

Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 214

Kay Khosrow Throws Shideh to the Ground and Kills Him

The composition shares many similarities with folio 193v. The two combatants, Shāh Kay Khosrow and Shideh, son of the Turānian king Afrāsiyāb, struggle in hand combat in the center foreground. Shideh lies limply, Kay Khosrow over him, having just thrust his dagger deep into the Turānian's chest. Both are dressed nearly identical: pointed helmets with feathers, leg guards, boots, and knee length coats bound with a belt from which sword, bow case, and quivers are suspended. Only the feathers and colors of the clothing vary, as well as the position of the shields: Khosrow's is strapped to his back, Shideh's has fallen to the ground. One curious note is that the facial features of the two combatants strongly resemble Bizhan and Humān as depicted on f. 193v, and are not at all in agreement with the Kay Khosrow on f. 230. The forequarters of two horses and their grooms are juxtaposed in the foreground, Khosrow's on the left, and Shideh's on the right. Both grooms have a forefinger to the lips in astonishment. In the center foreground two warriors, one Turānian and the other Iranian, witness the event. Two other warriors, stand behind the combatants on each side: the Iranian holds a shield and standard; the poorly proportioned Turānian holds a sword and shield. Behind the second ridge five more heads observe the event. The setting is the typical sloping hillside, with widely dispersed tufts of grass, that rises to a rocky ridge near the top. A *chenār* and bush grow at the crest. A second hill is beyond, and in the distance a striated sky of the Fażl 'Ali type.

Miniature dimensions: 25.4 x 16.5 cm. The text is written in four columns above and below the painting, with a rectangular frame enclosing miniature and text. The miniscule signature, *raqam-e kamīneh fażl 'ali*, is inscribed on the sky in the upper left, in addition to the signature of Mo'in, *raqam zad kamīneh mo'in-e moṣavver*, written in the lower margin. The miniature is attributed by Jackson and Yohannan to Fażl 'Ali, and by Robinson to Mo'in with the assistance of Fażl 'Ali. The painting is in excellent Mo'in style; only selected details are distinguishable from the master's work, and may be the contributions of Fażl 'Ali: the sky, the misproportioned Turānian in the upper right, and the five observers in the extreme background.

For another version painted by Mo'in, see Ms. C, f. 214v.

Location:

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Acq. 13.228.17 (Cochran 4)

Miniature references:

J&Y, PM, p.37, no.31 (not ill.).

Robinson, *Islamic Art*, p.79, no.31 (not ill.).

Text references:

Warner, IV, p.176; Mohl, IV, p.48.

