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MINIATURE FROM A COPY OF FIRDAWSI'S SHAHNAMA. 'KAY KHUSRAW MARCHES TO GUDARZ'S RESCUE'

IRAN, LAHIJAN; 1494

LEAF: 34.5 × 24.5 CM

The ways the figures are depicted in this miniature justify the manuscript's designation: the "Big Head Shahnama."

Kay Khusraw (with a whip), his page on foot (with an axe and a pointed hat), and the heavily armed Iranian cavalry and infantry are painted in a highly monumental and original manner. The cropping of the picture is unconventional, whereas the bold and at times garish colors are typical of the entire manuscript and to some extent of Turkmen painting in general.

The miniature is filled with realistic details – weapons, shields, armor, and various types of helmets – but also has more special features, such as the pennant painted with a dragon and the dragon ensign with the inscription "Allah," reversed.

Published in:

Sotheby's, London, 11/7-1972, lot 155;

B. W. Robinson: *Persian painting and the national epic*, London 1983, fig. 17;

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 25;

Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic About Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, cat.no. 41;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: Fighting, Hunting, Impressing. Arms and Armour from the Islamic World 1500-1850, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2021, cat.no. 60;

Filiz Cakir Phillip: "Weaponry of Iran in the 15th and 16th centuries. A helmet and a spearhead in the David Collection" in *Journal of the David Collection*, 2021, 5, fig. 4, s. 84, 85, 87;

<http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:-1069043555>;