

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 Rostam 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. *Rostam 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 Rostam to locate and rescue the young Iranian. With the help of Manizheh, who lit a flame near the pit so Rostam could find it at night, Rostam 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 Rostam 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. *Rostam 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-