 31. *The Battle of Gurazeh and Siyamak*, fol. 145a. The David Collection.



Fig. 30.
Fariburz
Defeats Kulbad,
 fol. 144b.
 The David
 Collection.



Fig. 32. *The Third Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Slays the Dragon*, fol. 149b. The David Collection.



Fig. 33. *Kay Khusrau Kills Shida, Son of Afrasiyab*, fol. 157a. The David Collection.



Fig. 34. *The Fourth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar and the Witch*, fol. 186b. The David Collection.



Fig. 35. *Rustam
Kills Shaghad
and Dies*,
fol. 211a.
The David
Collection.



Fig. 36. *The Hanging of Faramarz*, fol. 214b. The David Collection.



Fig. 37. *The Death of Iskandar*, fol. 237a. The David Collection.



Fig. 38.
Ardashir Recognizes his Son Shapur Playing Polo, fol. 243b.
 The David Collection.



Fig. 39. *Bahram Gur Kills the Lions to Gain the Throne*, fol. 258b. The David Collection.



Fig. 40.
*Anushirvan
 Enthroned with
 Buzurgmibr,
 Before the
 Introduction of
 Chess, fol. 295b.*
 The David
 Collection.



Fig. 41. *The Battle of Sa'ad-i Vaqqas and Rustam-i Hurmuzd*, fol. 350a. The David Collection.

1. I would like to express my thanks to Sam Fogg for bringing this manuscript to my attention and to Will Kwiatkowski for his considerable help with identification of the illustrations and of dispersed pages from the manuscript. I have greatly enjoyed sharing the thrill of discovery with Messrs Fogg and Kwiatkowski. In 2008, Kjeld von Folsach, Director of the David Collection, Copenhagen, generously allowed me to study the manuscript again with the intention of publishing this article. I am very grateful to him, Joachim Meyer, and their colleagues for their hospitality and encouragement.
2. Cornelius J. Hauck (1893-1967) was from a prominent family of Cincinnati brewers whose firm became an investment company during Prohibition in the United States. He and his wife were bibliophiles, amassing a collection that documented the history of book production worldwide. In 1966, he donated his collection to the Cincinnati Historical Society, and in the summer of 2006 the collection was sold at Christie's auction house in New York. According to the press release issued by the Cincinnati Museum Center, the collection had been built with the guidance of Emil Offenbacher, an antiquarian book-dealer based in New York. The New York sale took place on June 27-28, 2006, at Christie's Rockefeller Center.
3. These are: two-volume *Shahnameh*, dated *Jumada I* 1065-1067 / April-May 1655-1657, Chester Beatty Library (MS. 270) and Aga Khan Trust for Culture; dispersed *Shahnameh*, dated 1077 / 1666-1667; *Shahnameh* with illustrations by several artists, including twenty-one by Mu'in Musavvir, manuscript dated 1074-1079 / 1663-1669 and illustrations by Mu'in dated 1104 / 1693, Metropolitan Museum of Art (13.228.17); undated *Shahnameh* with illustrations signed by Mu'in, Russian National Library, St. Petersburg (PNS 381), c. 1650-1660; undated *Shahnameh* with illustrations attributed to Mu'in, British Library (IOL, Ms. 1256), c. 1630-1640. See Farhad 1990, pp. 126-127, n. 10.
4. Afshar 1969, p. 105. This is according to Muhammad Mufid Mustawfi (fl. 1666-1679), author of the *Jami'-i Mufidi*. Prof. Kioumars Ghereghlou, formerly of Ferdowsi University, Mashhad, has brought to my attention the reference to the anonymous vizier mentioned by Zarkish. This appears in Shamlu, 1371 / 1992, vol. 2, pp. 176-178, in the biography of Amin al-Din Zarkish.
5. Farhad 1990, p. 114.
6. In the collection of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. See Canby 1998, p. 86, no. 59.
7. Richard 1995, vol. II, p. 270. Richard cites Chardin's mention of Muhammad Baqir.
8. Stchoukine 1964, p. 140, pls. XVIIIa, XIXa-b.
9. Bayani 1965, vol. 3, pp. 767-779.
10. Bayani 1965, vol. 4, pp. 1181-1182.
11. Simpson 1997, pp. 28-33.
12. Robinson 1976a, p. 78; Canby 1993, p. 109, no. 73.
13. Robinson 1976a, p. 306, no. 172.
14. The British Museum's *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity* was acquired in 1922. Schroeder 1942, p. 151, states that the two illustrations in his museum's collection were acquired "at the Filippo sale in New York" in 1941. He does not give the name of the auction house. The dispersed pages are 1. *Rustam Pulling the Khaqan of Chin from his Elephant* [see Appendix for variant identification] and 2. *Rustam and the Iranians in the Snow* in the Harvard Art Museum; 3. *Rustam Discovers Suhrab's Identity* in the British Museum; 4. *Rustam Kills the White Div*, sold at Sotheby's, London, sale 3220, April 30, 2003, lot 31; 5. *Luhrasp and his Sons*; 6. *The Fifth Stage of Isfandiyar: Isfandiyar Kills the Simurgh*; 7. *Iskandar's March into the Gloom and Khizr's Discovery of the Water of Life*, and 8. *Rustam and Isfandiyar Hand-wrestle*, all in a private collection; a double-page composition of 9. a standing man in European dress and 10. a standing woman, in the Khalili Collection, London; 11. *Iskandar Comforts the Dying Dara*, sold at Sotheby's, London, sale Ya'qub, April 19, 1983, lot 119; 12. *Garsivaz and Gurwi Slay Siyavush*; 13. *Kay Khusrau Sends Rustam to India*; 14. *Div Akvan Carries Rustam to the Sea*; and 15. *Rustam Rescues Bizhan from the Pit*, all in the Israel Museum. Venice 1962, p. 131, cites other folios in the Dawud Collection, Dublin, and the Chester Beatty Library that are not from this manuscript, and from the Hyatt Mayor and Bullock Collections that cannot be verified.
15. Farhad 1990, fig. 8.
16. Robinson 1976b, 1083-1110.
17. Robinson 1976b, 1089 and no. 8.
18. See Appendix I.
19. <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/index/collection/>
20. Simpson 1980, pp. 94-95.

21. Robinson 1980, p. 337; <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/ceillustration:-2107907687> - <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/ceillustration:1362509229>
22. Robinson 1976a, nos. 55i-55ii.
23. Robinson 1976a, p. 78.
24. Canby 1996, pp. 172 and 175.
25. Stchoukine 1964, pl. XLI; British Museum, 1948,1009.059. This is a more expansive version of the pose without the cup and bottle.
26. Canby 1996, p. 208, no. 30. The painting is mistakenly identified as *Competition Between Two Doctors*. The note on the painting contains a full bibliography.
27. John Rylands Library, Manchester, Ryl. Pers. 909, fol. 22r, Shahnama Collection, <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/shahnama/faces/cardview/card/ceillustration:1943011894>. Robinson 1980, p. 330.
28. Warner and Warner, v. 164, on <http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main>
29. Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran, ms. 2239, fol. 84; see <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/shahnama/faces/cardview/card/ceillustration:-1979964345>, where the date of the manuscript is given as 1817.
30. Robinson and Sims 2007, pp. 28-29 and fig. 7.
31. Canby 1998, p. 46. This is not to suggest that Mu'in was copying this specific page. However, the inclusion of a yurt and the nightclothes of Khusrāu parallel the illustration by Mu'in.
32. Pal 1973, p. 141, no. 254; Canby 1993, fig. 76; Stchoukine 1964, pl. LXXXIII.
33. Canby 1993, fig. 76.
34. Sotheby's, London, sale 3220, April 30, 2003, lot 31.
35. See p. 59 and note 18.
36. Milstein 1984, p. 86.
37. Martin 1912, vol. II, pl. 160.
38. Simpson 1980, p. 97, Grube and Sims 1995, fig. 5b-c.
39. Canby 1996, pp. 26, 36-37.
40. Milstein 1984, pp. 86 and 88.
41. Robinson 1972, pp. 73-86.
42. Khaleghi Motlagh 1992, vol. 3, pp. 194-195. I am grateful to Abdullah Ghouchani for helping me with this identification.
43. Milstein 1984, p. 87.
44. Milstein 1984, pp. 86 and 89.
45. Robinson 1976a, no. 55 iii.
46. Chester Beatty Library, see <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:830567083>.
47. Robinson 1976a, no. 55 iv.
48. Chester Beatty Library, per 270, fol. 53r, see <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/shahnama/faces/cardview/card/ceillustration:-412651692>.
49. Sotheby's London, sale Ya'qub, April 19, 1983, lot 119.
50. Sotheby's, London, sale 3221, October 15, 2003, lot 30.
51. Simpson 1997, p. 219.
52. Stchoukine 1964, p. 65, and Canby 1998, pp. 83-84.
53. A.G. Warner and E. Warner, trans., *The Shahnama of Firdausi*, London 1905-1925, in <http://persian.packhum.org/persian/>
54. British Library, India Office Library, MS. 1256, *Shahnameh* of c. 1630-1640, see <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:598954688>
55. John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Ryl. pers. 909, *Shahnameh* dated 1650, see <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:-879351536>.
56. Numbers of instances of this illustration occurring in 17th-century *Shahnameh* manuscripts, <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/index/collection/>.

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