Humayûn, who is eventually succeeded by her son, Dârâ. Dârâ defeats Fâyklâin, a kinsman of Rûm; he marries the latter’s daughter but, finding her unsatisfactory, he sends her home. In Rûm the princess gives birth to Iskandar, Dârâ’s son. Dârâ takes another wife and has by her a son named Dârâ. A time comes when Dârâ, who has succeeded in Rûm, demands tribute from Iskandar, who has succeeded in Rûm. Iskandar refuses; he leads his army by way of Egypt to Rûm.

Spaced text D. 310. Iskandar visits Dârâ in the guise of an ambassador; their armistice is drawn up for battle.

Iskandar pursues Dârâ to flight. At a second encounter Dârâ is again defeated and Iskandar enters Isâkhur. Dârâ sends a message of submission to Iskandar, and Iskandar replies that Dârâ may retain the sovereignty of Rûm.

26. Iskandar comforts the dying Dârâ (315b)

Dârâ feels that it would be humiliating to accept Iskandar’s offer, and he writes to Fûr of Hind to ask for assistance against Iskandar. Hearing of this, Iskandar advances. When faced with his army, the army of Rûm surrenders. Dârâ flees. His chief ministers, Mâhiyâr and Janûsîyâr, conclude that his power is at an end, and Janûsîyâr stabs him mortally. Hoping to gain Iskandar’s favour, they lead him to the place where Dârâ is dying. Iskandar puts the ministers under guard.

‘Swift from his horse Iskandar vaulted down’. In his lap he took that wounded crown. Iskandar offers encouragement to Dârâ. Dârâ says that he is near to death; he resigns Rûm to Iskandar, and asks him to care for his children and wives, and to marry his daughter, Rausânâk, so that his line may revive the religion of Zardusht. Dârâ dies. Iskandar laments him and has a suitable tomb built. He sends to assure Dârâ’s womenfolk of his protection, and has a conciliatory message sent to the nobles of Rûm.

The death group, with Dârâ’s head resting upon Iskandar’s knee, was much used after this manuscript, but was probably in use long before, since it is hinted at in a marginal drawing in the British Library’s Shahnama (Or. 13529) of c. 1405. In the present illustration, this unit is integrated into the wider composition with great dramatic effect. It is the immediate focus of attention. This is in part by means of colour, since the cool hues of Dârâ’s garments contrast vividly with the coral ground, and since, within the conventions of Persian painting, he is bleeding copiously. Unusually the group is set in the extreme lower left of the picture, but being L-shaped it fits there with visual logic. The steep lines of the horizon and of the foreground rock channel the viewer’s eyes towards it, while a tree presses in the same direction. The cavalcade wends towards the death group, which has entirely engaged the attention of the leading horse; however, with remarkable judgement, the painter turns the head of the leading rider back to direct our attention to the secondary focus, Mâhiyâr and Janûsîyâr, clearly identifiable as prisoners from the rope round their necks and their unclothed upper bodies, but partly screened by the foreground rock, so that they do not distract too much from the principal focus. In the lower right and against the chilly, bluish ground, a soldier is holding Iskandar’s horse, balancing the death group, contrasting with the cavalcade by his stillness, and acting as an anonymous witness.

After Iskandar has established himself on the throne of Rûm, he advances upon Kayûd of Hind, who, however, presents him with four extraordinary gifts. Iskandar marches to Kannauj and calls for Fûr to submit to him. Receiving a scornful reply, Iskandar leads his army on through difficult terrain. Informed by spies that Fûr will use elephants against him, Iskandar has his smiths create horses of iron that are filled with naptha. Fûr’s elephants flare from the burning naptha. On the second day, iskandar challenges Fûr to single combat.

Spaced text E. 321. Iskandar slays Fûr in single combat; he visits the Ka’bah.

During his brief reign Iskandar travels to many distant parts and sees many marvels, though he is not himself privileged to find the Water of Life that he seeks. He dies at Babylon.

Iran is ruled by minor Aḥkānīs kings until the time of Ardashîr. However, Sûsîn, a son of Dârâ, has escaped at the fall of his father and lived out his life as a camel-driver in Hind. A descendant, also named Sûsîn, becomes a shepherd to one Fâpak, and marries the daughter of his employer, who gives birth to a son, Ardashîr Pâpâkân. Ardashîr eventually slays Ardashîr in battle; he ascends the throne in Baghûdâd and marries Ardashîr’s daughter.
This queen attempts to poison Ardashir, but instead of being executed she is taken into concealment where she gives birth to his son, Shāpūr. The child is restored to Ardashir, his identity being confirmed by his skill in polo. Shāpūr secretly marries the daughter of a local king and she bears him a son, Urmuz; he also distinguishes himself before Ardashir by his skill in polo. As he feels his end approaching, Ardashir advises Shāpūr on just kingship and yields the throne to him.

Spaced text F. 349. Shāpūr, son of Ardashir, is enthroned; he fights against the army of Rūm.

The Rūm commander Barāmush is captured, and Shāpūr later exploits his skill for the building of a bridge. Shāpūr dies, passing the throne to Urmuz. The dynasty continues.

27. Bahram Gur hunting with Azadah (362b)

Yazdagird, son of the third Shāpūr, is a tyrannical ruler. To preserve his son, Bahram, from his influence, counsellors persuade the king to send him to be brought up among the Arabs. The young prince is instructed in penmanship, hunting, and skill at arms; at length he asks for female companionship and is provided with two slave girls from Rūm, one of whom is a harpist. One day he goes to hunt with the harpist, whose name is Azadah and who delights him. They ride a camel that is spread with a brocade and fitted with two pairs of stirrups.

They sight two pairs of gazelle; Bahram asks Azadah whether he should kill the female or the male of one pair. Azadah replies that he should make the female male, and the male female; that he should then speed his camel on, send a stone at the ear of another so that it would raise its leg to scratch, and finally he should transfixed its ear and foot. Bahram accomplishes the first feat by shooting off the male’s horns with a double-headed arrow, and lodging two arrows into the head of the female. The stone and subsequent shot also find their mark:

’Sitched ear to head, and both to hoof as well: Azadah’s heart was seared for the gazelle.’

Azadah begins to weep. Bahram vaunts his skill. Azadah says that only an Ahraman (spirit of evil) could shoot so. Bahram flings her from the camel and tramples her saying that her challenge has put him at risk of dishonour. He takes no more girls to the hunt: when he next follows this pastime it is with men, using hawks and cheetahs.

The group of Bahram with Azadah on the camel has a long history, extending as least as far back as the period of miniatures’ ceramics, but has rarely been infused with such energy. The camel races briskly from the right, and the quarry is shown along the left hand edge, ranging downwards in power from onagers at the top, to three gazelles — one of which will escape — to the stricken gazelle in the lower left corner, and hares in the foreground. Since the central trio is as yet untouched, the order of events is not quite that of the text. Our attention is not, however, focused on the physical consequences of the shot, but on the riders. They are dally seated on the brocade and both are using stirrups. Their robes are richly coloured and decorated with gold designs, as are the quiver and harp. The figure of Bahram is in a dynamic balance as he leans forward, his back muscles tensed, following the latest shot, with his releasing right hand flung back — to an extent that seems to have elongated his index finger.

Central in the picture is his face with eyes shining and lips parted in the exultation of success: the use of profile for the principal figure is rare at the period. Behind him sits Azadah, whose face has a trace of a grudgingly indulgent smile, as though she had seen it all before: she is quite unconscious of the doom she has brought upon herself. There is no attempt to characterize the landscape as particular to Arabia. The ground is of one pale coral rimmed with blue rock at the horizon, and with the same below the foot of the larger plants.

The outline of the camel has been pricked, cutting through the figures in the process. This was presumably to transfer the motif to another paper for later pouncing. It is hard to imagine who would have had both access to the manuscript and such an urgent need of a small camel motif. Perhaps the damage was a hazard of harem storage at some point.

It appears that a seal has been obliterated in the lower right corner.

Having vindicated his claim by killing two lions at between him and the crown and throne, Bahram Gur rules in Iran. Numerous stories of an anecdotal character follow, two of which may have been intended in the present manuscript for illustration.

On one occasion Bahram has killed a dragon and is looking for a place to rest and recover from the effects of its venom, when he sees a country wife (wife of a dihejan) with a pitcher and requests hospitality. She provides this, and later, when he inquires conversation, she tells him that the officers of state behave Bahram is take upon his justico beharse yet mor. will be the mor

Spaced text G. : resting at the box complaint of injo

In the morning no milk, and let not
must have take. Hearing this, B the cow's milk cr
of state behave high-handedly as they pass by, Bahram is taken aback to consider how this reflects upon his justice; he decides that he will, for a while, behave yet more unjustly, so that a later reform will be the more evident.

Spaced text G. 372. Bahram Gur slays a dragon; resting at the house of a dilhujan, he hears the wife’s complaint of injustice.

In the morning the woman finds that her cow gives no milk, and she tells her husband that the king must have taken a bad resolution during the night. Hearing this, Bahram decides that he must be just: the cow’s milk duly flows. Bahram tells the woman to hang his whip in a tree, and when she sees that people salute it, she understands that she has entertained the king.

Secondly, Bahram, incognito, is at the court of Shangal of Hind; the king asks him to deal with a karg39 which is wreaking havoc nearby. The creature is of great size, but Bahram shoots it and cuts off its head; its body is carried to Shangal on a wain.

Spaced text H. 382. Bahram Gur kills a karg.

Bahram receives general praise, but Shangal resolves to send him against a dragon. This also is sian.

At last Bahram resigns the kingdom to his son and dies in his bed.39