



Inv. no. 133/2006

CAT. 1. FIRDAWSI IN AN AUDIENCE WITH SULTAN MAHMUD OF
GHAZNA

IRAN, ISFAHAN; 1615-1625

The David Collection, 133/2006

On his way to an audience with Sultan Mahmud, Firdawsi meets the three court poets – Unsuri, Asjadi, and Farrukhi. At first, they are not very welcoming. When he agrees to compete with them by taking turns in improvising a verse that ends in a word that rhymes with the previous end word, he is allowed to sit down.

Unsuri begins with a verse terminating in a word that supposedly rhymes with only two others. Then come Asjadi and Farrukhi, who choose precisely the words that he had in mind.

To everyone's surprise, Firdawsi adds a fourth verse in which the rhyme word is the name of an ancient hero from the *Shahname*.

On this painting, Firdawsi is shown in the blue kirtle at his audience with the sultan.

