

## History of Shāh Esmā'il

### folio 165

#### Shāhibeg's Ambassador Spying on the Sons of Sultan Ḥoseyn Mirzā Bāyqarā

Sultan Ḥoseyn Mirzā Bāyqarā, the last Timurid ruler of Herat, had three sons, Badi' al-Zamān Mirzā, Moẓaffar Ḥoseyn Mirzā, and Köpek Mirzā, who after the death of their father in 1505, had pretensions to independent rule. Upon hearing of the dissension and disagreement between the Timurid princes, Shāhibeg Khān (Moḥammad Khān Shibāni, the Uzbek) laid covetous eyes on Khorasan. In 913/1507 Shāhibeg invaded Khorasan, gave battle to the sons of Sultan Ḥoseyn, defeated them, and put them to death. In short, he destroyed the last remnants of the Timurid dynasty and annexed their territory.

The miniature illustrates an example of the petty bickering between two of the sons of Sultan Ḥoseyn, who are totally oblivious of the presence before them of an external force that is about to destroy them. The text states that the spy from Shāhibeg wanted to kiss the feet of Badi', the eldest son, but the retainers of the younger son Moẓaffar forced him to kiss his feet instead. Badi' al-Zamān Mirzā, in a purple robe and variegated turban, sits cross-legged on a slightly elevated hexagonal throne in the upper right. On the left, also on a slightly elevated throne but of square dimensions, sits his brother Moẓaffar, in a grayish robe with red flowers and a similar colored turban. He leans on a vermillion pillow decorated with gold. In the center of the miniature is a tightly compacted group consisting of four retainers of varying sizes and ages, who usher the ambassador of Shāhibeg Khān, sandwiched between them, in the direction of Moẓaffar Ḥoseyn. Three seated dignitaries in the lower corners, symmetrically disposed on the vertical central axis, observe the event. Another observer with a walking stick is visible at the bottom, his lower extremities cropped by the frame. Two attendants, one behind each of the princes, complete the ensemble. One holds a sword, the other a quiver case. The backdrop is a white walled pavilion decorated with gray and pale mauve tiles, gold multilobe arches, and a framed panel. The floor is light rose-mauve sprinkled with red arabesque-like decorations. For the most part, the clothing is executed in dark or intense colors - purple, vermillion, orange, blue, brown - causing the figures to stand out against the light pastel background.

Miniature: 24.1 x 13.0 cm. One line of text above and below the miniature. Frame encloses miniature and text; two branches of a tree and a pyramidal shaped cupola protrude beyond the frame into the top margin. Some of the paint, particularly the blue clothing, has flaked off, exposing the paper underneath. No other signs of damage or retouching. A marginal inscription in red, presumably of later date, describes the event depicted. Inscription in black appear on two of the figures, identify them as Badi' al-Zamān Mirzā and the ambassador of Shāhibeg Khān.

#### Miniature references:

Mahboubian Cat., #923 folio 165 (not illustrated).



#### Text references:

Muntazar, p.293. Savory, SA, p.59.

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