

Second Half of the Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 110v

Shāpur Defeats the Rumis

The miniature is basically square in format with an additional appendage in the right hand margin. The square, primary portion of the painting is divided vertically in the center with an opposing army on each side confronting each other in a fierce battle. Five mounted warriors wearing steel helmets have charged from the right side. Although this group can be definitely identified as the Iranians, it is not clear if the leader, dressed in purple at the forefront of the attack, is intended to be Shāpur. Without question his sword has found its mark and severed the apparent leader of the opposition in two at the waist. The Rumis are portrayed on the left side of the miniature represented by seven mounted warriors. Two are bareheaded with their hands raised in surrender or despair; the remaining five all wear turbans. Three of them are shooting arrows at the advancing Iranians, one defends himself with a shield, and the leader, dressed in yellow and sporting a beard and a moustache, has just been cleaved in two at the waist. The Iranians are dressed in yellow, purple, gray, and light blue; the Rumis in yellow, russet, purple and gray. In the background is a rocky crest, one small bush, and a gold sky in the far distance. Off to the right, in the margin, is a castle or palace of uncertain spatial organization, that includes a doorway with a soldier standing guard and a parapet with arched openings above it. There is a semicircular arch at the top, confining within it two trumpeters with long horns. Just to the left of them the heads of two additional soldiers peer from behind the frame. Several standards in yellow and purple emerge from the top of the palace and from behind the text.

There are four columns of text above and below the main portion of the miniature. Above the miniature the two right columns are each comprised of nine lines of text, and the remaining columns of eight lines each. Below the painting the two right columns each contain three lines of text, and the remaining columns four each. A rectangular ruled frame encloses the miniature and text on the top, bottom, and left side. On the right side the frame encloses only the text, but is omitted alongside the miniature, and the painting continues irregularly into the right margin. The miniature is signed in the lower margin, to the right of center, in miniscule characters in Mo'in's hand: *raqam zad kamineh mo'in-e moşavver*. (Drawn by the most humble Mo'in Moşavver). No date is indicated.

Location:

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. no. 270, folio 110v

Miniature references

Unpublished

Text references:

Warner, VI, pp.337-47; Mohl, V, pp.352-66.

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