

Second Half of the Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 89v

Ardavān Captive Before Ardashir

The miniature is composed in the form of a reverse L, from two segments, one horizontal, and one vertical, that are separated by ruled frame that encloses the text. The horizontal portion is sandwiched between the upper and lower text blocks and adjoins the other segment on the right which is relegated entirely to the confines of the margin, stretching vertically the full length of the columns of text. In the smaller horizontal segment four figures are depicted. The furthest to the right is Ardavān, shown as a prisoner, bareheaded, with his hands tied behind his back. Arrows protrude from his body and he is forced to kneel before Ardashir by a helmeted soldier that stands over him with dagger in hand. On the far left are two mounted soldiers, one in yellow attire, the other in maroon. Ardashir, the most prominent figure in the right segment of the miniature, sits astride a black horse with his arm extended in the direction of Ardavān. He wears a yellow coat and a crown adorned with jewels and feathers. An attendant behind him holds a blue and gold umbrella of state over the shāh's head. A mounted soldier, attired in maroon, accompanies the shāh in the lower right foreground, while a diminutive groom with his finger to his lips, precedes him on foot. The background is a non-descript hillside rendered in light mauve, that reaches a rocky pinnacle over the head of Ardashir. Small bushes grow near the top with a variegated blue sky beyond.

The text is written in four columns. Sixteen or seventeen lines, depending upon the column, appear above the horizontal segment of the miniature. The text is then resumed below the miniature with one or two lines, juxtaposed with the top so that overall each column is comprised of eighteen lines. A rectangular ruled frame encloses the text and the horizontal segment of the miniature. A secondary, lighter frame, encloses the vertical portion of its miniature in the right margin, and attaches it to the main frame as an appendage. The painting is signed near the center of the lower margin, in miniscule characters in Mo'in's hand: . . . *mo'in mosavver*. No date is indicated.

Location:

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. no. 270, folio 89v

Miniature references:

Unpublished

Text references:

Warner, VI, p.228.

Mohl, V, p.241.

Levy, p.262.

