



Judeo-Persian Miniatures

Author(s): Joseph Gutmann

Source: *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*, Vol. 8, No. 2/4 (Spring, 1968), pp. 54-76

Published by: Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27943399>

Accessed: 22-06-2016 07:32 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*

Judeo-Persian Miniatures*

BY JOSEPH GUTMANN, *Cincinnati*

THE EXISTENCE OF A FLOURISHING Jewish literature in Persia, especially in the fourteenth century, was first called to scholarly attention at the turn of this century.¹ That some manuscripts of Judeo-Persian literature were also later illustrated, however, has received scant notice in Jewish scholarly works² and, to the author's knowledge, is not mentioned at all in works dealing with Persian art.

No exhaustive treatment of the style and iconography is intended in this exploratory article; rather, it is the author's intention to acquaint art historians and Jewish scholars with the types of Jewish manuscripts which were illustrated and to describe some of the miniatures in these manuscripts which widen the scope of iconographic studies treating "Old Testament" themes in Muslim art.³

The beginnings of Judeo-Persian manuscript illumination are still obscure; no extant miniatures can be said to antedate the seventeenth century, and the miniatures appearing in the same literary manuscripts show such iconographic diversity that no theory of an earlier common model can be posited, nor, as will be indicated later, do the miniatures reveal any iconographic parallels with early or medieval Jewish art.

The manuscripts and their miniatures can be divided into two categories: 1. translations of epic Persian poetry into Judeo-Persian, such as Nizāmi's *Haft-Paīkar*,⁴ his *Khusraw u-Šīrīn*⁵ and Jāmi's *Yūsuf u-Zulaikhā*;⁶ 2. the original Jewish works of Šāhīn, the fourteenth-century Jewish poet from Šīrāz, who wrote an epos of the Bible, the various books of which are known as a *Genesis Book*, a *Moses Book*,⁷ and an *Ardašīr and Ezra Book*,⁸ — only the Moses and Ardašīr-Ezra books are known to be illustrated. Similarly, the Jewish poet Imrānī, who, basing himself on Šāhīn, continued his Biblical epos in the sixteenth century with a work known as the *Book of Conquest*, of which only the portion dealing with Joshua is known to be illustrated in one extant manuscript.⁹

We know nothing about the artists who executed these miniature cycles, indeed not even whether they were Jews or non-Jews. The scribes were undoubtedly Jewish, as was the case with Hebrew manuscripts from medieval Christian Europe, and their names are sometimes indicated in the colophons.¹⁰

From the stylistic point of view, the miniatures are provincial products from the Safavid and Qājār periods. To date those from the Safavid period accurately is extremely difficult, as the literature on the subject rarely treats Persian paintings after the first half of the seventeenth century.¹¹

* I am greatly indebted to my colleague, Prof. Ezra Spicehandler, for suggesting that I write this article and for his generous help in translating the captions to the miniatures discussed in this article.

Iconographically, many of the battle, hunting and court scenes are familiar from the vast Persian repertoire of such scenes and were undoubtedly copied. Other scenes, however, which deal with a more specifically Jewish iconography, adapted Persian models to suit the Jewish demands.¹²

Just as Ezekiel, the tragic poet from pre-Christian Alexandria, wrote a drama with Moses as its hero and modelled it along the lines of classic Greek tragedy, especially that of Euripides, so Maulānā Šāhīn in 1327, during the benign reign of the Mongol Il-Khān dynasty, wrote his first work on Moses, the so-called *Moses Book*. Under the influence of Persian classical poetry, particularly of Firdausī and Niẓāmī, this first work and the others to follow attempted a poetical commentary and paraphrase of the biblical narrative. "It is an *Epos of the Jewish Past* in Persian, shaped after Firdusi's *Epos of the Iranian Past*."¹³ In the *Moses Book*, such Biblical figures as Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Phinehas, Eleazar, Ithamar, Caleb, Jair, and Eldad are represented as heroes who in a manner similar to the kings and warriors of the Persian epos, vanquish the enemy with feats of personal bravery, lead and direct armies in battle, and engage the enemy with speeches and counter-speeches. In successive chapters, the Jewish leaders and the Israelite armies battle with the armies and heroes of Amalek, Edom, the king of Arad, Sihon, Og and Midian, and gain victory over their foes. In his *Moses Book*, Šāhīn draws upon the Bible and rabbinic literature, the Koran and Islamic tradition, Firdausī and Persian classical poetry, as well as his own imagination.¹⁴

Only two manuscripts of the *Moses Book* are, as far as the writer knows, extensively decorated. One *Moses Book* in the Hebrew Union College Library dates from the late nineteenth century and has 37 illustrations; the other, recently acquired by the Bezalel National Art Museum in Israel is from the late seventeenth century and has 19 miniatures.¹⁵ Done in the style of the Qājār period, the illustrations in the *Moses Book* of the Hebrew Union College Library are painted in black outline and filled in with green, red, yellow, black, and orange wash colors. The illustrations begin with the enthroned figure of king Pharaoh on folio 4r and then follow several episodes from Moses' experience as a shepherd. On folio 23r, we see a fiery dragon and Moses with a staff in his hand; the depiction alludes to the dragon's demand that Moses surrender one of his sheep. Moses refuses, and as the dragon threatens him, he slays him with his staff and cuts off his head. This episode and the illustration on 24v, showing Moses with a wolf, and on folio 25v, Moses with a lion, also refer to Moses' encounters with these animals while he was a shepherd of Jethro's flock. They seem to have no literary foundation and probably spring from Šāhīn's imagination.¹⁶

Illustrations in the rest of the manuscript are predominantly of Israel's struggles with its enemies. Many of these scenes depict two men engaged in battle — the Israelite hero on a horse while his enemy is usually on an elephant. Thus on folio 68r, for instance, we find Joshua mounted on his horse engaging Amalek, who seated on an elephant, is in flight from the scene of battle.¹⁷ On folio 134v, Eleazar, riding on a horse, kills Kohyār on an elephant,¹⁸ and on folio 195r, Balaam, seated on his traditional ass, is killed by Phinehas

on horseback.¹⁹ These battle scenes are undoubtedly either simple adaptations of, or direct copies from Persian manuscripts, illustrating similar scenes.

A particularly interesting illustration is that of Moses encountering the giant Og, on folio 155r. This is an old Jewish legend illustrated in Persian manuscripts since the fourteenth century. In our illustration, the giant figure of Og, with his left hand raised, wears an orange ruff around his neck and is clothed only in a red skirt. The haloed figure of Moses, bearded and fully clothed, approaches the giant with a long forked instrument in his hand (fig. 1). According to Šāhīn, Og's attempt to subdue Moses proved of no avail, but Moses' stature and staff were miraculously lengthened by ten cubits, and, jumping another ten cubits into the air, he struck Og on his ankle and thereby killed him.²⁰

The Biblical account (Num. 21:35) attributes the slaying of Og, the king of Bashan, to the children of Israel, but an old aggadic tradition already ascribed this feat to Moses. Thus we read in the Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot* 54b that Og uprooted a mountain three parasangs in size in order to cast it upon the children of Israel and crush them. But God caused ants to perforate the mountain so that it slid from Og's head down upon his neck. When he tried to pull it off, he was unable to do so. When Moses perceived this, he took an axe ten cubits long, leaped ten cubits into the air and struck Og on his ankle, which caused his death. Later aggadic versions, as well as Ṭabarī and other Muslim commentators, render this story in a manner very similar to the above aggadic account. They differ mainly in that they sometimes mention that Og intended to hurl a rock (instead of a mountain) at Israel, that God sent a bird or worm (rather than ants) to bore through the rock or mountain and that the weapon with which Moses struck Og may also have been a club or staff.²¹

Though the illustration of Moses killing the giant Og in the Šāhīn manuscript is the only known depiction of this Jewish legend to appear within a Jewish book, it is already found in the early fourteenth-century Arabic translation of Rašīd-al-Dīn's World History (*Jāmi-al-Tawārīkh*). Rašīd-al-Dīn (c. 1247–1318), a famous vizier, physician, scholar and patron of learning, may have been a Jewish convert to Islam, and his work, which contains a history of the Jews, is the first universal history of the Orient and Occident and probably the most important Persian historical work.²²

The miniature (Edinburgh University Library, Arab. MS. 20, fol. 9v) shows the upturned giant Og writhing on the ground in pain and grasping his wounded ankle with both hands. Moses, dwarfed by the size of the giant, holds his staff and points to the fallen Og (fig. 2).

In another miniature, dating from around 1425, in a Persian manuscript of Rašīd-al-Dīn's Universal History now in the Cincinnati Art Museum, Og is depicted desperately trying to pry loose the rock which has settled around his neck like a tight collar. The tiny, turbaned figure of Moses is standing at Og's feet ready to smite him on his ankle with a big staff²³ (fig. 3). Although the few extant Islamic miniatures of Moses smiting the giant Og do not reveal an established iconographic tradition, there is an iconographic similarity



FIG. 1. MOSES'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE GIANT OG. Šāhīn, *Moses Book*, late 19th century. Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College Library, fol. 155r.



FIG. 2. MOSES SLAYING THE GIANT OG. Rašid-al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*, 1306/1307.
Edinburgh, University Library, Arab. Ms. 20, fol. 9v.



FIG. 3. MOSES'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE GIANT OG. Rašid-al Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*, ca. 1425. Cincinnati Art Museum, Acc. No. 1947.501.



FIG. 4. BATTLE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND AMALEK. Šāhīn, *Moses Book*, late 17th century (?). Marburg (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Staatsbibliothek), Ms. or. oct. 2885, fol. 5v.

between the 15th-century Rašīd-al-Dīn miniature and the 19th-century Šāhīn illustration. One need only compare the landscape with its tufts of grass and the bearded turbaned figure of Moses raising his staff with his right hand. Interesting and incongruous, too, is the ruff in the Šāhīn illustration. The ruff is probably a misinterpretation of the rock around Og's neck, depicted in the Rašīd-al-Dīn manuscript. As the Šāhīn text does not allude to the rock around Og's neck, the provincial artist who copied from such an earlier model probably misunderstood its true meaning.²⁴

Several pages of another *Moses Book* are extant today, one of them illuminated and preserved in Marburg (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Staatsbibliothek, MS. or. oct. 2885, fol. 5v). It comes from the Safavid period and may belong to the second half of the seventeenth century.²⁵ The miniature depicts the battle of Israel and Amalek at the crucial juncture when Aaron and Ḥur held up Moses' hands until victory was assured (Exod. 17:8–13).²⁶ Our miniature copies a typical Persian battle scene with men on horses and arms clashing.²⁷ Towards the top of the miniature are added three figures clumsily posed before the small strip of sky. In the center is Moses, old and bearded with flaming halo, his hands upheld by Aaron and Ḥur standing on either side of him (fig. 4).

The only other fully illuminated book of Šāhīn is his *Ardašīr Book*. Two illuminated copies of this manuscript are extant — one in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the other in Tübingen (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Tübinger Depot der Staatsbibliothek), both probably dating again from the second half of the seventeenth century.²⁸ The so-called *Ardašīr Book*, written in 1332, closely patterns itself on classical Persian national poetry. Its introductory chapters are taken over from Firdausī's *Šāh-nāmeḥ* to which is skillfully appended the biblical story of Esther with embellishments from Jewish and Muslim legends, from Šāhīn's creative imagination and from Firdausī's descriptions of Persian court life. It ends with a typical Persian fairy tale. The heroes of the book are Ardašīr (or Bahman), who is identified with Ahasuerus, and his sons Šērō and Kūraš (Cyrus).²⁹ It is hardly surprising that the masoretic book of Esther with its Persian setting, lent itself so beautifully to Šāhīn's talents or that it should have been treasured by Persian speaking Jews. After all, an ancient tradition has it that the graves of Mordecai and Esther are located in Hamadan.^{29a}

Though the miniatures in the two Ardašīr manuscripts may come from provincial centers, the Tübingen miniatures reveal the hand of a more skilled artist. The animation of some of his figures, their gestures and poses, and their setting within their spatial surroundings are generally more convincing than the crudely drawn figures in the Jewish Theological Seminary Library manuscript, which sit or stand awkwardly within their pictorial frame. No doubt, the many scenes in these two manuscripts depicting hunts, slayings of dragons, banquets and court life are taken from miniatures of the *Šāh-nāmeḥ* and other Persian miniatures. Whether Šāhīn's *Ardašīr Book* was already illuminated in the fourteenth century we are unable to determine, particularly as the two surviving Ardašīr illuminated manuscripts of the seventeenth century show few iconographic parallels. Different episodes

of the story are shown in the two manuscripts, and although thirteen of the miniatures in the two manuscripts carry identical captions, the miniatures were taken from different sources and suggest no common archetype.³⁰

Particularly interesting are those miniatures dealing with the story of Esther, as they add significantly to the Esther illustrations hitherto known. Esther illustrations are of course familiar in medieval Jewish and Christian art and become popular in the cycles of the Esther scrolls from the seventeenth century on. They are, however, not found in Muslim art. Haman, though mentioned in the Koran, is identified there as the minister of king Pharaoh, and, hence has no association with the traditional story of Esther.³¹

In our manuscripts the first miniature related to the story of Esther is based on Esther 2:8-9, and depicts king Ahasuerus seeking a new queen after having deposed Vashti. The caption in Tübingen MS. or. qu. 1680, fol. 29r and Jewish Theological Seminary, No. 40919, fol. 13r reads: "Bišūtan gathers the daughters of the surrounding areas about Šāh Bahman (Ardašīr)." In both miniatures we see a seated king surrounded by beautiful maidens in keeping with the counsel of Ardašīr's advisor Bišūtan.³²

According to Šāhīn, Haman schemed to become vizier to the king as soon as he came to Shushan, and in order to accomplish his plans, he built a house near the royal palace. This episode, which is without biblical foundation, is illustrated in or. qu. 1680, fol. 54r and No. 40919, fol. 36r. The caption on both miniatures reads: "Description of the accursed Haman building his home in Shushan." In or. qu. 1680, Haman stands in front of his house and directs the laying of bricks, plastering and other building activities for his new home, while in No. 40919, he supervises the building astride his horse. The two scenes, though illustrating the same episode, show no iconographic similarities and were drawn from different sources (figs. 5-6).³³

Esther 3:1-2 mentions that Haman was promoted over all the princes, but does not explain how the crafty Haman managed to procure this position. Šāhīn fills in the void by relating that the king, in a state of intoxication, promoted Haman to vizier in place of Bišūtan. In the miniature illustrating this episode in No. 40919, fol. 20v, we apparently have the drunken king placing his hand upon a bowing Haman and by this gesture raising Haman to the vizirate. Below Haman, a servant is offering a cup of wine to the king while others present are gesturing in the direction of Haman. The caption reads: "The Sāh's giving the vizirate to Haman." (fig. 7).³⁴

An aggadic elaboration of Esther 7:7, telling that upon Esther's accusation of Haman, Ahasuerus rose in wrath and "went into the palace garden" is illustrated in or. qu. 1680, fol. 82r and in the badly effaced and torn miniature of No. 40919, fol. 126r. Three female angels with large wings are grouped around a tree in the or. qu. 1680 miniature and one of these angels seems to be embracing the tree. One would never surmise that this gesture was intended to show the uprooting of a tree by the angels in Ahasuerus' palace garden. According to legendary accounts, God wanted to kindle Ahasuerus' wrath against Haman even more and thus sent ministering angels, who in sight of Ahasuerus, were to uproot

trees in his royal garden and accuse Haman of having given the order.^{34a} In a contemporary 17th-century Dutch Megillah (British Museum, MS. Or. 1047) we actually see ten men in Ahasuerus' palace garden, each swinging an axe to chop down trees and each labelled with one of the names of Haman's sons. This illustration follows targumic tradition, which claims that God sent ten angels in the guise of the ten sons of Haman to chop down trees in the royal garden.^{34b} Although the Dutch and Persian illustrations are based on related Jewish legendary traditions, they bear no iconographic parallels.

Haman's end is graphically depicted in No. 40919, fol. 86v (Esther 7:10): "Šāh Bahman's hanging of the accursed Haman." The king on horseback is directing his archers, who shoot arrows at the body of Haman, hanging from the gallows (fig. 8). In another miniature in or. qu. 1680, fol. 88v, we see armed men in the process of decapitating several men tied together by a rope. The inscription: "The killing of the accursed Haman's people by the sons of Jacob," is of course based on Esther 9:5–6, as is the hanging of the ten sons of Haman, also illustrated in or. qu. 1680, fol. 93r (Esther 9:7–10, 13–14), whose caption reads "Mordecai's hanging of the ten sons of the accursed Haman."³⁵ Ten sons are shown hanging from one gallows in the miniature, while armed Jews and a crowned Mordecai, all mounted, shoot arrows at them (fig. 9).

The hanging of Haman and his sons is often illustrated in Jewish art in the lands of Western Christendom, from the Middle Ages on, but in a manner that bears no iconographic relation to these depictions, which closely follow Persian scenes of hangings.³⁶ Similarly, it must be noted that such popular Jewish legends as that of Haman's daughter mistakenly emptying a chamber pot over her father's head and then committing suicide, though related by Šāhīn and illustrated in Western Jewish art, are not depicted in these Judeo-Persian manuscripts.³⁷

Whereas the biblical book of Esther ends with the triumph of the Jews over Haman and his followers, Šāhīn's Ardašīr epos continues the story of Esther by relating her happy union with Ardašīr (Ahasuerus) and the birth of their son Kūraš, identified in Jewish tradition with Cyrus.³⁸ A miniature in MS. No. 40919, fol. 154r, shows Esther giving birth to Kūraš. The midwife receives the child emerging from the womb, while an attendant with hands outstretched is ready to wash the baby in the waiting basin. Another figure firmly grasps Esther around her shoulders while two other servants stand by (fig. 10). Stark in its realism and frankness, the scene is treated in such a natural way as to induce only a sense of reverence and awe. Similar depictions of birth scenes already occur earlier in Christian manuscripts, such as the Ashburnham Pentateuch and the Octateuchs, as well as in Arab paintings.³⁹ Even in Jewish art, the depiction of female nudity is not an uncommon phenomenon; it occurs in the synagogue of Dura-Europos and in medieval Spanish Haggadot.⁴⁰

Between 1523–1536, the Jewish poet Imrānī composed a *Book of Conquest* (Fath-nāme) which continues the poetic paraphrase and commentary of the biblical narrative begun 200 years earlier by Šāhīn. In his work, Imrānī bases himself on the biblical historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and goes up to the reigns of David and Solomon.⁴¹

One extant Imrānī manuscript (Sassoon collection, MS. 614) primarily illuminates episodes from the Book of Joshua.⁴² Most of the scenes are typical battle scenes taken from Persian art, but two miniatures are of special interest. Dating perhaps from the second half of the seventeenth century, the miniature on p. 29 is captioned: "The address of God, the most holy and exalted, to Joshua regarding the crossing of the Jordan." Three superimposed rows of figures are seen about to cross the dry Jordan river, in keeping with the biblical account of Josh. 3-4. In the top row, Joshua, the leader, with flaming halo, extends his hand in a gesture of wonder at the divine miracle. The two foremost figures carry, not the biblical ark, but what appears to be an Oriental Torah case (*tik*) with inlay decoration, similar to some Torah cases that have survived from the contemporary Near East (fig. 11).⁴³ Already in the paintings of the Dura-Europos synagogue do we find the synagogal ark substituted for the biblical ark of the desert wanderings, and even early Christian art in some of its depictions of the desert ark show a synagogue ark (chest) instead.⁴⁴ Joshua is not named in the Koran; his existence, however, can be inferred, and he is indeed mentioned by Muslim commentators.⁴⁵ Although the crossing of the Jordan is a familiar theme in Christian art, the author does not know of any depictions of it in Muslim art.⁴⁶

On page 62 of this Sassoon manuscript, seven turbaned figures with shofars in hand are standing before what appears to be a panelled backdrop. The caption: "The address of God, may He be glorified and exalted, to Joshua concerning the capture of Jericho," clearly reveals that the seven figures are intended to be the seven priests blowing seven shofars before the walls of Jericho, in keeping with the biblical account in Joshua 6 (fig. 12).⁴⁷ Again, the author knows of no similar depiction in Muslim art, although the universal history of Rašīd-al-Dīn (Edinburgh University Library, Arab. MS. 20, fol. 10v) does portray in a miniature a seated Joshua, who, having taken Jericho, orders his leaders to destroy all seized property.⁴⁸

The miniatures discussed in this paper offer nothing significantly new for an understanding of the stylistic development of Persian art. They do, however, open up a little explored chapter of Jewish artistic endeavors in Persia and considerably widen the repertoire of "Old Testament" themes in Muslim art.⁴⁹

NOTES

¹See bibliography on this subject cited by J. P. Asmussen, "Judaco-Persica I: Šāhīn-i Šīrāzī's Ardašīr-nāmā," *Acta Orientalia*, XXVIII, 3-4 (1965), 246, n. 4.

²F. Landsberger, *A History of Jewish Art* (Cincinnati, 1946), p. 359, note 62; W. J. Fischel, "Israel in Iran (A Survey of Judeo-Persian Literature)," in *The Jews, their History, Culture and Religion*, ed. L. Finkelstein (New York, 1949), II, pp. 832-33;

L. A. Mayer, *L'art juif en terre de l'Islam* (Geneva, 1959), p. 27.

³Cf. T. W. Arnold, *The Old and New Testaments in Muslim Religious Art* (London, 1932); M. Schapiro, "The Angel with the Ram in Abraham's Sacrifice: A Parallel in Western and Islamic Art," *Ars Islamica*, X (1943), 134-47; J. Gutmann, "The Haggadic Motif in Jewish Iconography," *Eretz Israel*, VI (1960), 19-20, notes 11 and 22,



FIG. 5. HAMAN OVERSEES THE BUILDING OF HIS HOME IN SHUSHAN. Šāhīn, *Ardašīr Book*, second half of 17th century. Tübingen (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Tübinger Depot der Staatsbibliothek), Ms. or. qu. 1680, fol. 54r.



FIG. 6. HAMAN OVERSEES THE BUILDING OF HIS HOME IN SHUSHAN. Šāhīn, *Ardašīr Book*, second half of 17th century. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Acc. no. 40919, fol. 36r.



FIG. 7. HAMAN'S PROMOTION TO VIZIER. Šāhīn, *Ardašīr Book*, second half of 17th century. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Acc. no. 40919, fol. 20v.



FIG. 8. THE HANGING OF HAMAN. Šāhīn, *Ardašir Book*, second half of 17th century. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Acc. no. 40919, fol. 86v.



FIG. 9. THE HANGING OF HAMAN'S TEN SONS. Šāhīn, *Ardašir Book*, second half of 17th century. Tübingen (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Tübinger Depot der Staatsbibliothek), Ms. or. qu. 168o, fol. 93r.



FIG. 10. ESTHER GIVING BIRTH TO KŪRAŠ. Šāhīn, *Ardašīr Book*, second half of 17th century. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Acc. no. 40919, fol. 54r.

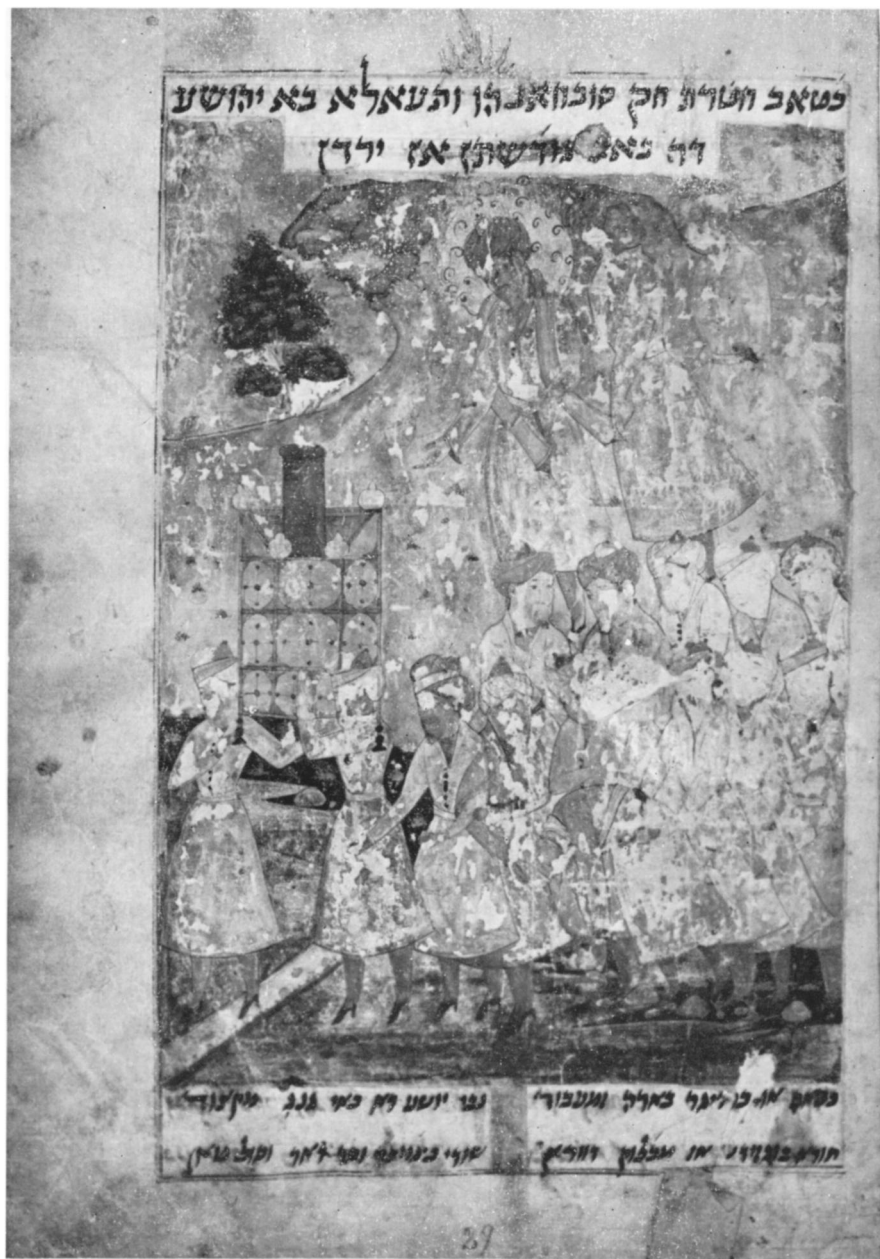


FIG. 11. JOSHUA CROSSING THE JORDAN. Imrānī, *Fath-nāmeḥ*, late 17th century(?). Letchworth, Herts., private collection of Rabbi S. D. Sassoon, Ms. 614, p. 29.



FIG. 12. THE CAPTURE OF JERICO. Imrānī, *Fath-nāmeḥ*, late 17th century(?). Letchworth, Herts. private collection of Rabbi S. D. Sassoon, Ms. 614, p. 62.

note 27; J. Gutmann, "The Illuminated Medieval Passover Haggadah: Investigations and Research Problems," *SBB*, VII (1965), 24, note 43.

⁴ British Museum, Or. 4730, dated in catalog 18th–19th century, with 13 miniatures. G. Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts of the British Museum* (London, 1912), Part III, p. 273, No. 947.

⁵ Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Adler 62 with 12 miniatures. *Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Collection of Elkan Nathan Adler* (Cambridge, 1921), p. 63 and illustration of folio 89r (fig. 38). Folio 33r is reproduced in *UJE*, VI, p. 257 and folio 55v is reproduced in *EJ*, IX, p. 566. See also the color photo of folio 133v in Mayer, *op. cit.*, frontispiece. Cf. E. N. Adler, *The Persian Jews: their books and ritual* (Oxford, 1898), p. 21, T 78. This manuscript may date from the second half of the seventeenth century.

⁶ Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Adler 1440; *Catalogue Adler, op. cit.*, p. 63 and illustration of folio 8r, the only illuminated page (fig. 37). This manuscript is only a fragment and may date from the second half of the seventeenth century. Cf. Adler, *op. cit.*, p. 21, T 77. Another illuminated manuscript of Jāmi's, Yūsuf u-Zulaikhā is in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, H. G. Friedman, No. 01593. It contains twenty-six miniatures and was copied by the scribe Eliyahu ben Nisan ben Elijah in Mašhad, 1853. I am in debt to Mr. Amnon Netzer of New York for this information. British Museum, Or. 10194 (Gaster 776), a collection of Persian poems in Hebrew characters, also contains 5 miniatures. Prof. J. P. Asmussen was kind enough to call this manuscript to my attention.

⁷ The Hebrew Union College Library in Cincinnati possesses a Moses epos from the late nineteenth century. I am grateful to Mr. Moses Marx for calling to my attention the fact that many folios carry a watermark of the year 1877. The manuscript has thirty-seven illustrations; folio 197v is reproduced in Harry M. Rabinowicz, *The Jewish Literary Treasures of England and America* (New York and London, 1962), fig. 16 (the date and location given should be corrected).

A Moses epos was recently acquired by the Bezalel National Art Museum in Jerusalem, Israel. According to the information kindly supplied by Mrs. H. Feuchtwanger, the manuscript has nineteen miniatures and was written in 1686 by

the scribe Nehemiah of Tabriz. Some of its miniatures reportedly show Moses receiving the Ten Commandments, Moses and the brazen serpent and Moses crossing the Red Sea. Unfortunately, photos of all the miniatures could not be obtained from the Museum, as the manuscript was sent to London for binding, and a description of its miniatures could therefore not be included in this study.

Some of the miniatures show similarities to the works of the painter Muṣīn Mošavvir; cf. I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shāh Abbās I^{er} à la fin des Safavis* (Paris, 1964), plates LXVI–LXVII and pp. 62 ff., 184–85, 216.

Some loose pages of another Moses epos are located in Marburg (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Staatsbibliothek), MS. or. oct. 2885. Cf. *Synagoga*, catalog of exhibition held at Historisches Museum, Frankfurt am Main, May–July, 1961, "Handschriften," No. 90. The only miniature of this manuscript, folio 5v, appears in color as the frontispiece to *EJ*, IX.

We have no way of determining whether the original fourteenth century Persian manuscripts were illuminated, as no Šāhīn manuscripts have survived from this period and there are no known literary sources attesting to illumination of these manuscripts.

⁸ Two illuminated manuscripts of the Ardašīr epos are known. One is located in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Acc. no. 40919, with 33 miniatures (folio 133r is reproduced in Fischel, *op. cit.*, facing p. 818). The other manuscript is in Tübingen (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Tübinger Depot der Staatsbibliothek), MS. or. quart 1680 with 24 miniatures.

Cf. now the fine article describing all the miniatures in the Tübingen manuscript by H. Striedl "Die Miniaturen in einer Handschrift des jüdisch-persischen Ardašīrbuches von Šāhīn," *Forschungsberichte* (Forschungen und Fortschritte der Katalogisierung der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland), X (1966), 119–33. I am very grateful to Dr. Striedl for kindly sending me a copy of his article.

⁹ One Imrānī illuminated manuscript with seven miniatures (one folio has a rough sketch for another miniature) is in the private collection of Rabbi S. D. Sassoon, Letchworth, Herts., England, MS. 614. See D. S. Sassoon, *Ohel Dawid, Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the Sassoon Library* (London, 1932), I, pp. 473–76 and illustration of page 100 (fig. 51). The catalog attribution of this manuscript to Šāhīn should be corrected to read Imrānī. Cf.

W. Fischel, "A new ms. of Imrānī's Judeo-Persian paraphrase of the Book of Samuel," *KS*, IX (1933), 522-24 (Hebrew).

Loose, illustrated manuscript pages from an Imrānī text have recently come on the market in New York and have already found their way into private and public collections. While the pages and the script on which the miniatures appear seem genuine, the miniatures themselves are forgeries. They bear little or no relation to the Judeo-Persian text, are superimposed on the writing underneath them and are stylistic and iconographic pastiches drawn from many diverse sources.

¹⁰ Cf. notes 6 and 7, and British Museum, Or. 4742, a Genesis and Moses book by Šāhīn, written by Molla Amina in 1702. Cf. W. Bacher, *Zwei jüdisch-persische Dichter, Schāhīn und Imrānī* (Budapest, 1907-1908), p. 76. Cf. also Striedl, *op. cit.*, p. 133, for a discussion of this question.

¹¹ I am deeply grateful to Prof. Richard Ettinghausen for his kindness in examining the photos I sent him of some of the Šāhīn and Imrānī manuscripts from the Safavid period. In a letter, dated March 22, 1966, he wrote: "I would think that all these manuscripts could still be from the second half of the seventeenth or late seventeenth century. They reflect the style of Isfahan, but it is of course possible that this style was imitated in another local center."

Cf. B. W. Robinson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1958), p. 162: "But on the whole the subject of Safavid provincial painting remains, and seems likely to remain obscure and unrewarding. . . . The scarcity of examples makes accurate dating and placing almost impossible."

Striedl, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-33, has rightly pointed out the striking stylistic similarities of the Tübingen manuscript to works of the painter Ṭālib. Cf. especially fols. 29r, 113v and 149v to plate LI in Stchoukine, *op. cit.* Cf. also the dancing figures in fol. 4v of MS. No. 40919 with plate LI in *ibid.*, and pp. 83-84, 202-03.

¹² A detailed study tracing the iconographic sources of the Judeo-Persian miniatures and a description of each scene depicted in the various manuscripts is highly desirable, but is not within the author's competence to undertake.

¹³ Fischel, *op. cit.*, p. 834.

¹⁴ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 ff. For the contents of the *Moses Book*, *ibid.*, pp. 40-43.

¹⁵ Cf. note 7.

¹⁶ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 136.

²¹ The story of Og intending to hurl a mountain or rock at Israel does not seem to be related in Šāhīn, cf. *ibid.*, p. 100. *Yalkut Shimoni*, Ps., §626; *Targum Pseudo Jonathan*, Num. 21:35; relate that God sent a worm to bore through the mountain. *Midrash Aggadah*, Num. 21:35 cites a raven who bore through the mountain. In *Yashar*, Num. (Lwow, 1929), p. 172, an angel performs this deed. In this source, as well as in *Midrash Haggadol*, II, 78 and *Berakhot* 54a, Og intended to cast a rock upon Israel. Cf. *Midrash Aggadah*, Num. 21:35; *Midrash Tehillim*, Ps. 136, §12; *Deut. Rabbah* 1:24 and *Yalkut Shimoni*, Deut., §810. Moses, in these accounts, took a pebble and pronounced over it the Divine Name and thereby kept the mountain, which Og had uprooted, from falling. The weapon used to strike Og is designated in most sources as גרגור, but in *Deut. Rabbah* 11:10 it is referred to as טשט. Cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1946), VI, p. 120, note 695 and the corrections and additions to his notes in A. Rosmarin, *Moses im Lichte der Agada* (New York, 1932), pp. 126-27.

Cf. *Chronique de Tabari*, tr. by M. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1867), I, pp. 391-92; D. Sidersky, *Les origines des légendes musulmanes dans le Coran et dans les vies des prophètes* (Paris, 1933), pp. 100 f. and M. Grünbaum, *Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sagenkunde* (Leiden, 1893), pp. 180 ff.

²² Cf. K. Jahn, *Rašīd al-Dīn's History of India* (The Hague, 1965), IX-X. On Rašīd-al-Dīn's assumed Jewish origin, cf. W. Fischel, "Über Raschid ad-Daulas jüdischen Ursprung," *MGWJ*, N. S., LXV (1937), 145-53 and F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, 1952), p. 122, note 2. Cf. also G. Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science* (Baltimore, 1947), III, Part I, pp. 969 ff. on Rašīd-al-Dīn's life and work.

²³ E. Kühnel, "History of Miniature Painting and Drawing," in *A Survey of Persian Art*, ed. A. U. Pope (New York and London, 1939), III, p. 1840 and V, plate 849; E. Grube, *Muslim Miniature*

Paintings from the XIII-XIX Century (Venice, 1962), pp. 55-56, plate 40. R. Ettinghausen, "An Illuminated Manuscript of Ḥāfiẓ-I Abrū in Istanbul. Part I," *Kunst des Orients*, II (1955), 34 ff. dates this manuscript around 1425. Cf. also the single miniature, last in the Samad Khan collection, Paris, which shows in the upper portion Moses striking the giant Og on his ankle. Kühnel, *op. cit.*, III, p. 1844 and V, plate 852.

²⁴ Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

²⁵ See note 7.

²⁶ Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

²⁷ Cf. for instance, Robinson, *op. cit.*, plate 38, fig. 1049.

²⁸ See note 8, and Striedl, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

²⁹ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-28. On Ardašīr = Ahasuerus, *ibid.*, p. 44, and Kūraš = Cyrus, *ibid.*, pp. 55-56, note 6. For an outline of the contents of this book, see *ibid.*, pp. 43-66.

Cf. now the detailed textual analysis of the Ardašīr epos, with a translation of its first 22 chapters and a summary of the rest, in the printed Ph.D. dissertation of D. Blieske, *Šāhin-e Sīrāzīs Ardašīr-Buch* (University of Tübingen, 1966). My sincere thanks to Dr. Blieske for sending me a copy of her dissertation.

^{29a} Cf. the traditional mausoleum, figs. 8-9 in Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

³⁰ Cf. Tübingen, MS. or. quart 1680 folios 29r, 54r, 82r, 98v, 107v, 109v, 113v, 123v, 146v, 147v, 149v, 165r, 167r with Jewish Theological Seminary MS. No. 40919 folios 13r, 36r, 126r, 68r, 141r, 116v, 111v, 28r, 50r, 95r, 31r, 56r, 40r. Many of the folios in the Seminary and Tübingen Library manuscripts are not in order. Cf. notes 11 and 29.

³¹ H. Speyer, *Die biblischen Erzählungen im Qoran* (Hildesheim, 1961), pp. 283, 412. On Esther scrolls and their illustrations, cf. the article and bibliography by J. Gutmann, "Estherrolle," *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, VI (in press).

³² MS. No. 40919 has eight maidens, while or. qu. 1680 has seven. Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 49. Cf. Striedl, *op. cit.*, plate XXXV, fig. 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

^{34a} Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 54; *Megillah* 16a. Cf. also Striedl, *op. cit.*, p. 129. It should be noted that the talmudic passage refers to angels in the guise of men, and not women as depicted here.

^{34b} M. Metzger, "A Study of Some Unknown Hand-Painted Megilloth of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, LXVI (1963), 92, 97 and plate Ib; *Targum Esther* 7:7. Cf. also 2 *Targum Esther* 7:7, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* 50 and Ginzberg, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 478, n. 181.

³⁵ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55. Cf. Striedl, *op. cit.*, pp. 124, 126, 129.

³⁶ For Jewish depictions, cf. R. Wischnitzer, "The Esther Story in Art," in *Purim Anthology*, ed. P. Goodman (Philadelphia, 1952), figs. 31, 37 and the hanging in a Persian manuscript, R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (New York, 1961), fig. 41. Cf. also, J. Gutmann, *Images of the Jewish Past: An Introduction to Medieval Hebrew Miniatures* (New York, 1965), fig. 16.

³⁷ Bacher, *op. cit.*, p. 54. Gutmann, *op. cit.*, fig. 16 and Metzger, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

³⁸ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56, note 6.

³⁹ G. Babić, "Les fresques de Sušica en Macédoine," *Cahiers archéologiques*, XII (1962), 323-25, figs. 13, 15 and R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (Cleveland, 1962), p. 121.

⁴⁰ Cf. J. Gutmann, "The Illustrated Jewish Manuscript in Antiquity: The Present State of the Question," *Gesta*, V (1966), 42-43, figs. 3-6.

⁴¹ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-95, for the content of his work. Cf. also, *ibid.*, p. 167 ff.

⁴² See note 9.

⁴³ Cf. A. Dothan, "On the History of the Ancient Synagogue in Aleppo," *Sefunot*, I (1956), 36 ff., and fig. 1 for a *tik* for a Sefer Torah, dating 1710. Cf. also the *tik* from Nablus, Palestine, 1756, in J. Gutmann, *Jewish Ceremonial Art* (New York, 1964), fig. 9.

⁴⁴ Cf. E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York, 1964), XI, figs. 332, 334, 339 and figs. 235, 240.

⁴⁵ Grünbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 182–85.

⁴⁶ Goodenough, *op. cit.*, figs. 103, 244.

⁴⁷ Bacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 192–93.

⁴⁸ Cf. L. Binyon, J. V. S. Wilkinson and B. Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (London, 1933), Plate XXI B and p. 45.

⁴⁹ I am indebted to the following libraries and museums for allowing me to reproduce the photographs of works in their collections: Hebrew Union College Library, Cincinnati Art Museum, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Edinburgh University Library, Private collection of Rabbi S. D. Sassoon, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Staatsbibliothek Marburg and Depot der Staatsbibliothek Tübingen.