

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