

History of Shāh Esmā'il

folio 210

Ādi Rescues Shāhibeg Khān From Drowning

According to the text, Ādi, the stableman of Shāhibeg Khān, rescued him from the river by lassoing him around the neck and pulling him out of the torrent, at which time Esmā'il immediately ordered Shāhibeg decapitated. The miniature, faithful to the text, depicts Shāhibeg with a disparaging look on his face, astride his horse in the lower right. A rope, looped around his neck, is being pulled taught by Ādi, who stands opposite him in the lower left. The river in which Shāhibeg is immersed, executed in silver and now tarnished to a dark gray, occupies the bottom third of the miniature, above which is a mauve colored hill with a craggy rock outline at the top and a gold sky. Shāh Esmā'il, in a white coat with gold trim and a red *tāj*, stands at the very edge of the river bank with a sword raised over his head and staring at Shāhibeg in anticipation. Behind the shāh is his horse and a mule. Five other Safavids observe the scene, three in the upper right, and two others peering over the rock ledge in the upper left.

There is a basic discrepancy between the event here depicted, and the account of Shāhibeg's demise as related by Eskandar Monshi. Monshi states that following the decisive battle of Maḥmūdābād in the district of Marv in the year 916/1510 where many Uzbegs were killed, Shāhibeg Khān and a group of Uzbegs in their precipitate flight (see folio 135v), entered an enclosed area which had no escape route. There they piled one upon the other in a bog (here depicted as a river), only to perish miserably. The corpse of Shāhibeg Khān was discovered, according to Monshi, beneath a pile of dead bodies by one of the Bozchalu *ghāzīs*, 'Aziz Āqā by name, known as Ādi Bahādor (a remarkable resemblance to Ādi the stableman). The head was separated from the body and flung under the hooves of Esmā'il's horse, while the various body parts were each sent to a different province (see f.217).

Miniature: 22.5 x 15.4 cm. One line of text above and below the miniature. Frame encloses miniature and text; Four standards protrude beyond the frame into the margin. Some of the paint on Ādi's coat has flaked, and what appears to be rubbing shows up on Shāhibeg's uniform; otherwise no other signs of damage or retouching. A marginal inscription in red, presumably of later date, describes the event depicted. Inscriptions in black, are written on three of the figures, identifying them as Shāhibeg Khān, Shāh Esmā'il, and Ādi the stableman.

Miniature references:

Mahboubian catalog, #923 folio 210 (not illustrated)

Text references:

Muntazar, p.369; Savory, SA, p.62.

