34 SHAHRASHOB REACHES TAKAW WITH HAMZA BOUND IN CHAINS

The sequence of illustrations is disrupted slightly by a lacuna of one folio, which in all likelihood was illustrated with one of the heroic exploits described above. Even without the ensuing page of text, the thread of the story is easy to pick up again as the separate tales of Alamshah and his companions and Shahrasb's abduction of Hamza finally converge on the outskirts of Takaw. This painting has lost its caption, but the subject is identified in the opening lines of the text that follows the illustration.

"When they met Khwaja Bakhtyar, Malik Kamyar, Nimrod, Larghay Chain-Chewer, and Sharrat b. Beast-Chain and explained the Amir's situation to them, Bakhtak praised Shahrasb. Then they got out of the boat, mounted, and took the news to Malik Arghus. Bakhtak said, 'Malik Arghus, good news for you: Shahrasb Ayyar has the renowned Amir Hamza in chains and has brought him by sea with Nimrod, Larghay Chain-Chewer, and Sharrat b. Beast-Chain. The infidels rejoiced and ordered the drums of glad tidings to be sounded.'

Meanwhile, Arghus and Zumurrud Shah rush to the shore to behold Shahrasb disembarking with a manacled Hamza.

The painting depicts Shahrasb and his men as they set foot on the beach at Takaw. Shahrasb's getaway boat has become a flotilla of skiffs, an artistic elaboration that allows the key figures to be spread across the composition. Wearing his shield on his back, a habit common among djuys, Shahrasb strides across a gangplank from the centermost boat to embrace one of Arghus's operatives, or possibly Arghus himself. Two henchmen behind Shahrasb, armed but less remarkable than their names, stand stoically in the water. A crowd of onlookers has gathered between the shore and the walls of Takaw. Still arriving in the largest of the boats is Hamza, his head downcast. His manacles plainly visible to all. Let there be any confusion about the prisoner's identity, someone has written Amir Kishwar Chaw (Amir, the conqueror of provinces) on his sleeve. Balancing his boat is another one advancing from the left, its visual weight increased by an elaborate canopy and wooden baldaquin. Likewise, a toothy sea monster, its glowing yellow scales now partly abraded, has been added to animate the sea and complement the size and position of the oar blade.

Mukhil casts an attentive eye on the assorted boats, and particularly on their fittings. Essentially decorative elements such as the inlaid canopies and the hierarchically colored yaktais fluttering from the prows are outnumbered by meticulously described functional items including rope oarlocks, the bundle of mooring rope, and the cord yoking the two smaller skiffs.

This painting resembles another appearing slightly later in the volume (cat.38) in many respects. Most obvious is the distinctively elongated pattern of waves. Many of the facial types in the two paintings are exceedingly close, as are a number of architectural features and patterns.
The dastardly Shahrashob now furnishes his kind of spectacle, a shackled Hamza paraded from the shore to Malik Arghun's palace. When they arrive there, the furious Hamza sits down.

"Zumurrud Shah turned to the Amir and said, 'Come, prostrate yourself!' The Amir said, 'You dogs! I have prostrated to the Almighty who created the eighteen thousand worlds.' In short, many words were exchanged between the Amir and Zumurrud Shah. In the end Zumurrud Shah ordered the Amir to be killed, but Dastur the vizier whispered in Arghun's ear, 'If Zumurrud Shah had any sense, he would not have lost his kingdom. This man is the leader of the whole army of Iran and Turan, and the champions of whom you have heard so much are in this man's service. Now, order this champion to be sent to prison so that we may see how battle-worthy his men are. Whenever you want to have him killed, it will be easy enough.'"

Shahrashob takes hold of Hamza's chains and, surrounded by a huge armed guard, leads the Amir through the city and past Baba Junayd's caravanserai, where his would-be rescuers see him.

"Tul Mast opened the window and saw Shahrashob holding the Amir's chain with three or four thousand men around the Amir holding naked swords to prevent the champions from making a rescue attempt. The Amir was walking like an enraged lion and a furious elephant. The champions sighed in despair, unable to help."

The prison to which Hamza is taken is a domed mountain with a deep dungeon capped by a mammoth stone.

"The circumference of the dome was a hundred and eighty cubits, and the thickness of the walls was forty cubits. Inside a pit had been dug, and on top of that was a stone that took four hundred men to lift by handle that had been attached to it; it took forty men to move the door to the dome, and when it was closed it made such a noise that everyone in the city could hear it."

The artist focuses on the human drama near the end of this account of Hamza's humiliation. Standing in relative isolation in the center of the composition is Hamza, head up, but hands shackled and suspended from another chain around his neck. He is tethered to two particularly sinister figures, Shahrashob in the lead and Bakhtak bringing up the rear. A throng of guards surround the prisoner, their swords and daggers brandished against any who would dare approach. They surge across a courtyard and through a city gate, and fan out in both directions. At every door and window of the caravanserai are astonished onlookers, purportedly including Hamza's friend, Tul Mast, though anyone who even remotely matches his previous description is absent.

Unlike the previous levels of action, this painting shows its energy from subtle variations in a very restricted set of activities. Soldiers mill about, their turned heads directing attention everywhere, and their unsheathed swords creating a staccato rhythm across the composition. From their tiny cubicles, the caravanserai-dwellers, heads bobbing as they gaze, have much the same effect. A large portion of the paint on Hamza's face has flaked off, but that surface is compensated by the exquisite underdrawing.

The guards exhibit a very distinctive and coherent range of facial types. The eyes are typically very round and have remarkably bright whites. The mustaches are still more distinctive, thick and winglike in shape and bristly in texture, and often with upturned flairing ends. Indeed, some figures, notably the one directly behind Hamza or the guard dressed in red in the upper center, sport such impressive mustaches that they function as signature features. The recurrence of this combination of features throughout the illustration allows us to attribute most of the actual painting to Jagana, a major artist active in the late 1570s and 1580s, for he is named as both the designer and painter of two illustrations in the Jaipur Kozimmar with an absolutely identical range of faces (see fig. 20). The irresistible connection between this Horomandoo illustration and Jagana's work some fifteen years later demonstrates how little the basic elements of artists' personal styles in the Mughal atelier changed over time. Though Hamza's face is damaged, enough remains of his nose and eye to indicate that another well-documented artist, Basavana, supplied his face and torso.

Attributed to Jagana and Basavana

Volume 11, painting number 39, text number 10
India, Mughal dynasty, 1570-1571
68.8 x 51.6 cm
(detail on pp. 182-183)
1. Maharat Samad Mubarak Singh II, Museum, Jaipur, AG 779 and 1730; Hendley 1884, pl. 37-38; and Bareejee 1978, figs. 140-44.

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