
History of Shāh Esmāʿil

In 915/1509 Shāhibeg Khān, more confident with his successes, sent a detachment of troops under the command of his nephew Jān Vafā Mirzā across the desert from Khorasan to plunder Kerman and Yazd. The local ruler of Yazd, Shāh Neʿmatollāh, who was a Safavid ally, requested assistance from Shāh Esmāʿil. In response to the Uzbek raid, Esmāʿil dispatched a force under the command of his brother Sultan Ebrāhim Mirzā.

Apparently second in command of this detachment was a young *qezelbāsh* of Qājār origins by the name of Ḥalvachi Ogli (also known as Ḥasan Beg), who had distinguished himself at Tabriz in the battle against Alvand Mirzā Torkmān (see folio 51). In the ensuing battle at Yazd between the *qezelbāsh* and Uzbeks, Ḥalvachi Ogli came, by chance, in direct confrontation with Jān Vafā Mirzā. The two charged each other, and with the point of his lance Ḥalvachi Ogli caught his opponent under the belt and lifted him from the saddle. Quickly the Qājār pounced on his downed opponent and was about to kill him when his prey retorted, “you don’t want to kill me for I am the leader of these troops”. Hearing these words, Ḥalvachi Ogli bound Jān Vafā and took him prisoner to Shāh Neʿmatollāh in whose charge he was left while the *qezelbāsh* pursued the remaining Uzbeks. After expelling the Uzbeks from Kerman and chasing them halfway across the desert, Sultan Ebrāhim and Ḥalvāchi Oghli returned to Yazd to pick up their prisoner, and with him in tow proceeded to Azerbaijan to report to Shāh Esmāʿil. There Jān Vafā Mirzā remained a prisoner for a short time, only to be returned to Khorasan a little later as a peace gesture to Shāhibeg Khān, when Esmāʿil sent Shaykhzādeh Lahiji as an ambassador to the Uzbek camp in a futile attempt to negotiate an end to the hostilities.

History of Shāh Esmā'īl

folio 186v

Ḥalvāchi Oghli Unseating Jān Vafā Mirzā

The two have charged, Ḥalvāchi Oghli from the right, Jān Vafā Mirzā from the left, and have met near the center of the miniature. Ḥalvāchi, in purple with a red and white flat top *qezelbāsh tāj*, is astride a black horse. Sword, bow, and quiver case hangs from his belt. He has thrust a very slender red lance, now held almost vertical on the page, and at the end of it is Jān Vafā plummeting through the air, the lance tip engaged in his belt. He wears a vermillion coat and pointed helmet; sword, dagger, bow, and quivers hang from his belt. In one hand is a round shield, in the other a narrow lance. His light brown horse strides riderless on the left. Two mounted figures of high rank, observe the combat from behind their respective combatants. On the right, in yellow with a spotted cape, is probably Sultan Ebrāhim Mirzā, commander of the Safavid contingent. On the left, behind a walled enclosure, sits a bearded Uzbek on a white horse and wearing green garments. He may be identified as Julī Bahādor, an Uzbek of near equal rank to Jān Vafā, who observed the demise of the latter and reported back to Shāhibeg Khān. Six other personage appear in the scene, organized in three groups of two each. Two Uzbeks gesture astonishment from behind a crenelated parapet in the upper left. They are balanced compositionally by two Safavids behind the ridge in the upper right. And in the foreground, a Safavid *ghāzi* with a lance chases an Uzbek across the picture plane.

The backdrop is a little more complex than most others in the manuscript. A sloping hillside, colored in light mauve, rises to a craggy ridge in the upper right, on which small shrubs grow, and in the distance is a blue sky. The upper left quadrant is occupied by a pavilion of uncertain spatial organization, rendered in white, beige, light salmon, and light purple. Behind a low tiled wall in front, there is what appears to be a square structure with rectangular windows, with a crenelated embattlement and a balcony above.

Miniature: 23.6 x 16.3 cm. One line of text above and below the miniature. Frame encloses miniature and text except for five standards in the upper right that protrude beyond the frame into the top margin. No signs of damage or retouching. A marginal inscription in red, presumably of later date, describes the event depicted. Inscriptions in black appear on two of the figures, identifying them as Jān Vafā Mirzā and Ḥalvāchi Oghli.

Miniature references:

Mahboubian Cat., #923 folio 186v (not illustrated), where Jān Vafā mirzā is incorrectly transcribed as Janoufa Mirzā.

Text references:

Muntazar, p.333; Savory, SA, pp.59-60.

