

Second Half of the Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 175

Benduy and Gostaham Blind Hormozd

The miniature approximates a square in shape with appendages on the left and top. It is divided into two registers corresponding to two stories of the royal palace, the upper being an interior view, the lower being exterior. On the right side of the upper register Shāh Hormozd is being cast headlong from his throne by three soldiers wearing pointed steel helmets. His crown has already fallen from his head and is shown in mid-air on the way to the floor. On the left, two additional soldiers wearing turbans stand before an open doorway. In the lower register stand a detachment of five mounted troops portrayed in full battle array with quivers, shields, and standards. A commander on his horse stands at the head of them distinguished from the others by his relative isolation and crown. To the right of him are two diminutive grooms silhouetted before an open doorway that leads into the palace. Two personage are singled out among the rest by the red feather affixed to their headgear: one is the commander of the troops in the lower register, the other the centermost of the three soldiers in the upper register who are upending Hormozd. The artist may have intended these two to be Benduy and Gostaham.

The text is written in four columns above the miniature, consisting of, from right to left, seven, seven, six, and six lines of text respectively. In addition, a single line of two column text is written in the lower left. A rectangular ruled frame encloses miniature and text, except on the left side where it is omitted below the text, allowing the painting to continue an additional column width into the left margin. The painting is also extended upward in the left margin to the top of the text where a balcony, two pavilions, and five cypress trees protrude into the upper margin. The miniature is signed in the center of the lower margin in miniscule characters in Mo'in's hand: *ze towfiq šān'e raqam zad mo'in* (Drawn with the grace of the Maker by Mo'in). No date is indicated.

Cf. Manuscript E, no.13 for another, slightly later, version of this subject by Mo'in.

Location:

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. no. 270, folio 175

Miniature references:

Unpublished.

Text references:

Warner, VIII, p.183.

Mohl. VI, p.567.

Levy, p.349.

