

Author	Firdawsī
Title	Shāhnāmāh
Origin	Shiraz (Iran)?
Date	16th century
Language	Persian
Artists	Anonymous. On the basis of a miniature ascribed to Zayn al-‘Ābidīn in BL Or.12985, f.90v (<i>Garshaspnāmāh</i>), the three double page compositions and 23 others may be attributed to him (ff.1v-2r, 10r, 130r, 138v, 144v, 153r, 166r, 176r, 183r, 195v, 206r, 356r, 454r, 463v, 477v, 490v, 502r, 519r, 528v, 536b, 547v, 561r, 568v-569r). The other artist, responsible for the remaining 32 illustrations, was more conventional in his treatment and exemplifies the normal late-sixteenth century Shiraz style at its best.
Decoration	56 miniatures of which three are double compositions: 1v-2, 10r, 17r, 25r, 35r, 44r, 54r, 71v, 91r, 98r, 106r, 116r, 121v, 130r, 138v, 144v, 153r, 166r, 176r, 183r, 195v, 206r, 219r, 225r, 238v, 242r, 254v, 262r, 274r, 281v, 288v, 299r, 307v-308r, 315r, 324v, 339v, 356r, 361v, 373r, 381r, 390r, 401v, 411r, 416v, 429r, 441v, 454r, 463v, 477v, 490v, 502r, 519r, 528v, 536v, 547v, 561r, 568v-569r. Magnificently illuminated heading on ff. 15v-16r; section headings throughout illuminated; margins on illustrated folios embellished with large floral scrolls in gold.
Script	Nasta‘liq in 4 columns of 25 lines per page on gold-sprinkled paper
Dimensions	46 x 29.5 cm.
Foliation	569 ff.
Binding	Modern scarlet morocco binding
Provenance	Possibly Francis Edward Rawdon-Hastings, 1st Marquess of Hastings (1754-1826), Governor-General of India 1813-23
Select bibliography	Hermann Ethé, <i>Catalogue of Persian manuscripts in the Library of the India Office</i> (Oxford, 1903-37) Basil W. Robinson, <i>Persian Paintings in the India Office Library: a Descriptive Catalogue</i> (London, 1976)

Images



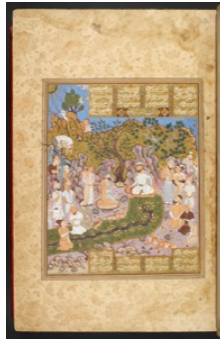
ff. 1v-2 Double-page miniature within a gorgeous illuminated border, of Salomon and the Queen of Sheba



f.3r



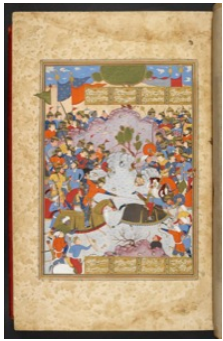
f.10r Bath scene: Firdawsi gives half his reward for writing the *Shahnamah* to a bath house attendant



f.17r Gayumars and his court



f.25r Faridun strikes down Zahhak in the palace in the presence of Jamshid's sisters



f.35r Tur defeated and killed by Minuchihr



f.44r Zal embracing Rudaba



f.54r The birth of Rostam



f.71v Rostam and the White Demon



f.91r The death of Suhrab



f.98r The fire-ordeal of Siyavush



f.106r Siyavush playing polo with Afrasiyab



f.116r The murder of Siyavush



f.121v Rostam in battle against Afrasiyab



f.130r The enthronement of Kay Khusraw



f.138v Persian troops sacking Farud's castle



f.144v The battle of Mount Hamavan between the armies of Gudarz and Piran



f.153r Ruhham and the Sorcerer



f.166r Combat of Rustam and Ashkabus



f.176r Rustam in battle, after being visited by Piran



f.183r Rustam attacking the fortress of Kafur the man-eater



f.195v Piran saves Bizhan from the gallows



f.206r Rustam's raid on Afrasiyab's palace after rescuing Bizhan



f.219r Barzu lassoing Faramurz



f.225r Combat of Rustam and Barzu



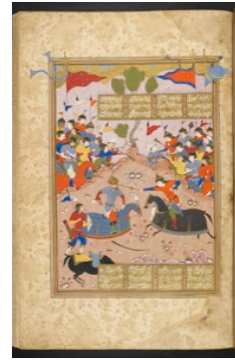
f.238v Encounter of Afrasiyab and Pilsam



f.242r Rustam fights Pilsam, the latter being kicked by Rakhsh



f.254v Human slain by Bizhan



f.262r Combat of Giv and Piran



f.274r Rustam leading the Persian army to war with Afrasiyab



f.281v Kay Khusraw slays Ustuqila the Kurd



f.288v The women of Afrasiyab before Kay Khusraw



f.299r Execution of Afrasiyab by Kay Khusraw



ff.307v-308r Double-page miniature: The enthronement of Luhrasp



f.315r Gushtasp killing the dragon



f.324v Death of Zarir in battle between Iran and Turan



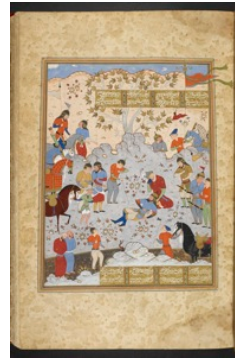
f.339v Isfandiyar's attack on Arjasp in the Brazen Fortress



f.356r Rustam shoots Isfandiyar in the eyes



f.361v The death of Rustam



f.373r Iskandar comforting the dying Dara



f.381r Iskandar visiting the Ka'ba



f.390r Iskandar building the wall against Gog and Magog



f.401v Bahram Gur winning the crown from between the lions



f.411r Bahram Gur hunting



f.416v Bahram leading the Khaqan captive



f.429r Battle between Piruz and Khushnavaz



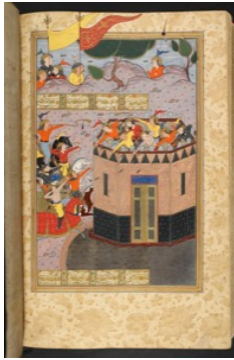
f.441v Capture of the Roman fortress by Nushirvan



f.454r Battle between the Khaqan and the Haytalians



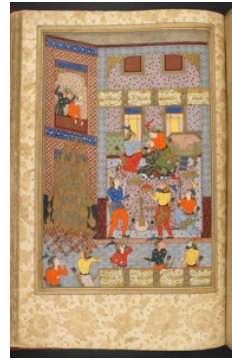
f.463v Introduction of chess at the court of Nushirvan



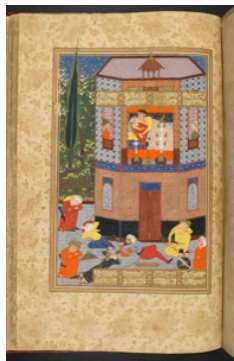
f.477v Nushirvan attacking a moated Roman fortress



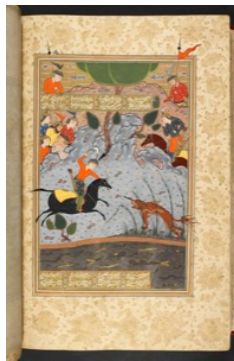
f.490v Sava Shah slain by Bahram Chubina



f.502r The blinding of King Hurmuz and burning of his palace



f.519r Khusraw embracing Maryam



f.528v Bahram Chubina killing the lion-ape



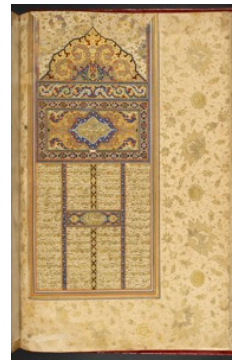
f.536v Khusraw and Gurdiya, sister of Bahram Chubina



f.547v Shirui sends an envoy to Khusraw



f.561r Rustam killed by Sa'ad at the battle of Qadisiyya



f.15v



ff.568v-569r Double-page miniature: hunting scene



f.16r