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CAT. 22. RUSTAM IS CAST INTO THE SEA BY THE *DIV* AKVAN

INDIA, BIJAPUR; C. 1610

The David Collection, 4/2015

After days spent in vain tracking the *div* Akvan, which had been plaguing a region, killing its horses, Rustam lies down by a river to sleep. The demon sees this and lifts the earth and Rustam with it into the air. Now the hero is given the choice between being cast into the side of the mountain or into the sea.

Knowing that the evil creature will undoubtedly do the opposite of what he wants, Rustam asks to be thrown into the mountainside, noting, "So that my bones can be preserved as eternal testimony to a magnificent warrior."

The *div* immediately casts the self-confident hero into the sea. On the painting, Akvan looks around nervously, as if afraid that it will be discovered what it intends to do, or that it is half-naked!

Published in:

Terence McInerney: *Indian painting, 1525-1825*, David Carritt, London 1982, cat.no. 18b;

Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic about Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, cat.no. 22;

Laura Weinstein: "Illustration as Localization: A Dispersed Bijapuri Manuscript of the Shahnama", in G. van den Berg and C. Melville (eds.): *Shahnama Studies*, III, Leiden 2017, p. 371;

J.P. Losty: *Indian Court Painting*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch, New York 2019, cat.no. 1;