

Second Half of the Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 189

Khosrow Parviz and Bahrām Chubineh Battle

The miniature is restricted top and bottom to the confines of the text, and to the frame on the right, but the frame on the left side is virtually non-existent, permitting the miniature to continue uninterrupted and irregularly into the left margin. The subject is a battle between Khosrow Parviz and the Bahrām Chubineh, but the specific confrontation is not clear from the accompanying text or iconography. Subsequently, the identifications are subject to uncertainty. The composition is a melange of horses, combatants, weapons, and standards moving in a right-left direction. Ten personage and eight horses are represented. Judging by folio 186v, one might identify Khosrow Parviz as the youthful personage in the upper left defending himself with sword and shield. But his clean-shaven depiction is at variance with the Khosrow on folio 216, where he is with a full moustache. He is accompanied by four soldiers, all more intent on escaping than fighting: one on an armor protected horse is being struck down near the center; another flees in front of him on the far left; and the remaining two are grouped in the left foreground. If it is Khosrow in the upper left, then Bahrām Chubineh would be the dominant personage on the right side, wearing a yellow tunic and crown, crashing his sword down a fleeing opponent. But again, the representation of him is at variance with folio 197v where he is shown clean shaven. His forces, all on the right side, are represented by two mounted warriors shooting arrows, and another with a lance. Costumes include pointed helmets, arm and leg guards, swords, quivers, bow cases, and tunics of various hues: yellow, orange, purple, maroon, and gray. The horses, three of which are clad in protective armor, are white, black, brown, or gray. The setting is a non-descript hillside in light mauve-pink that rises to a rocky outcropping in the upper left, with several bushes in the upper and lower left. Beyond the ridge in the right background another figure observes the battle below.

There are six lines of four column text above the miniature, and a single line below. A rectangular frame encloses miniature and text except on the left. The miniature is signed in the lower margin with miniscule characters in Mo'in's handwriting: *ze toufīq šan'e raqam zad mo'in* (Drawn with the grace of the Maker by Mo'in). Not dated.

For other Mo'in depictions of Khosrow Parviz and Bahrām Chubineh battles, see folio 186v and Ms.G, folio 422.

Location:

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. no. 270, folio 189

Miniature references:

Unpublished.

Text references

Warner, VIII, pp.292-300; Mohl, VII, pp.126-137.

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