

A Bloody World: Perceptions of Blood in Ferdowsi's  
*Shahnameh*

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## Introduction

*“The plain was like an Oxus of blood, a mass of severed heads and toppled warriors.”<sup>1</sup>*

This brutal imagery is just one of four-hundred-and-twelve references to blood in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*. This epic is a seminal work in the literature of the Ancient Near East and is the “chief source whence the Persians derive their ideas as to the ancient history of their nation”.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the beauty of the text, with its magnificent stories and wonderful images, lies a dark and gruesome root – blood. This theme has been rarely, if ever, commented on in *Shahnameh* studies, let alone Ancient Near Eastern studies in general, and yet, blood is central to the text, permeating every tale in some way. In this way, this work will shed light on this theme and demonstrate its importance to the text. This dissertation will explore perceptions of blood in *Shahnameh* through a variety of themes: sacrifice and martyrdom, nature, battle, the soul, and gender. Through a collation of a variety of meanings and interpretations of ‘blood’, new insights into the study of *Shahnameh* will be offered to encourage deeper thought into the themes of Ferdowsi's work. *Shahnameh* has continued to be used and reproduced across the Persian-speaking world from its conception,<sup>3</sup> thus it has been susceptible to various interpretations which will affect how one reads the text.

This work uses Professor Dick Davis' 2007 English translation of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*. When ancient texts are translated, it can be tempting to make the vocabulary fit with our definitions that only make sense in our own language and context.<sup>4</sup> In the Persian-English Dictionary, there are many variations of *khūn*,<sup>5</sup> the Persian for ‘blood’, which all bring their own nuances and meanings. These subtle differences are lost during the translation process in order to make Ferdowsi's words fit elegantly into our own language. This can lead to misinterpretation of the text, as

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<sup>1</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 393.

<sup>2</sup> Browne 1956, 111.

<sup>3</sup> Rubanovich 2012, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Clarke 1999, 44.

<sup>5</sup> Steingass 1892. 488-489.

well as a loss of different levels of meaning. Thus, through using a translation, the way one reads the use of blood may differ from interpretations using the original text. In this vein, it is easy to fit these works onto other cultural frameworks,<sup>6</sup> which can lead to further misinterpretation – one must be wary of forcing the ancient works into our own societal conceptions.

Another difficulty one faces when dealing with perceptions of blood in *Shahnameh* is our own pre-conceived notions of what blood means to us – “as interpreters, we can never entirely escape our biased perspectives”.<sup>7</sup> Hundly’s argument here suggests our interpretations will always be influenced by our own environments. These pre-conceived notions can affect interpretations of texts and only by being aware of this, can we minimise their effect on interpretation. Many people think of life when considering ‘blood’ – a loss of blood will end a life or the presence of blood make life. When reading blood in *Shahnameh* this same idea can be seen, with blood gushing from wounds and landscapes reddened with blood. However, a modern audience understands blood in this way because of a variety of influences, from media and literature, to religion and science – all of this will construct a specific viewpoint on what blood is for every individual. Ferdowsi’s contemporaries would have been influenced in the same way by their own environments, however there is a lack of scholarship and sources surrounding blood in the ancient world, especially blood in the Ancient Near East. Thus, it is difficult to get into their mindset – what did they believe about blood? This is down to interpreting their use of the substance in literature and other sources. The ancients do not explicitly mention their own beliefs on blood thus we must interpret what they have left behind to get a sense of how they saw blood. In this way, one can look to other ancient civilisations and epic traditions (for example the Homeric treatment of blood), which have been studied to a greater extent to inform interpretations of blood in *Shahnameh*. Views of blood in Islam, Judaism and Christianity can also inform us, offering alternative interpretations that can be applied to Ferdowsi’s text.

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<sup>6</sup> Clarke 1999, 44.

<sup>7</sup> Hundly 2003, 145.

## I. Blood, Sacrifice and Martyrdom

*“They set a yoke on his shoulder and dragged him on foot, hemmed in by soldiers his face bleeding, toward Seyavashgerd”.*<sup>8</sup>

Sacrifice is an interesting theme in *Shahnameh* – there are instances that take on elements one would expect to see in a sacrifice, leading the reader to interpret these references as sacrificial. Blood was often used for sacrifice as seen through Leviticus 4-5 and the sin-offering rites where animals were slaughtered and their blood scattered on the altar. Abasch argues animal blood is given to protect the human or atone for sins in place of human blood, protecting them from divine anger and from contaminating the gods with human blood.<sup>9</sup> Sacrifice and blood are seen as universal purifiers and, in turn, purity represents order.<sup>10</sup> However, blood appears to have played hardly any role in Mesopotamian culture as sources focus on the presentation of an offering rather than slaughter of animals or consumption.<sup>11</sup> In this way, *Shahnameh*’s use of blood may not be seen as sacrificial. There are also instances that can be interpreted as martyrdom but there is a fine line between sacrifice and martyrdom.

The most explicit section that can be interpreted as sacrifice is Seyavash’s execution – *“Knowing neither fear nor shame, they held a gold dish at his throat to catch the blood and severed the head of that silver cypress tree”*.<sup>12</sup> The use of a bowl to catch the blood is in line with sacrificial rites in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>13</sup> Leviticus 4 suggests this use of a bowl through the idea that blood was brought into the tent after the sacrifice was killed and verb ‘pour’. The use of a bowl to catch blood is also found in *The Odyssey* – *“[...] Perseus held the bowl for the blood.”*<sup>14</sup> This is later reinforced with Seyavash being compared to an animal sacrifice – *“[...] Seyavash had been dragged on foot, bound, and with a yoke placed about his neck [...] his face twisted*

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<sup>8</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 270.

<sup>9</sup> Abasch 2003, 676.

<sup>10</sup> Kazen 2018, 221-222.

<sup>11</sup> Abasch 2003, 608.

<sup>12</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 273.

<sup>13</sup> Wright 2008, 125.

<sup>14</sup> Hom. Od. 3.440.

*up like a sheep's whilst a basin was held to catch his blood.*<sup>15</sup> Through the images of binding and blood being caught in a dish, Ferdowsi evokes sacrificial imagery linked to animals being sacrificed. In this way, Seyavash is likened to the sheep and other animals who are sacrificed to the gods. By debasing Seyavash to animal status through his use of simile, Ferdowsi emphasises the idea of sacrifice because it transforms Seyavash from a human prisoner to animal sacrifice. Thus, one can suggest Ferdowsi was leading us to a sacrificial interpretation – animals are sacrifice; not humans. Without this simile, Seyavash becomes an executed prince, albeit a martyred one, but the deeper meaning of a sacrifice would be lost. One could argue this is likened to the idea of the lamb of God – Jesus sacrificed himself for humanity's sins and rises again; Seyavash dies because of Ashurbanipal's envy and rises again as Kay Khosrow. These Christian links to the sacrifice of Seyavash influence a modern reader when approaching this story, thus our interpretation of this instance of blood loss in *Shahnameh*. In this way, we can read Seyavash's execution as a sacrifice in line with Christian beliefs. Through Seyavash's face being held up, one can suggest it resembles a sacrifice to the celestial gods as in Greek and Hittite tradition.<sup>16</sup> In Zoroastrian belief, Ahuramazda heals the world from wrath with sacrifices,<sup>17</sup> thus one can read Seyavash's sacrifice as a way of healing the world from Afrasyab's wrath if Seyavash were to live. However, one could suggest instead Seyavash's sacrifice incites the future wrath of Kay Khosrow who works to avenge his father. The idea of sacrifice as healing or purifying can be seen through the purification of a leper through the sacrifice of a bird in Leviticus 13-14, thus suggesting that "blood has the inherent power to purify".<sup>18</sup> Like Jesus' sacrifice, the blood removes the impurity/sin from the individual/world. The use of blood in purification rites and sin-offerings in the Hebrew Bible suggests that blood was integral to the reconciliation process between man and God.<sup>19</sup> This is clearly seen through Leviticus 16:11-20 where Aaron sacrifices a bull and a goat to atone for the "uncleanesses of the people of Israel"<sup>20</sup> and transfers their sins to a live goat to be sent into the desert. In this way, blood sacrifice is used for purification, thus one can suggest Ferdowsi's use of sacrifice in *Shahnameh* is to 'purify'. This therefore

<sup>15</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 264.

<sup>16</sup> Beckman 2011, 100.

<sup>17</sup> Skjærvø 2015b, 66.

<sup>18</sup> Feder 2011, 61.

<sup>19</sup> DeTroyer 2003, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Leviticus 16:16.

creates a twisted evil because of Seyavash's innocence and no specific 'sin' has been committed to warrant such a sacrifice – it becomes needless and thus one can suggest it is a murder; not a sacrifice. However, there was a move away from blood sacrifice in Judaism after the fall of the Temple in 70 CE.<sup>21</sup> Despite this shift, there is never acknowledgement of any wrong in animal sacrifice in relation to Jesus' death.<sup>22</sup> In Islam, God demands sacrificial killing but any sin/regret is removed because the moral responsibility is on God (as seen with Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac).<sup>23</sup> However, this slaughter must be halal by making the death painless (the animal cannot be slaughtered in front of others and knives cannot be sharpened in their presence).<sup>24</sup> In this way, the animal sacrifice becomes a devotional act, as emphasised through the recitation 'in the name of God, God is most great'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Perlo 2009, 50.

<sup>22</sup> Perlo 2009, 83.

<sup>23</sup> Perlo 2009, 97.

<sup>24</sup> Perlo 2009, 102.

<sup>25</sup> Perlo 2009, 110.



Figure.1: 'The Slaying of Seyavash'. Iran. Shiraz. End of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. 44.5x26cm. <http://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/dynasties/safavids/art/48-1973>

sacrificial intent demonstrated by the artist's interpretation of Ferdowsi's words. This depiction of the execution clearly demonstrates how the images created by Ferdowsi are sacrificial – he is leading the reader to the conclusion that this is not a mere murder: it is a sacrifice. One can argue that the use of miniatures in *Shahnameh* editions, continues the adaptability of the text from its oral origins by creating a scene that can be understood without the words for all time.

We can also use images/iconography to critically read the text through iconographic exegesis. Figure.1 demonstrates the interpretation of Seyavash's execution as a sacrifice. The idyllic landscape contrasts with the horrifying depiction of Seyavash's death, creating a jarring atmosphere for the viewer. Seyavash's head is clearly being "twisted up like a sheep's"<sup>26</sup> whilst his throat is slit. This, along with Seyavash's visible bonds, all emphasise the sacrificial interpretation, thus enforcing this idea on the reader. Through using this miniature as a lens to read Seyavash's death, one can clearly see the

<sup>26</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 264.



Figure.2: Gilded Silver Plate depicting Shapur II hunting a deer. 4<sup>th</sup> century. 124091. British Museum.



Figure.3: Marble carved relief of Mithras slaying a bull from London Mithraeum. Museum of London. A16933. Museum of London.

one can argue Seyavash's execution is a sacrifice because of the similarities, thus reinforcing the sacrificial interpretation. This is furthered through the central ideology

One can also use Sasanian imagery for iconographic exegesis (figure.2). The depiction on this plate symbolises Shapur II imposing divine order over chaos (as represented by the deer). In this way, one can interpret the deer as sacrificial – it must die for order to be restored to the chaotic world. This idea is emphasised through the depiction of the deer itself – its head is being pulled back and tilted up whilst Shapur stabs it in the neck. This evokes a similar image to that given by Ferdowsi and the above miniature (figure.1), thus emphasising the reading of this episode as sacrificial – Seyavash is the deer and Afrasyab takes the role of Shapur. In using this image, we can read Seyavash's execution as a sacrifice for Afrasyab to restore order to Turan, like Shapur sacrifices the deer to restore order to his Empire. Through looking at this plate,

of bull-slaying in Mithraism (figure.3).<sup>27</sup> Mithras holds the bull's head up as he stabs it in the neck – echoing the imagery employed by Ferdowsi when describing Seyavash's execution. In Mithraic ideology, the bull's blood fertilises the Earth, with suggestions of agricultural fertility through wheat grass growing from the bull's stab wound.<sup>28</sup> This idea of a bull's blood as a symbol of fertility may have come from the *Bundahishn*, a 9<sup>th</sup> Century CE Zoroastrian text on creation in which Ahriman kills Ahuramazda's bull and from its body comes other life forms.<sup>29</sup> In this way, there appears to be a literary tradition of blood on the ground as a symbol of creation and fertility – suggesting Ferdowsi had Seyavash's blood collected to symbolise this attempted end to his lineage.

The figure of Seyavash can be found in the Avesta, as the god Siyavakhash (the dying god who rises in spring and linked to fertility) who was worshiped in ancient Khorsem, Sogdia and Bukhara. In his early worship, cockerel blood was spilt on the ground. In this way, we can interpret Seyavash's execution in *Shahnameh* as a sacrificial act resembling the sacrifice of cockerels to Siyavakhash. However, because his blood is caught in a gold dish, unable to reach the ground, we may interpret this as an ordinary execution and not an act of sacrifice. This same idea of blood spilling on the ground is seen through Mithras' sacrifice of the bull where the blood fertilises the Earth and returned life. In this way, the ground cannot be fertilised by Seyavash's blood nor any deity worshiped, thus it is symbolic of Afrasyab's mission to ensure nothing comes from Seyavash's bloodline – he cuts off the head and in doing so fells the tree and its roots. We can see this further through Afrasyab's orders "*I want nothing to grow from Seyavash's root, neither a tree nor a bough nor a leaf; I want no scion from him worthy of a crown or throne.*"<sup>30</sup> This reinforces the idea that by catching the blood in the bowl, Seyavash's fertility was ended. However, this bowl of blood is later mentioned to have been emptied elsewhere, symbolising Farigis' pregnancy with Kay Khosrow, demonstrating how Seyavash's line will continue, despite Afrasyab's attempt at ending his fertility. This further links to Siyavakhash as the god who dies and is mourned but rises again – Seyavash is killed and mourned in *Shahnameh* but his son, Kay Khosrow, rises

<sup>27</sup> Ulansey 1991, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Ulansey 1991, 55.

<sup>29</sup> Ulansey 1991, 9.

<sup>30</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 273.

again in his place. Later, Ferdowsi writes “*from the place where Seyavash’s blood had been spilt a green tree sprang up*”,<sup>31</sup> furthering this idea of blood fertilising the ground as a metaphor for Seyavash’s continued lineage. This same idea of blood on the ground symbolising rebirth can be seen in al-Tabarī’s account of al-Zabbā’s murder of Jadhima – she cuts his wrists so he bleeds into bowls because “*if a drop of his blood should fall outside the bowl, his blood would be avenged.*”<sup>32</sup> The idea of blood being spilt on the ground is clearly demonstrated in the Hebrew Bible – “*Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water*”.<sup>33</sup> This suggests that blood was meant to be spilt on the floor during sacrifices because of laws against consumption. In this way, returning the blood to the ground is like returning the victim’s lifeforce to God. Thus, there appears to be a literary tradition of catching blood of murdered/sacrificed victims to ward off revenge – if blood spills on the ground it is a bad omen.

When reading Seyavash’s story, it is clear that he is executed and not intentionally sacrificed. However, one could argue that the language used and images evoked transforms the episode into a sacrifice. This same idea is seen through the execution and sacrifice of Christ – the event is a criminal execution (with one side believing it is justified whilst another believes it is not), but Christ regarded his own death as a sacrifice, thus this ‘onlook’ metaphor transforms the incident from execution to sacrifice.<sup>34</sup> This demonstrates how our preconceived notions of blood can affect our reading of a text, thus transforming the words into our own interpretation. Therefore, was Ferdowsi’s intent to lead us to this interpretation of sacrifice or is it merely a side-effect of our beliefs and notions? This is difficult to tell, but one can argue that Ferdowsi’s use of language is loaded with sacrificial imagery which would have especially been understood by his contemporary audience – thus one can suggest that it was Ferdowsi’s intent to lead us to a sacrificial interpretation of Seyavash’s execution.

But when does sacrifice become martyrdom? “The tragedies of Iraj and Seyavash evoke the cosmic anguish and inconsolable pity of the guileless and the pure,

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<sup>31</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 279.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Tabarī IV.761.

<sup>33</sup> Deuteronomy 15:23.

<sup>34</sup> Caird 1980, 157.

ravaged by the wicked".<sup>35</sup> Both Iraj and Seyavash are restored through their heirs Manuchehr and Kay Khosrow.<sup>36</sup> The deaths of Iraj and Seyavash evoke great pity and emotion because they represent evil defeating good.<sup>37</sup> They were innocent victims needlessly caught up in the struggle between light and dark – between Ahuramazda and Ahriman. Both Iraj and Seyavash represent the good (light) and are killed because of this – they are in opposition to the dark evil (Ahriman). In this way, one can suggest they are martyrs because they are killed for their beliefs. Both Seyavash and Iraj are forces of good and fight for justice in a land where those in power are seduced by Ahriman. However, Iraj does not willingly sacrifice himself, in fact he willingly hands over his lands and begs his brothers to spare his life.<sup>38</sup> In this way, one cannot see Iraj as a martyr, but rather an innocent murdered victim. On the other hand, Seyavash predicts his death at the hands of Afrasyab,<sup>39</sup> and still decides to remain in Seyavashgerd where he is at risk. One can suggest Seyavash is a martyr because he does not run away from his death/fate and instead willingly faces Afrasyab and goes to his death – Seyavash does not attempt to change his fate but instead prepares for his inevitable end. In this way, Seyavash is a sacrificial martyr, unlike Iraj who is an innocent victim.

Ferdowsi uses blood in *Shahnameh* to evoke empathy for innocent, sacrificial victims. Whilst never explicitly stating there is a sacrifice, Ferdowsi's use of blood creates constructs that lead the reader to this conclusion. The images employed by Ferdowsi when describing Seyavash's death are steeped in sacrificial representations in Sasanian iconography and evokes images of sacrifices in the Hebrew Bible. In this way, the use of blood and the connected images lead the audience to interpret the episode as a sacrifice. There are many innocent victims in *Shahnameh* and Ferdowsi uses blood to enable the reader to explore ideas of martyrdom.

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<sup>35</sup> Banani 2000.

<sup>36</sup> Banani 2000.

<sup>37</sup> Banani 2000.

<sup>38</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 43.

<sup>39</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 255; 267-269.

## II. Blood and Nature

*“If you give the order, we shall make mountains level with the plains, and with our swords we shall make the ocean’s water into blood”.*<sup>40</sup>

One of Ferdowsi’s most prevalent themes of blood is in regard to nature. Natural imagery is employed constantly, with one-hundred-and-thirty-four references to blood and nature. Ferdowsi uses natural images to heighten his work, thus enabling the reader to visualise the hyperbolic descriptions. It is far easier to visualise a river of blood or plains stained with blood than a lengthy battle description. The natural world is universal – no matter where you are from you can relate to natural images, thus making Ferdowsi’s work itself universal and timeless. The highly repetitive nature of Ferdowsi’s nature references are reminiscent of oral traditions of the ancient world where stock phrases were employed to build stories.<sup>41</sup> This technique is also seen in the Homeric works through epithets such as “swift-footed Achilles”,<sup>42</sup> indicating the use of repeated phrases lay in ancient literary tradition and didn’t just belong to the *naqqâl* poets of Iran.

The most prominent natural feature in *Shahnameh* is water, being used sixty-four times. Water imagery is evoked even without direct mentions of water sources through Ferdowsi’s use of the adjective ‘awash’ (*[...] the ground was awash with blood [...]*)<sup>43</sup> and verb ‘swam’ (*[...] the earth swam with blood like a wine vat [...]*).<sup>44</sup> The majority of water references are to rivers – “*The armies clashed, and a river of blood flowed across the ground.*”<sup>45</sup> Some references specifically name the Oxus (“*[...] for him we shall turn this plain to an Oxus of blood.*”)<sup>46</sup> or even the Nile (“*Bahram’s troops pursued the elephants, and the earth was like a Nile of blood.*”)<sup>47</sup> The significance of water in *Shahnameh* may be influenced by the prominence of the two great Mesopotamian rivers – Tigris and Euphrates – and the complex water and

<sup>40</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 647.

<sup>41</sup> Thury and Devinney 2013, 19.

<sup>42</sup> Hom. Il. 2.690.

<sup>43</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 175.

<sup>44</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 181.

<sup>45</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 122.

<sup>46</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 54.

<sup>47</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 850.

irrigation systems of the Ancient Near East. In a world where the rivers flooding or a drought can affect your entire life, one would expect water to be a significant theme. This is evident through the flood story in the Epic of Gilgamesh. Like the flood in Genesis, this flood was sent by the Gods to destroy the Earth, indicative of the destructive power of water. Water imagery also features heavily in Isaiah, including references to blood – “*For the waters of Dibon are full of blood*”<sup>48</sup> – demonstrating its significance in the literary traditions of the Ancient Near East.

However, water also meant survival for the ancients, therefore it is unsurprising that it was “a central component of religion and cosmology”.<sup>49</sup> Water features heavily in Ancient Near Eastern mythology and religion, especially Zoroastrianism. Herodotus tells us the Persians sacrificed to a variety of elements, including water,<sup>50</sup> something that the variety of deities linked with water can attest to. The religious significance of water can be seen through its inclusion in the Avestan *yašt*s, for example the opening to *Yashna* 1.16 contains prayers to the water.<sup>51</sup> This is emphasised through the role of water in purifying an idol statue in the *mīs pī* ritual.<sup>52</sup> Through washing an idol statue and performing a variety of rituals, the statue becomes enlivened, enabling the god to visit the mortal realm. The use of water in these rituals demonstrates a belief in the purification properties of water, indicating the significance of water in Ferdowsi’s text. The importance of water in the Ancient Near East is emphasised through the role of the river god *Nāru* who is called upon to counteract evil and take away bad magic.<sup>53</sup> This demonstrates how rivers and water can be seen as a form of purification, thus one can suggest Ferdowsi’s use of river similes and metaphors for blood can be viewed as an act of purification through death – the purging of evil. However, this contrasts with attitudes towards blood in the *Vendidād*, where blood is seen as a pollutant.<sup>54</sup> In this way, rivers of blood can be interpreted as representing how bloodshed and war have polluted the land by causing chaos – it is only when these rivers have cleared and order restored that the land can be purified. The importance of water is also seen at Palmyra where annual

<sup>48</sup> Isaiah 15:9.

<sup>49</sup> Thury and Devinney 2013, 63.

<sup>50</sup> Hdt. 1.131. – “[...] they sacrifice also to the sun and moon and earth and fire and water and winds.”

<sup>51</sup> Grenet 2015, 132.

<sup>52</sup> Hurowitz 2003, 147.

<sup>53</sup> Geller 2010, 96.

<sup>54</sup> Kazen 2018, 227.

offerings were thrown in to the spring Efqa and oracles were received there.<sup>55</sup> This idea of purification is also found in Zoroastrian beliefs where a molten metal river will come and purify the world and everyone in it.<sup>56</sup> Thus one can argue Ferdowsi's extensive use of rivers and seas of blood is reminiscent of this idea – the world is purified of chaos and evil through being bathed in the blood of battle. One can argue that through this interpretation, these rivers of blood in *Shahnameh* act like the flood in tablet eleven of the Epic of Gilgamesh. The flood is sent to destroy mankind and in *Shahnameh* plains are turned to rivers and seas with the blood of the dead. This mirrors the mass loss of life – “*The clash of weapons filled the air, and blood flowed from the heroes like a monstrous flood.*”<sup>57</sup> However, water also featured in the creation myths, contrasting the destructive aspects of water. Through the mixing of Apšu and Tiamat's 'waters',<sup>58</sup> their offspring were created. In this way, water becomes a creative force rather than a destructive one. This argument can be furthered through the blood and bodies of the dead fertilising the land of the battlefield,<sup>59</sup> thus enabling new growth to come from death in the circle of life. In this sense, Ferdowsi's use of bloody waters can be viewed as a sign of a new land to come – the creation of the next stage in his narrative. The link between blood and water is seen further through the idea that God will rebuild the blood of deaths from water during the resurrection, as demonstrated in the *Bundahishn*.<sup>60</sup> This text also equates the blood and blood vessels to the river water and river systems of the Ancient Near East.<sup>61</sup> Thus one can suggest Ferdowsi's use of water and blood fits into Ancient Near Eastern traditions and Zoroastrian beliefs.

Tree images are also significant in *Shahnameh*. Ferdowsi uses tree metaphors when referring to figures of power. An example of this is Seyavash – “*Knowing neither fear nor shame, they held a gold dish at his throat to catch the blood and severed the head of that silver cypress tree.*”<sup>62</sup> The use of the tree metaphor in relation to Seyavash is significant through its connection to fertility and cyclical time.<sup>63</sup> Through

<sup>55</sup> Stoneman 1992, 72.

<sup>56</sup> Panaino 2015, 244.

<sup>57</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 169.

<sup>58</sup> *Enuma Eliš*, Tablet 1, Thury and Devinney 2013, 66.

<sup>59</sup> Hughes 2013, 130.

<sup>60</sup> Zargaran 2014, 309.

<sup>61</sup> Zargaran 2014, 310.

<sup>62</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 273.

<sup>63</sup> Porter 2003, 24 and 33.

connecting Seyavash to this idea of abundance, Ferdowsi reinforces the idea of the fertility of blood and the prevention of this through catching the blood in a bowl. However, because the seed has already been planted (Farigis is pregnant with Khosrow), this tree can regrow – “*From the place where Seyavash’s blood had been spilt a green tree sprang up; on its leaves the prince’s face could be seen, and its scent was like the scent of musk.*”<sup>64</sup> This evokes ideas from the Hebrew Bible where the holy seed remains after the tree of Judah is cut down.<sup>65</sup> If this is the case, blood can be viewed as the ‘holy seed’ from Isaiah 6, thus emphasising the ideas of fertility. This interpretation of fertility can be taken further when Ferdowsi uses tree imagery to indicate a promise of blood – “*You are planting a tree whose leaves will bring blood and whose fruit is vengeance.*”<sup>66</sup> In this way, Ferdowsi uses the fertile and cyclical connotations of trees to suggest there will not be an end to the bloodshed and war, people will always search for revenge on one another, as they have from the beginning with vengeance for Iraj – “*We look to wash the leaves and fruit of the tree of vengeance for Iraj in blood.*”<sup>67</sup> This cyclical nature of blood loss and battle is used throughout the text, as emphasised through stock phrases and the many battlescenes employed by Ferdowsi. This links to ideas of blood revenge and blood feuds, where murders are committed in vengeance for the murder of a family member in a seemingly never-ending cycle of blood revenge, hence a blood feud.<sup>68</sup> These cyclical ideas of never-ending bloodshed are emphasised through the centrality of blood in Ferdowsi’s narrative – it is everpresent throughout the text, being used time and time again.

One can suggest that through connecting trees and blood from the beginning of his work – “[...] he planted a tree whose sap is blood and whose fruits and poisonous”<sup>69</sup> – Ferdowsi suggests that there will be extensive bloodshed throughout his Epic. The tree of blood and poisonous fruits described here indicates the constant bloodlust within the text. Ferdowsi shows the reader that this ‘tree’ represents the people of Iran and Turan; like this ‘tree’ they are poisonous and bloody. Through the use of a tree, Ferdowsi highlights the cyclical nature of this bloodlust – it will remain a theme

<sup>64</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 279.

<sup>65</sup> Isaiah 6:13.

<sup>66</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 272.

<sup>67</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 50.

<sup>68</sup> Van Eck 2003, 10.

<sup>69</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 37.

throughout the text and will never end. The idea that Ferdowsi uses trees and blood to demonstrate blood loss is furthered through his use of simile – “*Warriors’ heads fell like leaves from a tree and the battlefield became a river of blood [...]*”<sup>70</sup>. Through connecting heads to leaves, Ferdowsi uses natural imagery to demonstrate the large number of warriors beheaded and killed. Ferdowsi also names specific trees, especially the Judas-tree – “*The caves and plain were strewn with bodies, and the blood made the ground as red as a Judas-tree’s blossom [...]*”<sup>71</sup> and “[...] I shall make the ground as red with his blood as the blossom of the Judas-tree.”<sup>72</sup> This red blossom refers to the emerging leaves after the main pink flowers,<sup>73</sup> thus one can suggest that by using a specific reference to the Judas-tree, Ferdowsi is using his environment and the well-known blossoms to emphasise the red of the bloody plain. The *cercis siliquastrum* is nicknamed ‘Judas-tree’ because it is believed that Judas hung himself from this species after betraying Jesus.<sup>74</sup> In this way, Ferdowsi links those whose blood has been spilt to the treachery of Judas.

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<sup>70</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 368-369.

<sup>71</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 289.

<sup>72</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 293.

<sup>73</sup> Anderson N.D., 8.

<sup>74</sup> Anderson N.D., 8.



*Figure. 4: Lion attacking a bull – cast of the Persepolis reliefs by Lorenzo Giuntini. c.470-450 BCE. British Museum C.226.1. Author Photo.*

Ferdowsi also uses a variety of animal images throughout *Shahnameh*. Ferdowsi frequently uses lions to refer to heroes and kings – “*The lion pressed on to the Greek camp*”.<sup>75</sup> Lions were traditionally hunted by the kings of Iran (Ferdowsi also has Bahram hunt a lion),<sup>76</sup> thus one can suggest the prominence of lions in the text links back to these royal traditions. The image of a lion attacking a bull (figure.4) represents the eternal struggle between good and evil and has lasting influence, even appearing on the cover of *The Economist* in 2013. One can suggest Ferdowsi’s use of the lion ties into this tradition, thus enabling Ferdowsi to use the lion and blood to indicate whether the blood loss was justified in the cosmic order.

Blood and nature are often paired together throughout *Shahnameh* to enable the reader to visualise Ferdowsi’s words. The use of nature also ties into epic traditions where natural imagery is used for description. One can suggest this is because the ancients were surrounded by this nature and thus using this figurative language will enable the text to be relatable to the reader. This is arguably tied into the oral traditions of epic poetry – the poets would use their surroundings and what they knew to create the stories. Ferdowsi draws on his environment and the landscapes of the Ancient Near East to emphasise his use of blood.

<sup>75</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 556 (Darab attacks the Greeks).

<sup>76</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 714.

### III. Blood and the Soul

*“Blood flowed from the wound, and his soul departed; he fell, and his horse turned and galloped back to camp.”<sup>77</sup>*

The idea of blood as life can be seen in Muslim and Jewish thought. As a devout Muslim, Ferdowsi would have held this same view. Thus, one can suggest when we read blood in *Shahnameh*, especially in the context of wounds and death, we must read it as the soul or life of the individual. “As a condition for life, it [blood] represents power”,<sup>78</sup> thus one can suggest that Ferdowsi’s use of blood represents the soul. If this is the case, one must read blood as the soul – not simply a substance, as emphasised through the belief that blood animated the body.<sup>79</sup> This idea of blood as a lifeforce is prevalent throughout history and literature, with some references from Homeric literature right up until the modern day, as seen through the popular BBC mini-series, *Dracula*, in which the titular character states “blood is life”.<sup>80</sup> Thus, our own notions of blood as being the reason for life will leak into our interpretation of Ferdowsi’s words. However, it is likely Ferdowsi himself held similar beliefs that informed his writing. In this way, one must consider references to wounds and death as the soul escaping the body – as they bleed their life force drains away.

This idea of the soul residing in the blood is clear in the literary traditions of the Ancient Near East. The Atrahasis epic demonstrates this – it is through the addition of blood from a fallen god that clay assumes the qualities that make it human.<sup>81</sup> Tablet VI, line 525 of *Enuma Eliš* also offers an interpretation of blood and the soul – “He [Ea?] created mankind from his [Qingu] blood”.<sup>82</sup> This suggests that it was Qingu’s blood that animated mankind and enabled them to serve the gods. In this way, one can suggest that it was believed that the soul was contained in the blood. Before the addition of this blood, humanity was lumps of clay; only when they are given blood do they become enlivened. This same idea of blood containing the soul or life is seen in Islam. The Quarnic passage sūra 96 states “Recite in the name of

<sup>77</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 316.

<sup>78</sup> Kazan 2018, 238.

<sup>79</sup> Gilders 2004, 17.

<sup>80</sup> BBC 2020, *Dracula*.

<sup>81</sup> Abusch 2003, 682.

<sup>82</sup> Thury and Devinney 2013, 79.

*your Lord who created, created humanity from a blood clot*".<sup>83</sup> Through the creation of mankind from blood, one can suggest it was through this that mankind was animated, thus their life (or soul) lies in the blood. This is furthered through the consumption of blood being *harām* (forbidden),<sup>84</sup> for to do so would be to consume the soul.

The Hebrew Bible supports this idea with Leviticus 17:11 making this link explicit – “*For the life of the flesh is in the blood [...] for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement*”.<sup>85</sup> In Hebrew thought, the blood is or contains the *nephesh* (life or thought),<sup>86</sup> as evidenced through “[...] for the blood is the life [...].”<sup>87</sup> This *nephesh* is spilt on the ground upon death, reflecting Ferdowsi’s use of blood (“*Blood flowed from the wound, and his soul departed*”).<sup>88</sup> In *Shahnameh*, blood is often depicted as spilling on the ground or gushing out of wounds. Thus, in line with beliefs surrounding *nephesh*, Ferdowsi suggests that their soul is streaming out of their body onto the ground. This idea is demonstrated through “*I poured out their lifeblood on the earth*”,<sup>89</sup> emphasising the soul resides in the blood. Life is evident through the blood and leaves when the breath ends or blood runs out.<sup>90</sup> Despite this, there are arguments that blood is a temporary vehicle for the soul,<sup>91</sup> thus the soul is evident in blood upon death when it escapes the body. The idea in Israelite culture that blood spilt by a premeditated and unjustifiable murder demands revenge for being spilt suggests that the soul was in the blood.<sup>92</sup> Because it is the blood itself that needs appeasing, one can suggest it contains the soul of the victim who wants revenge for their own murder – the blood is a vengeful spirit. This is clearly evidenced through Cain’s murder of Abel – “*The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground*”.<sup>93</sup> Through the active adjective ‘crying’, one can suggest the blood contains part, if not all, of Abel’s spirit which is crying to the Lord for help and vengeance. It

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<sup>83</sup> Rippin 2005, 46.

<sup>84</sup> Qur’ān 2/172-3 and 5/3 acc. Rippin 2005, 31.

<sup>85</sup> Leviticus 17:11.

<sup>86</sup> MacDonald 2003, 3.

<sup>87</sup> Deuteronomy 12:23.

<sup>88</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 316.

<sup>89</sup> Isaiah 63:6.

<sup>90</sup> MacDonald 2003, 6.

<sup>91</sup> MacDonald 2003, 32.

<sup>92</sup> Feder 2011, 174.

<sup>93</sup> Genesis 4:10

was believed that to appease the blood, more blood must be offered,<sup>94</sup> in line with the New Testament idea of “*an eye for an eye*”.<sup>95</sup> This links to the idea of sin sacrifices – by giving the blood of another it atones for the sins of humanity – for one to be forgiven, one must be sacrificed. The Hebrew Bible goes further to suggest that life is in the blood through passages in the *torah* prohibiting eating blood (Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 17:11, Deuteronomy 12:23). Genesis 9:4-6 highlights the idea of “*life, that is, its blood*”<sup>96</sup> and bloodshed repays bloodshed (“*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed*”).<sup>97</sup> There is a belief that the life must have departed the flesh before it can be eaten, thus the life is lost when the blood is drained.<sup>98</sup> In this way a lack of blood is equal to a lack of life,<sup>99</sup> thus one can interpret Ferdowsi’s use of blood to mean the soul. Blood is not merely a symbol of the soul, it is the soul.<sup>100</sup>

In Homeric thought, it is argued the soul leaves the body upon death, but there is debate over whether it resides in the blood or breath.<sup>101</sup> The soul ( $\Psi\chi\eta$ ) is life that is lost at death.<sup>102</sup> Despite this, blood is considered so essential that it is the centre of life for Homeric peoples with some considering blood and the soul to be one and the same thing.<sup>103</sup> In this way, blood loss can be read as the loss of the soul. This is emphasised through the belief that Gods and demons in Homeric writing are said to be without blood, meaning they are immortal.<sup>104</sup> Through a lack of blood, they have no soul that can be lost. Upon the death of a Homeric hero, the soul gushes from the wound to the underworld,<sup>105</sup> it is this mortality that makes a hero:<sup>106</sup> they have a presence of blood as opposed to the godly lack of blood. This idea can be seen in *Shahnameh*, through depictions of blood from hero’s wounds and on battlefields. The centrality of blood to life and its connection to the soul is clearly used by Ferdowsi when depicting the loss of a soul upon death. Thus, one can suggest that

<sup>94</sup> Feder 2011, 174.

<sup>95</sup> Matthew 5:38.

<sup>96</sup> Genesis 9:4.

<sup>97</sup> Genesis 9:6.

<sup>98</sup> Perlo 2009, 38.

<sup>99</sup> DeTroyer 2003, 50.

<sup>100</sup> Gilders 2004, 18.

<sup>101</sup> Clarke 1999, 129-30 and 135.

<sup>102</sup> Claus 1981, 1.

<sup>103</sup> Meletis and Konstantopoulos 2010, 2.

<sup>104</sup> Meletis and Konstantopoulos 2010, 3.

<sup>105</sup> Griffin 1980, 91.

<sup>106</sup> Griffin 1980, 93.

Homeric ideas about the loss of soul can be detected in Ferdowsi's epic narrative, demonstrating how the treatment of blood and the soul in *Shahnameh* resides firmly in the epic traditions of the ancient world. One can clearly see this connection through Piran's death – “*Piran gave a great cry, his mind turned dark as blood welled up from his liver into his mouth, and his soul departed*”.<sup>107</sup> Here, Ferdowsi connects the rising blood from his wounds to Piran's soul – as the blood escapes the body, the soul also escapes. In this way, one can argue the soul resides in the blood, thus tying into Homeric traditions of blood being integral to life. It is upon death that the body splits into the corpse and the *psyche* (soul) and become separate,<sup>108</sup> before this blood is needed to allow the soul to speak.<sup>109</sup> Thus, one can suggest that the blood enlivens the body and through a loss of blood, the life and therefore soul cannot inhabit the inanimate corpse.

When reading blood in *Shahnameh*, one must always be aware of the blood's role in a person's life – the blood is their life and its loss means a loss of life. The ideas of blood and the soul discussed must be considered and Ferdowsi's life as a devout Muslim would have influenced his writings, thus one must consider the idea of blood meaning life. Not only is this clear in Muslim and Jewish thought, but one can also see a precedence in the epic traditions of the ancient world. In this way, the reading of blood as the soul is a convincing argument however, there are ambiguities such as debates over translations – does the soul reside in the blood or the breath? These ambiguities may suggest that when reading blood in *Shahnameh*, we cannot always see it as the soul or life. One must be careful in bringing one's own beliefs on blood and life to the interpretation and instead look at it in context – Ferdowsi likely held these beliefs; thus, blood can be interpreted as life/soul.

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<sup>107</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 373.

<sup>108</sup> Holmes 2010, 85.

<sup>109</sup> duBois 2010, 125.

#### IV. Blood on the Battlefield

*“The two armies clashed with such force that blood flowed like a river”.*<sup>110</sup>

“Blood and war would seem to be a natural pair – it is hard to imagine a battlefield without blood.”<sup>111</sup> This is certainly true of battles in *Shahnameh*, with these scenes being the most common occurrence of blood in the text. The extent of battle scenes employed by Ferdowsi reflects the centrality of war to ancient societies to assert their dominance or defend their interests.<sup>112</sup> In this way, many of Ferdowsi’s blood references are connected to battle contexts and warriors/heroes. The dominance of battle blood is in line with the epic tradition where many ancient epic texts focus on events/figures surrounding war.

Ancient societies were warrior dominated,<sup>113</sup> with the king-warrior being central to Sasanian royal ideology.<sup>114</sup> The king could prove his legitimacy through his “soldierly



*Figure 5: A Sasanian rock relief showing Ardashir I defeating the Parthian Artabanus IV. 224-241 CE. Firuzabad. Marco Prins (livius.org).*

virtues”,<sup>115</sup> emphasising the importance of the army and military strength in the ancient world. In this way, they often represented themselves as warriors on their bowls and reliefs (figures 5 and 6). Furthermore, military actions were linked to religious piety and social order for the Sasanians,<sup>116</sup> thus one can

suggest that the extensive use of blood on the battlefield in *Shahnameh* recalls these ideas of restoring social order and doing a duty to society. Warriors composed the

<sup>110</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 119.

<sup>111</sup> McCracken 2003, 21.

<sup>112</sup> Fagan and Trundle 2010, 1.

<sup>113</sup> Hughes 2013, 129.

<sup>114</sup> McDonough 2013, 601.

<sup>115</sup> Wiese Höfer 2001, 199.

<sup>116</sup> McDonough 2013, 601.



Figure 6: Silver Plate depicting the king (Peroz or Kavad I) hunting Rams. Mid-5<sup>th</sup>-mid-6<sup>th</sup> Century. Met Museum (34.33). Met Museum.



Figure 7: Sardonyx cameo of Shapur I defeating Valerian. C.260 CE. Cabinet des Médailles, National Library, Paris. Nguyen. M. 2017. Ancient.eu.

second estate of Sasanian society,<sup>117</sup> emphasising the militaristic nature of the ancient world. Under the Sasanians, the idea of *Iranshahr* was a “set territory ruled by a warrior aristocracy”.<sup>118</sup> The importance of warriors and the army in Sasanian society suggests there was an emphasis on their military strength. The Sasanians depicted successes in single combat (figures 5 and 7),<sup>119</sup> demonstrating the importance of the warrior-king and the military in Sasanian society. One can suggest Ferdowsi’s use of blood on the battlefield emphasises this importance and demonstrates military strength – they have so many warriors they can turn the plains red with the blood of their enemies. However, this also demonstrates how they have many warriors to lose. In this way, Ferdowsi’s use of blood favours neither side and instead highlights the all-encompassing terror and destruction of war.

In the ancient world, landscapes are often described as becoming red with enemy blood.<sup>120</sup> Ferdowsi uses a variety of language to indicate the amount of blood spilt on the battlefield. There are instances of literal description – “*The river Kashaf brimmed*

<sup>117</sup> Daryaee 2013, 45.

<sup>118</sup> Daryaee 2013, 45.

<sup>119</sup> Wiesehöfer 2001, 199.

<sup>120</sup> Karlsson 2016, 166-167.

*with blood and turned yellow*<sup>121</sup> – as well as a heavy use of simile and metaphor – “*the warriors’ blood transformed the earth to a sea*”.<sup>122</sup> This demonstrates that Ferdowsi’s use of blood takes precedence from the ancients of his land, however there are also instances in Greek literature depicting a similar image. An example is found in the Iliad “*the earth ran red with blood*”,<sup>123</sup> indicating a precedence for this imagery in epic writing. Isaiah also uses similar images – “*the mountains shall flow with their blood*”<sup>124</sup> and “*their land shall drink its fill of blood*”.<sup>125</sup> This demonstrates there is a clear tradition in ancient literature that evokes images of landscapes red with blood. In this way, one can suggest Ferdowsi draws on these examples throughout *Shahnameh*, placing the text firmly in the epic traditions. Not only are these references rooted firmly in tradition, but they also emphasise the extent of bloodshed in the epic war between chaos and order. It is difficult to imagine a specific number of dead, however a reader can always imagine a plain stained red. In this way, Ferdowsi uses blood metaphors to enable the reader to effectively envisage the devastation of war.

The extent of bloodshed in battle contexts is significant – from all out wars to duels, Ferdowsi uses blood with a heavy hand in order to emphasise the extent of the suffering and destruction. In Numbers 35:33-34, the land becomes polluted by bloodshed, suggesting that these battlefield scenes in *Shahnameh* can be read as demonstrating the pollution of the land from the order/chaos of war and evil leaders. Blood loss on the battlefield became a heroic model in medieval Christian literature.<sup>126</sup> Male blood was seen as a purifying agent,<sup>127</sup> and thus by describing battlefields running with blood, Ferdowsi is suggesting through the blood loss, the land will be purified of evil and conflict. This blood saturating the landscape could also fertilise the fields,<sup>128</sup> thus one can suggest Ferdowsi’s use of blood in battle contexts can be taken as a sign of future growth and peace. The land is fertilised through the loss of battle and a new land under the auspices of order will grow from

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<sup>121</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 91.

<sup>122</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 571.

<sup>123</sup> Hom. Il.4.

<sup>124</sup> Isaiah 34:3.

<sup>125</sup> Isaiah 34:7.

<sup>126</sup> McCracken 2003, 14.

<sup>127</sup> McCracken 2003, 7.

<sup>128</sup> Hughes 2013, 130.

the destruction. In this way, blood on the battlefield is used to emphasise a sense of despair upon a first reading, but upon further investigation can provide a sense of hope of better days to come.

Ferdowsi also uses blood in battle contexts to demonstrate the act of killing itself – “*Blood congealed on the warriors’ hands as they gripped their swords, dripping down from the darkened blades [...]*”.<sup>129</sup> Through descriptions of warriors and weapons cloaked in blood, Ferdowsi demonstrates the reality of battle. Rather than just generic statements about the landscape turning red, by focusing in on the warriors themselves and how the battle is affecting their bodies, Ferdowsi uses blood to give the reader a glimpse into action; he presents an idea of what it would have felt like to be in the midst of these battles.

“The images of warfare are described with such vigour that the reader feels that he actually sees these images”.<sup>130</sup> Ferdowsi’s use of blood in these intense battle scenes adds to the tenacity of his descriptions. Through blood, Ferdowsi brings the reader into the action and highlights the importance of the military to ancient societies. The passages on warfare are some of the most prevalent in the text,<sup>131</sup> and the images created by Ferdowsi in them through his extensive use of blood highlights the importance of blood and life to the text.

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<sup>129</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 59.

<sup>130</sup> Venetis 2010, 26.

<sup>131</sup> Venetis 2010 26.

## V. Gendered Blood

*“In this land Shirin was considered to be like that bowl of polluted blood.”<sup>132</sup>*

Blood is carefully used by Ferdowsi in relation to gender. When referring to women, blood is only ever used to express emotion or represent lineage, with one exception in the case of Shirin. This suggests there is a taboo around the idea of female blood and bleeding, as opposed to the many occasions where male blood is referred to in detail throughout the text. This viewpoint is suggested through menstrual and other female blood never being referenced, even in relation to Gordafarid, a courageous female warrior, blood is never mentioned despite vague references to her wounds (“wounded woman warrior”).<sup>133</sup> This absence of blood suggests that there is an aversion to female blood on the whole; not just menstrual blood – in a context where wounds are normally described extensively, Ferdowsi consciously chooses to not include descriptions of blood and wounds because it originates from a woman.

In Sasanian society there was a “dread of pollution of blood”,<sup>134</sup> meaning women were often isolated in an enclosure during their menstruation.<sup>135</sup> This fear was so prevalent in society that women faced all sorts of restrictions during their menstrual period including not being able to cook or clean, come into contact with the sacred fire or have sex; their husbands could even divorce them if they came out of confinement too early because it was believed a menstruating woman was contagious and therefore a danger to every living being.<sup>136</sup> The *Vendidād* 16:17-18 even claims that men could be given the death penalty for having sex with a menstruating woman,<sup>137</sup> demonstrating the extreme anxiety surrounding polluted blood. In Iranian religions, pollution is a concept associated with a female deceiver demon (Nasu),<sup>138</sup> thus one can suggest that women were linked with pollution and thus chaos because of this association with Nasu. This is emphasised through the belief that *divans* (monsters) were found in the blood, with menstrual blood and

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<sup>132</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 921.

<sup>133</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 193.

<sup>134</sup> Daryaee 2013, 60.

<sup>135</sup> Daryaee 2013, 60.

<sup>136</sup> Daryaee 2013, 60-61.

<sup>137</sup> Kazen 2018, 227.

<sup>138</sup> Kazen 2018, 222.

semen key places of their residence because of its uncleanliness.<sup>139</sup> Thus, the absence of female blood in *Shahnameh* may be explained through these ideas of female blood as pollutive and dangerous to society.

This belief that female blood was pollutive and taboo is also seen in medieval Christian beliefs where male blood on the battlefield is valorised through the exclusion of female blood from society.<sup>140</sup> In Mark 5:24-34, the woman who bleeds for twelve years is a social pariah, not only because of her gender but because of this never-ending bleeding. One can see this woman's exclusion from society through the fact she is seen as ceremoniously unclean. Leviticus 15:25-30 demonstrates how polluted and impure blood was linked to women even beyond the confines of menstruation, thus leading to them being ostracised from society because of her uncleanliness – everything they come into contact with is polluted through their touch. In Jewish law, menstrual blood (and semen) are seen to make an individual unclean,<sup>141</sup> thus one can suggest that the absence of female blood in *Shahnameh* is to avoid suggesting the royal women are unclean. They are so polluted that they must give a sin-offering at the end of their discharge.<sup>142</sup> There was a belief that demonic forces lived in menstrual blood,<sup>143</sup> thus emphasising the idea that female blood was pollutive and dangerous. Menstruation is connected to illness,<sup>144</sup> suggesting female blood was seen as unhealthy and dangerous.

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<sup>139</sup> Zargaran 2014, 311.

<sup>140</sup> McCracken 2003, x.

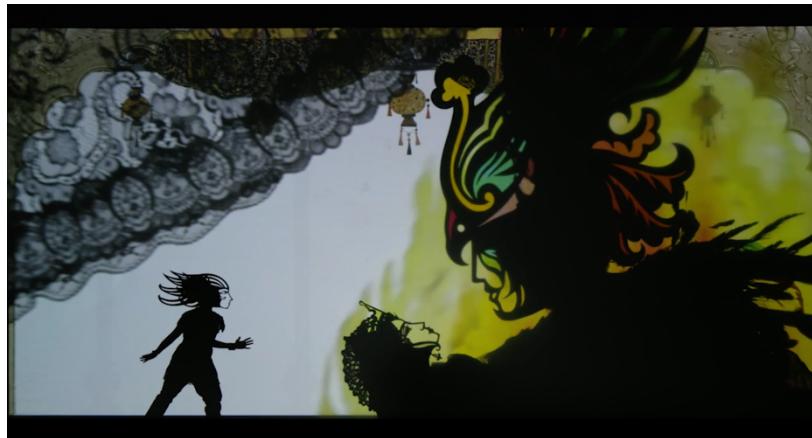
<sup>141</sup> DeTroyer 2003, 51.

<sup>142</sup> Leviticus 15:30.

<sup>143</sup> DeTroyer 2003, 52.

<sup>144</sup> Ellens 2003, 30.

The idea of a blood taboo is supported through the fact that blood is not mentioned during Rostam's birth where Rudabeh is cut open for a C-section. One would expect blood to be referenced in such a scene and modern readers know the amount of blood involved in such an invasive procedure. Here it is the absence of blood that can be interpreted and understood to demonstrate an aversion to female bleeding in *Shahnameh*. This absence of blood is still clear in modern iterations of *Shahnameh*,



*Figure 8: The simurgh helps Rudabeh through the birth of Rostam. Hamid Rahamanian. 2016. Feathers of Fire. Kingorama. Screenshot from vimeo.*

Rudabeh through the birth. This follows the aversion to blood in the text in which the clear avoidance of the issue suggests it was taboo.

Blood is most explicitly linked to women in the story of Khosrow and Shirin. In this instance, the bowl of blood is used as a metaphor by Khosrow himself – “*In this land Shirin was considered to be like that bowl of polluted blood; but the bowl in my harem is now filled with wine; it is my scent that fills her now.*”<sup>145</sup> Here the bowl of blood is symbolic of Shirin herself – the blood is viewed as polluted by Khosrow's advisors because of their notions about Shirin – they are all against her joining the harem and marrying Khosrow. This idea of a woman as polluted blood may be symbolic of Shirin ‘polluting’ Khosrow's lineage as king. This demonstrates a gendered use of blood – only in reference to Shirin is blood ever ‘polluted’, despite not being her own blood; just a representation of her. Ideas of menstrual blood as a polluting substance<sup>146</sup> suggest this metaphor refers to the harmful aspects of Shirin

as demonstrated through Hamid Rahamanian's cinematic shadow play 'Feathers of Fire' (figure. 8). Here, during the procedure, there is no representation for blood, instead images evoking fire are used to indicate a magical process from the simurgh in helping

<sup>145</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 921.

<sup>146</sup> McCracken 2003, ix. McCracken explains the idea of gendered blood in Medieval literature in the Christian mind, including menstrual blood as causing symbolic and practical harm. Whilst this cannot

and her gender as a whole. This demonstrates the opposite view of male blood as a purifying agent demonstrating the masculine control of their blood and therefore society.<sup>147</sup> One can suggest that Ferdowsi's use of blood in this instance is referring to this belief – Khosrow is in control of his pure blood (and society as King) and in doing so has purified the polluted blood of Shirin into wine – his 'scent' fills and purifies her.

When commenting on women, Ferdowsi uses blood in relation to their emotions or lineage. Their lineage gave them power and enabled them to be players in Ferdowsi's grand narrative - "*Mariam is of your own blood, and so I have entrusted her to you*".<sup>148</sup> Through their blood connections, women are able to form marriage alliances and thus mother heroes. This is emphasised through "*I've made a blood alliance with him; I gave him my daughter [...]*".<sup>149</sup> Through connecting their families through marriage, they are connected through their blood. Thus, one can suggest blood is gendered through the idea that women are used to form 'blood alliances' and yet are not depicted as bleeding. This gendered idea of blood is also evident through the use of blood to describe female emotions – "*Farigis saw him through her bloody tears [...]*".<sup>150</sup> When the women of *Shahnameh* lament, they are often described with bloody tears and "*[...] blood clogged her musky curls [...]*".<sup>151</sup> One can suggest female blood is therefore used to emphasise the violent lamentations of the Ancient Near East, where people scratched their faces and pulled their hair. Through this use of blood, Ferdowsi is emphasising the role of women as wives and mothers because they lament their lost ones in this way.

Despite this taboo, Ferdowsi uses feminine terms in relation to blood – "*He drew a dagger from his boot and split Iraj from head to foot, so that his body was veiled in blood.*"<sup>152</sup> Veiling of women was common in the ancient world becoming a "portable form of seclusion"<sup>153</sup> to cover their heads and/or bodies. Evidence of veiling can be

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be used to directly ascertain Ferdowsi's thoughts on female blood, we may infer there was similar feeling due to the taboo surrounding female blood in *Shahnameh*.

<sup>147</sup> McCracken 2003, 7.

<sup>148</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 892.

<sup>149</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 262.

<sup>150</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 274.

<sup>151</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 267.

<sup>152</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 43.

<sup>153</sup> Llewellyn-Jones 2003, 4.



Figure 9: Mosaic of a lady with flowers, Bishapur Palace. 260 CE. Tehran National Museum. Jona Lendering ([livius.org](http://livius.org)).

found on mosaics from the Sasanian palace at Bishapur (figure. 9). Here the woman wears a transparent shawl with a scarf fastened around her forehead ending in a veil at the back.<sup>154</sup> In this mosaic, her whole body is covered, thus one can read Ferdowsi's use of 'veiled' as depicting Iraj's body covered in blood from his wounds. In this

way, Ferdowsi uses a domestic, feminine image in a violent context to enable the reader to understand the extent of the injuries.

Throughout *Shahnameh*, female blood is avoided suggesting a taboo surrounding the reality of female blood. This taboo can be read through the absence of blood – because it is lacking, one can read it as an unacceptable topic. Even when discussing wounds, Ferdowsi consciously excludes female blood compared to his vivid descriptions of male wounds. In this way, one can read blood as gendered in *Shahnameh*. This is emphasised through Ferdowsi's use of blood to emphasise a woman's emotions and role in society through the formation of blood alliances. Thus, one can suggest, Ferdowsi's gendered use of blood reflects ideas of women as wives and mothers in the patriarchal society of the ancient world.

<sup>154</sup> Daems 2001, 52-53.

## Conclusion

*“If you do not pay attention to my words now, you will find yourself wading through the blood of many men”.*<sup>155</sup>

Through Ferdowsi’s words one can see the centrality of blood to society. From ideas of the soul and gender to contexts of sacrifice, battle and nature, blood is one of the most prevalent themes in *Shahnameh*. It is this centrality to this text specifically but also to the wider world that makes blood such a key theme deserving of further study. This gruesome undercurrent to the text is ever-present and one must not brush its significance to the side when considering the work. Blood is ever-present in *Shahnameh*, through its mythical, heroic and historical sections, blood is just one connecting theme. Blood is a constant throughout societies and time – every society has a set of beliefs surrounding blood that influence our lives and interpretations of texts.

This work has shed light onto Ferdowsi’s extensive use of blood in *Shahnameh* and offered a new insight into the study of this National Epic. Due to the lack of scholarship on blood in *Shahnameh* and the Ancient Near East, I have attempted to use scholarship on blood in other texts and societies to provide an interpretation of Ferdowsi’s use of blood and read cross-cultural connections in the epic genre. Occasionally one can look to iconography to shed light on uses of blood within the text and aid the interpretation. This gives a new insight into the text and enables one to interpret how Ferdowsi’s contemporary audience would have viewed the text. This reading of *Shahnameh* has used a variety of themes to interpret the use of blood throughout the text, however there are many overlaps between these themes indicating the diversity of blood within the pages. This diversity and universality of the theme of blood demonstrates its importance to the text. Blood has, and always will be, integral to our understanding of the world. In this way, it is vital to understand and appreciate Ferdowsi’s use of blood because it offers insights into how he and his contemporaries saw their world; thus, one can fully engage with the text.

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<sup>155</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 434.

*"I've reached the end of this great history  
And all the land will fill with talk of me:  
I shall not die, these seeds I've sown will save  
My name and reputation from the grave,  
And men of sense and wisdom will proclaim,  
When I have gone, my praises and my fame".<sup>156</sup>*

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<sup>156</sup> Ferdowsi trans. Davis 2007, 962.

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Appendix – Database of references to blood in *Shahnameh*

Ref no.	Page No.	Line No.	Ref. to Blood	Type of loss/letting	Context of blood	Context of scene
1	2	15-16	"His face was smeared with blood, his heart was in mourning, and his days were filled with sorrow"	Lamentation after battle	Kayumars beating head	Kayumars son, Siamuk is killed by the Black Demon in battle
2	3	31	"Its two eyes were like bowls of blood affixed to its head, and smoke billowed from its mouth, darkening the world."	Metaphor	Describing snakes eyes	Husband and companions go to mountains and encounter snake then discover fire
3	5	29	"He dragged them wounded and in chains in the dust..."	Wounding	Wounding	Tahmures defeats demons and sorcerers
4	9	23-24	"Zahak heard him out and considered his words, but the thought of shedding his father's blood troubled his heart"	Death	Plan to murder	Eblis visits Zahak and tells him to take the throne from his father, Merdas
5	10	16-19	"I heard a wise man say that, no matter how much of a savage lion a man might be, he does not shed his father's blood and if there is some untold secret here, it is he mother who can answer the inquirers questions"	x	Idea/murder	Merdas is dead with Zahak complicit in it
6	10	32-33	"The new cook made dishes from the flesh of birds and animals, feeding Zahak on blood to build up his valour"	Death/Eating	Food	Eblis disguises himself as a cook and feeds Zahak blood

7	14	1-3	"...and the time came for their blood to be spilled, the two men looked at another with their eyes filled with tears and with rage in their hearts."	Murder for food	Food	Reign of Zahak - victims killed by cook for Zahak's snakes who ate human brains
8	24-25	35-2	"then he destroyed all your idols and spells and flung your courtiers, both men and demons, from the castle walls, mixing their brains and their blood in death."	Murder/Death	Death	Kondrow tells Zahak what Feraydun has done
9	27	17-18	"And so he was left, hanging in chains, with his heart's blood staining the ground."	Death/wounding	Death/wounding	Feraydun imprisons Zahak in Mount Damavand and nails him to rocks, avoiding vital organs
10	30	24	"With daggers we will make the earth blood red"	Death/wounding	Metaphor/wound/death	King of Yemen's advisors when talking about marrying daughters to Feraydun's sons and denying Feraydun
11	35	4	"Tur's stars showed Mars soaked in blood, in Leo."	x	Description	Horoscope of Feraydun's middle son, Tur - forecasts trouble and warfare
12	37	12-14	"Remember, my just lord, that our father deceived is in our youth, that he planted a tree whose sap is blood and whose fruits are poisonous."	x	Metaphor	Salm and Tur discussing injustice of Iraj inheriting best lands from Feraydun

13	40	23-24	"The starry heavens turn, and turn again, And all they bring mankind is blood and pain."	x	Speech	Iraj talking to Feraydun after finding out his brothers planned to wage war on him - reflecting on life and death
14	42	6-8	"He rode with his heart filled with rancour; blood suffused his liver, and his face was knotted with frowns."	x	in the body	Salm when he sees Iraj riding towards him
15	43	14	"Don't kill me, because my blood will be upon your head."	Death/wounding	Injury	Iraj speaking to Tur after Tur has brought his golden throne on Iraj's head - jealously of power
16	43	21-23	"How can you long to spill your brother's blood and torment our father's heart with such a crime? You wanted the world and now you have it; don't spill my blood, turning against God in this way."	Death	Threat of murder	Iraj speaking to Tur
17	43	24-25	"He drew a dagger from his boot and split Iraj from head to foot, so that his body was veiled in blood."	Death/wounding	Murder	Tur kills Iraj
18	45	2-5	"His waist was girdled with blood, and he spread fire through the pleasure grounds, uprooted the flowerbeds, gave the cypresses to the flames, and with this act sealed tight the eyes of happiness."	Metaphor	Lamentation	Feraydun learns Iraj has been killed

19	49	23-27	"The king listened to his fluent talk asking for pardon for the two brothers and suggesting that Manuchehr visit them, when, as his slaves, they would welcome him and transfer to him their crowns and thrones, paying the blood-price they owed their father with silks and gold, crowns and royal belts."	Oath/redemption	Envoy/Oath	Salm and Tur's envoy goes to Feraydun and Iraj's grandson Manuchehr to ask forgiveness
20	50	11-12	"We look to wash the leaves and fruit of the tree of vengeance for Iraj in blood."	Threat	Envoy/Threat	Feraydun responds to Salm and Tur's envoy
21	50	25-26	"If God has forgiven you, why are you so afraid of your brother's blood?"	x	Envoy	Feraydun responds to Salm and Tur's envoy
22	54	21-23	"Whoever spills the blood of these warriors from China and the West and seizes their territory, his name will live forever, and he will earn the glorious praise of our priests."	Death/Wounding	Speech before battle	Qaren speaks to the troops with Sarv before Manuchehr attacks Tur's army
23	54	29-31	"Whatever he orders we shall do immediately; for him we shall turn this plain to an Oxus of blood."	Death/Wounding	Metaphor in speech/oath	Commander pledging what they will do for Manuchehr before the battle with Tur
24	55	7-9	"The plain became a sea of blood, as if red tulips had sprung up everywhere, and the elephants' legs glowed like pillars of coral."	Death	Battle	Manuchehr attacks Tur's army
25	56		"They said, 'When night comes,	Death/Wounding	Plans/metaphor	Plans for Tur to

		5-6	we'll ambush them, and fill the mountains and plains with their blood!"			ambush Manuchehr's army
26	58	15-16	"Shirui made for the castle gates, attacking the defenders, and bestowing crowns of blood on them."	Death	Battle/attack	Manuchehr's general enters Tur's palace in disguise and takes it with a contingent of troops
27	58	25-26	"The whole surface of the sea turned as black as tar, and the plain was a river of blood."	Death	Battle/metaphor	Qaren and Shirui take the Castle of the Alans
28	59	10-11	"Blood congealed on the warriors' hands as they gripped their swords, dripping down from the darkened blades..."	Wound/death	Battle aftermath	Between battles - capture of castle of Alans and attack by Kakui
29	59	18-19	"For half the day these two blood-soaked men fought, until the sun sank in the sky."	Battle/wound	Duel	Battle between Manuchehr and Kakui
30	59	19-21	"They attacked like leopards, and their blood was mixed with dust, so that the plain and mountainside were drowned in blood, beyond all measure."	Battle/wound	Duel	Battle between Manuchehr and Kakui
31	60	19-21	"If he wishes to fight against us and spill our blood, we lack the strength to oppose him: we lay our innocent heads before the king, at his mercy."	Death	Oath/plead for life	Salm's army pledging themselves to Manuchehr for him to do what he likes
32	60	31-34	"A herald cried from the royal pavilion, 'Great Champions, whose thoughts are noble, from now on do not spill blood	Death	Herald/orders	Manuchehr brings peace

			thoughtlessly, since those who are tyrannical suffer an evil fate."			
33	63	24-25	"My grieving soul writhes with shame, and the hot blood boils in my heart."	Anger/sadness	Complaint	Birth of Zal and Sam's sadness/anger at him being born with white hair.
34	66	16-17	"His eyebrows were pitch black, his lips like coral, and his cheeks the colour of blood."	x	Description of body	Description of Zal as a grown man when reunited with Sam after being brought up by the Simorgh
35	69	3-5	"I ate dirt and taste blood once, held in the great bird's claws; now I am far from my protector, and it is Fate that protects me"	x	Food/drink	Zal speaking to Sam after reunification
36	77	8-9	"His eyes are like two pitch-black narcissi, his lips are like coral, his cheeks ruddy as blood."	x	Description	Rudabeh's serving girls describing Zal to Rudabeh
37-38	86	20-23	"When Mehrab heard this he sprang up and grasped his sword hilt; his body trembled, his face darkened, blood surged in his heart, his lips were cold with sighs, and he said, "I shall make a river of blood of Rudabeh this moment"."	Threat of death/wound	Threat	Mehrab discovers Rudabeh's intentions to marry Zal from Sindokht
39	89	34-35	"Zal assured them, 'There's no fear of that; I have blood in my veins, not dirt."	x	Lifeblood	Sam and Zal meet
40	91	20-	"I approached and saw it was like a great mountain, with its hair	x	Description	Sam's letter to Manuchehr - facing

		23	trailing on the ground, its tongue like a black tree, its gullet breathing fire, its eyes like bowls of blood."			the dragon from River Kashaf
41	91	29-31	"Blood bubbled up from its entrails, and, invoking God's power, I struck my ox-headed mace down on its head."	Death/wounding	Battle/duel	Sam's letter to Manuchehr - facing the dragon from River Kashaf
42	91	32-34	"The river Kashaf brimmed with blood and turned yellow, and the earth was at peace again and could rest."	Death	Battle/duel/landscape	Sam's letter to Manuchehr - facing the dragon from River Kashaf
43	92	32-34	"Say what you know, fight for your life, or prepare your body to be veiled in blood."	Threat of death	Treat	Mehrab speaking to Sindokht after she offers to go speak to Sam and his army to save Kabol after her support of Rudabeh and Zal's marriage
44	94	14-16	"Fear the Creator of reason and might, of the evening star and the sun; he will not approve of such an act from you; do not bind on your belt for bloodshed."	Death/wounding	Metaphor/description	Sindokht speaking to Sam and persuading him not to start a war with Kabol
45	114	14-15	"And Aghriras said to his ambitious father, "I shall make their rivers flow with the blood of vengeance."	Threat of death	Metaphor/description	Pashang learns about Manuchehr's death
46	117	1-2	"If your white beard is reddened with blood, all our warriors will lose heart; our army will be broken, and the hearts of our	Death metaphor	Metaphor	Qaren trying to stop Qobad from going to battle with Barman

			friends will despair."			
47	118	1-3	"The neighing of horses and the dust sent up by the armies obscured the sun and moon; the diamond glitter of steel weapons was dulled by blood."	Battle/wound/death	Battle	Battle after Qobad's death
48	118	3-5	"Dust swirled like rain clouds made vermillion by the sun, clouds reverberated with the din of drums, and swords ran with blood."	Wound/death	Battle	Battle after Qobad's death
49-51	119	1-4	"The two armies clashed with such force that blood flowed like a river: wherever Qaren attacked, blood mingled with the dust, and where Afrasyab's dust rose up, the plain streamed with blood."	Wound/death	Battle	Afrasyab's 2nd attack
52	119	16-19	"Blood seemed to fill his heart, cold sighs escaped from his lips, and he remembered his great father's words: 'From Turan and China a mighty army will invade Iran; your heart will be wrung by them, and your army broken.'"	Death	Death/speech	Nozar speaks to Tus and Gostahm
53	121	32-34	"Their banners were torn, their drums overturned, their shrouds were red as tulips, their faces vermillion with blood."	Description	Battle	Battle in which Viseh Finds His Son Dead
54	122	17-	"The armies clashed, and a river of blood flowed across the	Death/wounding	Battle	Battle in which Viseh Finds his son dead

		18	ground."			
55	124	10-12	"He donned new armour and returned to the fray like a lion; his father's mace was in his hand, his head was filled with fury, and blood welled in his heart."	Anger/life	Prepare for battle	Zal prepares to go into battle with Afrasyab's army
56	124	12-14	"He brought his ox-headed mace down on Khazbaran's head, and the ground was spotted with his blood like a leopard's hide."	Death	Battle/duel	Zal battles Khazbaran
57	125	10-11	"They will die wretchedly there, but you should not shed their blood."	Death/wounding	Battle	Aghriras asking Afrasyab to hand over the prisoners to him
58	129	23-26	"He sent an envoy to Afrasyab saying, 'You should have been a friend to Aghriras, but you shed your brother's blood and fled from that savage brought up by a bird. I want no more to do with you, and you will never see me again.'"	Death	Envoy	Pashang sends envoy to Afrasyab
59	131	23-24	"Its weight will break an elephant, one blow From it will make a bloody river flow."	Death/wound/metaphor	Battle	Rostam speaks to Zal about his mace when discussing choosing a horse
60	135	13-15	"The ranks of the Persian army marched to war, ready for bloodshed: one wing was led by Mehrab, the king of Kabol, and the other by Gazhdahom."	Death/wounding	Prepare for battle	The reign of Kay Qobad

61	135	25-27	"Once battle was joined, Qaren was involved in every charge, sometimes riding to the left, sometimes to the right, everywhere eager for bloodshed."	Death/wounding	Battle	Rostam's combat with Afrasyab
62	137	25-26	"It was as if a cloud had rained vermillion down by magic, staining the earth with red dye."	Metaphor	Metaphor	Battle - Rostam's combat with Afrasyab
63	139	16-19	"Our heads have grown as white as snow, and the ground has been dyed vermillion with Kayanid blood, but in the end a man owns only the earth in which he lies; five cubits of ground are all we inherit, linen covers us, and we lie in the grave."	Death/wounding	Speech	Pashang sues for peace
64	146	21	"Don't shed their noble blood"	Death	Speech	Zal speaking to Kavus - Kay Kavus's War against the demons of Mazanderan
65	150	19-22	"If you fight against the sea, it is turned to blood, and at the sound of your voice, mountains crumble to the plains; Arzhang and the White Demon must have no hope of escaping from you with their lives."	Metaphor/death/wound	Speech/metaphor	Zal telling Rostam to go help Kavus in Mazanderan
65-66	155	16-18	"The ground beneath its body disappeared beneath a stream of blood, and Rostam gave a great sigh when he looked at the dragon, and saw that all the dark	Death	Landscape after battle	Rostam's Third Trial: Combat with a dragon - Rostam has beheaded the dragon with Rakhsh's help

			desert flowed with blood and poison."			
67	157	22-24	"The owner of this land was a man called Olad, a fine, brave young man, and the injured servant went wailing to him, carrying his bloody ears in his hand."	Wounding	Revenge	Rostam's Fifth Trial: the capture of Olad - Olad's servant argues with Rostam after letting Rakhsh in the wheat thus angering the servant by contaminating the wheat - Rostam gets angry and cuts the servant's ears off.
68	160	6-9	"He grabbed him by the head and ears, and holding on to his shoulders with his other hand tore the demon's head off, like a ravening lion, and flung it covered in blood into the crowd of warriors."	Death	Battle	Rostam kills Arzhang - Rostam's Sixth Trial: Combat with Arzhang
69	160	35-38	"Our warrior's eyes are darkened with sorrow, and I live sightless and bewildered in the darkness; doctors have told us there is hope of a cure if we use a balm made from the blood and brains of the White Demon."	Death/Wound	Cure	Kavus telling Rostam of his and soldiers ails and how it can be cured - what Rostam must do. Rostam's 6th trial
70	162	4-5	"Each repeatedly tore flesh from the other's body, and the ground beneath them was turned to mud with their blood."	Death/Wounding	Battle/Duel	Rostam fights the White Demon - Rostam's 7th Trial

71	162	12-13	"All the cave was filled with the demon's great bulk, and the world seemed like a sea of blood."	Death	Battle/Duel	Rostam fights the White Demon - Rostam's 7th Trial
72	163	1-2	"When they brushed the king's eyes with the White Demon's blood, the darkness there cleared."	Death	Battle/Healing	Kavus's sight is restored.
73	165	9-11	"When the king heard of Rostam's battle against the White Demon, his eyes reddened with blood and his head filled with roars of lamentation."	x	Anger	King of Mazanderan learns about the death of the white demon from letter from Kavus
74	165	33-35	"A letter as cutting as a sword blade must be written, a message like a roaring thunder cloud; I will go as the messenger and my words will make blood flow in the rivers there."	Death/Wounding	Message/anger/wound	Rostam telling Kavus he will take a message to the King of Mazanderan
75	169	20-22	"Rostam dragged him from his saddle, spitted like a hen, and hurled him to the ground, his armour cut to pieces, his mouth filled with blood."	Wound/Death	Battle/Duel	King of Mazanderan makes war on Kavus and the Persians. Rostam fights Juyan and kills him.
76	169	36-37	"The clash of weapons filled the air, and blood Flowed from the heroes like a monstrous flood"	Wound/Death	Battle/Duel	King of Mazanderan makes war on Kavus and the Persians

77-78	170	16-23	"First Rostam launched an attack on the centre of the enemies' forces, soaking the ground with their warriors' blood, then like a wolf bearing down on sheep, Giv crossed over from the right flank to the left, and on the right Gudarz brought forward armour, shields, drums and other equipment. From dawn until the sun sank in darkness, blood flowed in the rivers like water, faces lost all trace of shame, courtesy and kindness, and the sky seemed to rain down maces."	Wound/Death	Battle	King of Mazanderan makes war on Kavus and the Persians
79	171	5-7	"I thought I'd see him fall from the saddle, blood streaming from his body, but he turned into that crag of granite, and so escaped from the perils of war and my prowess."	Wound/Death suggested	Battle	King of Mazanderan makes war on Kavus and the Persians - King of Mazanderan turns into a rock to escape Rostam
80-81	175	33-38	"The world was darkened by their dust, and crimson blood rained down, spattering the ground as thick as dew, until it seemed red tulips had sprung up between the rocks. Sparks sprang from the clashing blades, the ground was awash with blood, and the three armies were so overwhelmed by the Persian forces that they fell back in utter confusion."	Wound/Death	Battle	Kavus battles the Barbary Kingdom

82	180	15-16	"There he set about plundering the countryside, and all the land ran with rivers of blood."	Wound/Death	Battle	Rostam and his army go to Hamaveran
83	181	19-22	"Spears and arrows glittered in the air, the earth swam with blood like a wine vat; so many lances thronged the sky it seemed a bed of close-packed reeds, and abandoned armour and severed heads, still helmeted, lay scattered on the ground."	Wound/Death	Battle	Rostam fights with the Three Kings at Hamaveran
84	198	14-15	"And now in Afrasyab's name I shall make this plain a sea of blood."	Wound/Death	Battle	The Persian Army Sets Out against Sohrab
85-87	205	18-22	"He saw Sohrab in the midst of the Persian ranks, the ground beneath his feet awash with wine-red blood; his spear, armour, and hands were smeared with blood and he seemed drunk with slaughter. Like a raging lion Rostam burst out in fury, 'Bloodthirsty Turk, who challenged you from the Persian ranks?'"	Wound/Death	Battle	The First Combat Between Rostam and Sohrab
88	205-206	35-2	"He didn't destroy one warrior from this host, while I, for my part, killed many Persians and soaked the ground with their blood."	Death/Wound	Battle	Sohrab and Rostam in camp at night - Sohrab speaking to Human about the battle
89	208	11-	"They closed in combat, wrestling hand to hand, and mingled blood	Wound	Duel/Battle	Sohrab and Rostam fight

		13	and sweat poured from their bodies."			
90	211	10-12	"Cold sighs on his lips, his face besmeared with blood and tears, Rostam mounted Rakhsh and rode to the Persian camp, lamenting aloud, tormented by the thought of what he had done."	Wound	Battle	Rostam killed Sohrab and rode back to the Persian camp
91	218	7-9	"Blood ties and love will not stay hidden long; you've sisters in my harem, and Sudabeh loves you like a mother."	x	Family	Kavus speaking to Seyavash about visiting Sudabeh and the harem - Sudabeh's love for Seyavash
92	223	9-10	"The wise say that, in cases like this honour demands blood."	Wound/Death	Punishment	Kavus considering what Sudabeh has said (Seyavash abused her) and punishment if true
93	233	7-10	"A dust storm sprang up and toppled my banner, and then on every side streams of blood began to flow; they swept away my tent, and my army that numbered over a thousand was mere lopped heads and sprawled bodies."	Wound/Death	Battle/Dream	Afrasyab's Dream
94	233-234	38-3	"If the king fights with Seyavash, the face of the world will turn crimson as brocade with the blood that's shed; the Persians will not leave one Turk alive, and	Death	Battle	Afrasyab's Dream - wise men interpreting the dream

			the king will regret giving battle."			
95	240	20-21	"Get on with your task of vengeance; attack by night and make a second Oxus of their blood."	Death	Revenge/Battle	Kay Kavus's Answer to Seyavash
96	241	16-18	"Our priests advised us to turn aside from war, as we had secured all we had fought for and there was no point in shedding more blood."	Death	Advise against Battle	Kay Kavus's Answer to Seyavash
97	247	20-22	"They have fought for too long, blind to the ways of peace; through you we shall rest from battles and the longing for blood-revenge."	Revenge/Death	Battle/Revenge	Afrasyab and Seyavash meet in peace
98	255	29-30	"My spilt blood will set Iran and Turan to wailing, and all the world will be in turmoil."	Death	Death, Execution	Seyavash aware that he will be killed after becoming related to Afrasyab
99	261	25-26	"He said. 'Affection sprung from our common blood guides you to speak like this.'"	x	Blood ties	Garsivaz reports to Afrasyab about Seyavash saying he will be a threat - Afrasyab responds
100	262	3-5	"I've made a blood alliance with him; I gave him my daughter, the light of my eyes, and I've renounced all thoughts of vengeance against Iran."	x	Blood ties	Afrasyab speaking to Garsivaz about Seyavash
101	267	19	[...] Blood clogged her musky	Wound	Lament	Queen Farigis

			curls, tears stained her face, [...]"			laments over Seyavash suggesting he will die soon.
102	268	32-34	"Soon, by Afrasyab's command, my luck will sink to sleep; though I am innocent they will cut my head off, and my crown will be soaked in my vitals' blood."	Death	Execution	Seyavash's Dream
103	269	26-27	"The Iranians drew up in battle order and prepared for bloodshed [...]"	Wound/Death	Battle	Afrasyab and Seyavash meet
104	270	10-11	"He said, 'Grasp your weapons, and make this plain a sea of blood to float a ship on.'"	Wound/Death	Battle	Afrasyab and Seyavash meet - Afrasyab orders men ready for battle
105	270	16-18	"They set a yoke on his shoulder and dragged him on foot, hemmed in by soldiers, his face bleeding, toward Seyavashgerd; the prince had never seen such a day as this."	Wound	Battle/Prisoner	Seyavash is wounded and captured by Gorui
106	270	20-21	"Let his blood sink in the hot soil there; fear nothing, and be quick about it."	Wound/Death	Execution	Afrasyab ordering Seyavash's execution
107	271	19-20	"Don't worry about spilling Seyavash's blood, delay is wrong when there's work to do."	Death	Execution	Damur and Gorui speaking
108	271	28-29	"But if I spill his blood, a whirlwind of vengeance will arise from Iran."	Death	Execution	Afrasyab considering Seyavash's execution

109	272	16-17	"You are planting a tree whose leaves will bring blood and whose fruit is vengeance."	Wound/Death/Illness	Metaphor/War	Farigis warning Afrasyab against killing Seyavash
110	273	10-12	"Knowing neither fear nor shame, they held a gold dish at his throat to catch the blood and severed the head of that silver cypress tree."	Death	Execution	Seyavash is killed
111	274	1-6	"They told him that Seyavash had been dragged on foot, bound, and with a yoke placed about his neck; that he had been forced to the ground by Gorui with his face twisted up like a sheep's while a basin was held to catch his blood; that his head had been severed and that his body lay like a silver cypress felled in a meadow."	Death	Execution	Seyavash is killed - Piran is told of what happened
112	274	22-24	"Farigis saw him through her bloody tears and said, 'See what evil you have brought upon me, you have thrown me living into the fire.'"	x	Lamentation	Farigis sees Piran riding towards her before he dismounts and joined in lamentation
113	275	6-7	"Afrasyab replied, 'Do as you say; you have made me unwilling to shed her blood.'"	Death	Execution	Piran convinces Afrasyab NOT to kill Farigis
114	276	7-10	"God cleansed all hatred from the monarch's mind; He knew that Seyavash had been maligned; He sighed for him, tortured with pain and guilt, Mourning his malice and the blood he'd spilt."	Wound/Death	Battle	Afrasyab regretting killing Seyavash

115	279	23-26	"From the place where Seyavash's blood had been spilt a green tree sprang up; on its leaves the prince's face could be seen, and its scent was like the scent of musk."	Death	Death/Rebirth	New life in Seyavashgerd - Piran takes Kay Khosrow to Afrasyab
116	287-288	35-3	"With a heavy heart, her face bathed in blood-stained tears, she opened the treasury door in front of her son and said to Giv, 'You have suffered a great deal, now see which precious stones in this treasury you desire, which of these gold coins and royal jewels, rubies, and gem-encrusted crowns."	Wound	Lament/Joy	Farigis remembers Seyavash's struggles and then allows Giv to choose his reward for returning Kay Khosrow to her
117	289	8-11	"The thronging lances made the battlefield seem like a reed bed, hiding from sight the sun and moon, but the lion's heart was enraged in the midst of this reed bed, and with the blood he shed he made it seem like a winepress."	Wound/Death	Battle	Piran Viseh Learns of Kay Khosrow's Flight
118	289	15-19	"The caves and plain were strewn with bodies, and the blood made the ground as red as a Judas-tree's blossom; the horsemen's cries and the wailing of their brass bugles echoed in the mountains, as though the crags' hearts were wrenched from their	Wound/Death	Battle	Piran Viseh Learns of Kay Khosrow's Flight

			places."			
119	289	20-21	"Brave Giv returned to Kay Khosrow, his breast covered in blood, his hands like a lion's claws, and said to him: [...]"	Wound/Death	Battle	Giv returns to Khosrow after battle - Piran Viseh Learns of Kay Khosrow's Flight
120	291	13-14	"I must go out on the plain, and my sword shall make their blood gush as high as the sun."	Wound/Death	Battle	Piran Viseh pursues Giv, Kay Khosrow and Farigis - Kay Khosrow speaking to Giv
121	293	8-13	"She said to Giv, 'Great warrior, you have undergone many trials and come on a long journey, but you should realize that this ages chieftain, who is wise, righteous, and possessed of a noble soul, was, after the just God Himself, the cause of my being saved from a bloody death; his kindness was like a curtain that kept my soul safe, and he asks for quarter now because of this.'"'	Death	Speech, death	Farigis speaking to Giv
122	293	13-17	"Giv said to her, 'O noblest of queens, and may our young king's soul flourish, I have sworn a great oath by the moon, the crown, and the exalted king's throne, that if this man falls into my hands on the day of battle, I shall make the ground as red with	Death	Battle	Giv responds to Farigis

			his blood as the blossom of the Judas-tree."			
123	293	23-24	"And as his blood drips on the ground you'll see Vengeance and love united equally."	Death	Battle	Kay Khosrow speaking to Giv about going to Piran and piercing his earlobe
124	294	17-19	"As Afrasyab was listening to Sepahram, a group of men appeared led by Piran, whose head, beard, and shoulders were covered with blood."	Wound	Wound	Afrasyab learns that Kay Khosrow and Farigis have fled
125	295	12-13	"He set off in fury for the Oxus, trailing his skirts in blood."	Wound/Death	Battle	Afrasyab learns that Kay Khosrow and Farigis have fled and goes to stop them crossing the Oxus
126	297	35-36	"With his heart seething with blood Afrasyab and his men turned back from the river."	x	Anger	Afrasyab pursues Kay Khosrow and Farigis to the Oxus and discovers he cannot follow them across
127	301	4-6	"Fariborz is King Kavus's son, he is a man who is worthy of the throne; he has no enemy blood in him, and he possesses farr, strength, a good reputation, and he is just."	x	Family ties	Tus explaining why he didn't swear loyalty to Kay Khosrow
128	302	16-17	"If I'd a spear with me now your chest and shoulders would be drenched in blood."	Wound/Death	Threat of battle/duel	Kay Khosrow approaches Kay Kavus's throne -

						Gudarz speaking to Tus
129	309-310	34-1	"You are this great man's son, you're every inch a king and you should ready yourself to exact revenge, to show whose blood runs in your veins."	x	Family ties	Forud learns of the approach of the Persian Army - Jarireh speaking to Forud about what to do
130	311	15-17	"The banner studded with stars, with a red ground and a black silk fringe, belongs to Bizhan who in battle stains the sky with blood."	Wound/Death	Battle	Tochvar explaining the banners of the chieftains to Forud
131	313	30-31	"He has skill and wealth and is of the blood royal, but he has scant respect for the king."	x	Family ties	Bahram speaking about Tus to Forud
132	316	11-12	"Blood flowed from the wound, and his soul departed; he fell, and his horse turned and galloped back to camp"	Death/wound	Battle	Forud kills Zarasp
133	317	28-30	"Forud has destroyed Zarasp, a great knight descended from Nozar, and he left Rivniz's body, weltering in its own blood."	Death	Battle	Giv speaking to Tus after Tus was chased off from fight with Forud
134	321	15-19	"Tus's response was to swear an oath of vengeance, saying, "I'll raze his castle and see the dust of its ruins obscure the sun; I'll fight a battle of revenge for Zarasp and destroy that malignant Turk; I'll make the stones of his castle glisten like coral with his blood.***"	Death/Wound	Battle/Revenge	Bizhan fights with Forud - Tus' response when Bizhan returns

135	323	14-16	"Then she went to the stable and with a sword slashed the remaining horses' bellies and lacerated their legs, and the horses' blood spattered her face."	Death/Wound	Lost battle/sacrifice	Forud fights with the Persians and is killed - Jarireh and the womenfolk carry out Forud's dying wishes so they are not captured.
136	323	31-32	"When he learns of his brother's spilled blood, you will lose all favour with him."	Death	Battle	Forud fights the Persians and is killed - Bahram speaking to Tus
137	324	3-5	"Gudarz and Giv and the other warriors wept to see him, and Tus too wept bloody tears, both for his son and for Forud."	x	Lamentation	Grieving Forud
138	327	9-10	"I must find some trick by which my sword can stain that golden hide with blood."	Wound/Death	Battle	Rostam planning on how to defeat the Akvan Div
139-140	331	1-3	"No animal is like him, and he'd turned that whole plain into a sea of blood; when I cut his head off with my dagger, blood spurted into the air like rain."	Wound/Death	Battle	Rostam recounting his battle with the Akvan Div
141	335	22-24	"With his bow Bizhan was like another Tahmures, the binder of demons, and his hawks' talons made havoc among the pheasants that their blood spotted the jasmine plants by the wayside."	Wound/Death	Hunting	Bizhan and Manizheh - Bizhan and Gorgin go to defeat the wild boar that have overrun the forest, killing people's animals and crops.

142	337	8-10	"When Bizhan heard this his young blood was roused; he agreed to the venture, partly from a thirst for fame, but partly too for the pleasure it promised."	x	Life blood, lust	Bizhan agrees to go to the meadows where Manizheh and her girls go to take some of them back for Khosrow - Gorgin's plan
143	340	18-20	"When he saw Bizhan, his blood boiled with rage; three hundred serving girls and musicians were there, singing to lutes and serving wine."	x	Rage	Garsivaz discovers Bizhan's presence in Afrasyab's palace with Manizheh
144	341	1-3	"Garsivaz saw what Bizhan was about, but he also saw the sharp dagger in his hand and knew that he meant it when he said he would soak his fists in their blood."	Death/Wound	Threat of war/battle/duel	Bizhan threatens Garsivaz unless he intercedes before Afrasyab so Bizhan can explain why he is there. Garsivaz then swears an oath to do so
145	342	32-33	"He said, 'How did you come to be here? Did you come to Turan looking for bloodshed?'"	Death/Wound	Battle	Piran arrives and asks Bizhan why he is there - hears Bizhan's tale and weeping - Bizhan is tied and naked awaiting gallows
146	343	21-23	"And Zal's sword is still not sheathed; his son Rostam is still lopping off heads with it and staining the sun with blood."	Death/Wound	Battle/Enemies	Piran speaking to Afrasyab - advisor
147	343		"If you spill Bizhan's blood, once	Death	Battle	Piran's advice to

		25- 26	again the dust of vengeance will rise up from Turan."			Afrasyab
148	344	32- 34	"Barefoot, clad only in her shift, her hair loose, her face smeared with blood and tears, Manizheh was dragged stumbling to the pit's edge."	Wound	Vengeance	Manizheh is punished and taken to the pit where Bizhan has been locked up by Afrasyab and Garsivaz
149	359	9	"[...] He hangs in chains, blood stains his clothes, [...]"	Wound	Punishment	Manizheh comes to Rostam and his caravan asking is help will come for Bizhan and tells of what has happened to Bizhan
150	359	34- 37	"I am Manizheh, Afrasyab's daughter, once the sun never saw me unveiled, but now my face is sallow with grief, my eyes are filled with bloody tears, and I wonder from house to house seeking charity."	Wound	Lament	Manizheh speaking to Rostam about her plight - doesn't know it is Rostam
151	363	35- 38	"Rostam lowered his lariat into the pit and brought Bizhan out of its depths. Wasted away with pain and suffering, his legs still shackled, his head uncovered, his hair and nails grown long, all his body caked with blood where the chains had eaten into the flesh."	Wound	Punishment	Bizhan is rescued from his punishment in the pit by Rostam
152	366	3-6	"Cries and a confused noise of combat resounded on all sides, and blood streamed beneath	Death	Battle	Rostam, Bizhan and 6 others attack Afrasyab's palace

			Afrasyab's door; every Turanian warrior who ventured forward was killed, and finally Afrasyab fled from his palace."			
153	368-369	36-2	"Warriors' heads fell like leaves from a tree, and the battlefield became a river of blood in which Turkish banners lay overturned and abandoned."	Death	Battle	Turks (led by Afrasyab) and Persians (led by Rostam) fight as the Persians try to leave Turan
154	373	26-30	"Piran gave a great cry, his mind turned dark as blood welled up from his liver into his mouth, and his soul departed; like a raging lion he fell on the mountainside, jerking spasmodically for a moment, until his mind rested from all thoughts of vengeance and battle."	Death	Battle	Piran is killed by Gudarz
155-158	374	3-11	"The he dipped his hand in Piran's wound, so that it was filled with blood, and - oh horror! - he drank the blood and smeared his face with it. He wept bitterly for Seyavash's shed blood and prayed to God, moaning in grief to Him for his seventy slain clansmen. He was ready to cut off his own head and would not have thought this an evil thing to do himself. He planted a banner in the ground next to Piran, so that	Death/Wound	Battle	Gudarz with Piran's dead body on top of a mountain.

			its shadow shaded the fallen warrior's head from the sun; then he turned back toward his own army, with blood dripping from his arm like a stream."			
159-160	375	13-17	"In an agony of grief Afrasyab summoned his army, and spoke to them at length about Piran, and the blood of his brother Farshidvard, and Ruin, the army's champion. 'Now,' he said, 'is the time for vengeance, for shedding blood, for fighting like lions."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab learns of the death of Piran, Farshidvard and other champions and swears an oath of revenge against Khosrow
161	375	22-26	"Now we stand before you, nobles and commoners alike, and even if the valleys and mountains should become a sea of blood, and our tall warriors lie felled on the ground, if the Lord of the moon is with us, not one of us shall turn away from this war."	Death/Wound	Imminent Battle	Afrasyab's army swear their loyalty
162	377	27-29	"Thirty thousand malevolent warriors, armed with maces and bows and arrows, were led by the general Aghriras, who made blood flow like water in an irrigation channel."	Death/Wound	Power of a general/battle	Afrasyab divides up his army as they cross the Oxus
163	379	34-36	"He doesn't want money, or a crown, or horses, or swords, or treasure, or an army - the only thing he wants is to spill the blood	Death	Battle	Shideh goes to Afrasyab and talks about Khosrow

			of his own relatives; this is all he talks of doing."			
164	380	25-27	"Let us put forward our champions in single combat; in this way we shall soak the desert sands with their blood."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab responds to Shideh - speaking about the battle and Khosrow
165	381	15-17	"And if I have sinned. What had Piran done, or Ruin, or Lahhak, or Farshidvard, that they had to strap saddles on their mounts and fight drenched in blood like maddened elephants?"	Wound/Death	Battle/War	Afrasyab sends a message to Kay Khosrow
166	381	25-26	"But I fear God's justice if blood is spilt on an evil day and so many innocent noblemen are beheaded on the field of battle."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab sends a message to Kay Khosrow
167	382	16-20	"And if you don't wish to fight him either, and are looking for some other kind of battle, let the army rest tonight, and when the sun lifts its golden crown above the mountains we can choose proud warriors from our forces; we'll turn the earth the colour of brocade with blood and topple our enemies to the ground."	Death	Battle/Duel	Afrasyab sends a message to Kay Khosrow - tries to come to a deal. If not accepted then offers a variety of duels.
168	382	20-23	"On the second day, at cockcrow, we'll tie war drums on our huge elephants, lead out champions to reinforce our fighters, and make streambeds run with blood."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab sends a message to Kay Khosrow

169	382	28-29	"The son made his obeisance and left; the father had tears in his eyes and thoughts of blood in his heart."	Death/Wound	Battle	Shideh leaves to take Afrasyab's message to Kay Khosrow
170	385-386	34-2	"If I am victorious in this battle, I shall not delay as you are advising me to; we'll attack on two fronts, crying our war cry; the plain will be awash with blood, and then we shall lead our warriors forward, massed like a moving mountain."	Death	Battle	Kay Khosrow's answer to Afrasyab
171	388	4-7	"Then, of necessity, they attacked one another with Rumi maces, with swords and arrows, and though the earth beneath them turned black with their blood these two horsemen did not weary of battle."	Wound	Battle/Duel	Kay Khosrow and Shideh fight
172	389	8-10	"I know where his strength and valor come from but, for all his God-given <i>farr</i> , if I can face him on foot in combat I will make his blood flow fast enough!"	Death/Wound	Battle/Duel	Shideh speaking to the translator after asking Khosrow to fight on foot
173	389	17-19	"They attacked one another on that plain like mammoths, and the dust was mixed with their blood."	Wound	Battle/Duel	Shideh and Khosrow fight on foot
174	390	1-2	"Shideh's interpreter saw men lift the blood-smeared body of his prince from the dust and carry it to the king's army."	Death	Battle/Duel	Shideh is killed by Khosrow
175	390	30-	"And he wept bloody tears from	x	Lamentation	Afrasyab laments

		31	his eyes, stricken by the agony whose cure is no physician's care,"			Shideh's death
176	391	14- 17	"So many men from Turan were killed that the battlefield became a sea of blood, and the battle went on until the sky was so dark that the combatants' eyes could not make out their opponents.	Death	Battle	Kay Khosrow's Second Battle with Afrasyab
177	391	27- 31	"He prayed, scraping his face against the dust, And said, 'Great Judge of all that's pure and just, You know how long I've suffered, all the days That I've endured this evil sovereign's ways: Punish this evildoer now with blood, and be A guide to safeguard and deliver me.'"	Death	Battle/Prayer	Kay Khosrow praying before the second day of battle
178	392	16- 17	"The countryside was like a cloth steeped in blood and trampled beneath the horses' hooves."	Death/Wound	Battle	Second day of battle between Kay Khosrow and Afrasyab
179	393	5-6	"The din of the clash of weapons sounded on both sides, and streams of blood covered the ground."	Death/Wound	Battle	Second day of battle between Kay Khosrow and Afrasyab
180	393	21- 22	"The plain was like an Oxus of blood, a mass of severed heads and toppled warriors."	Death	Battle	Second day of battle between Kay Khosrow and Afrasyab
181	393	25- 28	"Headless bodies and bodiless heads, the crash of huge maces, the glitter of daggers and sharp- bladed swords - all these put the	Death	Battle	Second day of battle between Kay Khosrow and Afrasyab

			sun to flight; it was as if a black cloud had arisen and rained down blood upon the battlefield."			
182	394	12-13	"Which of our heroes is still eager to fight, with the ground soaked in blood, the air filled with dust?"	Death	Battle	Garsivaz complaining to his brother , Afrasyab, and tries to get him to order a retreat to keep his troops on side
183	395	9-10	"We shall make all the face of this plain like a sea of blood, and the shining sun will be as the Pleiades compared with our glory."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab and his soldiers on return to camp
184	397	3-6	"How sorely then the Turk's commander wept for those of his kinsmen who were no longer alive, for his dear son, his nobles, and his relatives; such a cry went up, you would have said the clouds were a lion weeping blood."	Death/Wound	Lament/Battle	Afrasyab has crossed the Oxus and joined the army at Qarakhan where each person told of the battle.
185	397	23-24	"The whole army, with tears in their eyes and blood-smeared faces, made their way toward Golzaryun."	Wound	March to battle	Afrasyab moves his army to Gang on advice as there are means for war there to face Khosrow
186-187	398	30-35	"Kay Khosrow addressed his troops: "Today we shall fight in a different way; do not shed the blood of any Turks who yield to us, whose hearts regret that they	Death	Battle	Khosrow speaks to his army as they approach Afrasyab's forces

			once fought against us; guide no one toward evil! But if someone seeks war with us, and his vengeful heart cannot be won over, it is licit for you to shed his blood, and to pillage and plunder his possessions."			
188	400	15-16	"The nails of so many horseshoes made the ground like an iron mountain, and the plain became a sea of ruby-red blood."	Death	Battle	4th day of battle between Afrasyab and Khosrow's forces
189	402	9-10	"We must attack like spreading fire and ambush him, and make the plain flow with his blood like another Oxus."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab's orders after the Persians are winning
190-191	402	32-34	"He sought out the Persian dead, preparing shrouds for them and cleansing them of blood and filth. Following ancient custom he built a tomb for them. Then, turning from the dirt and blood of battle, he struck camp and led his army in pursuit of the Turkish king's army."	Death/Wound	Battle	Khosrow after the battle.
192	404-405	34-1	"He said, 'The man who built these ramparts didn't do so lazily or half-heartedly; he had spilt Persian royal blood and knew he had ignited the fires of vengeance in us.'"	Death	Speech	Kay Khosrow reaches Gang Dezh
193	407-408	37-1	"Consider that I am living in my fortified city, and you are camped	x	Speech	Afrasyab addressing Khosrow

			on an open plain while your head is filled with longings for revenge, your heart with the thirst for blood."			
194	410	35-37	"And in this recent war the ground turned to sludge with the blood of men slain from Gudarz's clan; you look for nothing but trouble and ways to do harm."	Death	Battle	Kay Khosrow's reply to Afrasyab
195	414	8-10	"The luck of the Turkish troops was at an end, and they wept, their eyes filled with bloody tears."	x	Lament	Persians take control of Afrasyab's palace - Turks are defeated
196	417	5-7	"As God is my witness I wept tears of blood for this act of his, as did your relative, Jahn, whose two legs are now fretted by your shackles."	x	Lament/Grief	The Principal Queen speaks to Khosrow
197	417	16-18	"Do not rush to humiliate those without guilt, do not harm them, or spill their blood; it is unworthy of a king to cut off the head of someone who has done no wrong."	Death	Revenge, Control	The Principal Queen speaks to Khosrow
198	418	9-12	"Your home is Iran; expel all thoughts of hatred from your hearts, act in this land with kindness; so much blood has been spilt here that the earth has turned to mud, and the inhabitants are terrified of us."	Death	Battle	Khosrow speaks to the Persians

199	418	14-16	"Soon I shall distribute the Turkish treasure to the army, but see that you drive the desire to spill blood from your hearts."	Death/Wound	Want for revenge	Khosrow speaks to the Persians
200-201	421	12-18	"The mountains, deserts, hillsides, and wastelands have been covered with two armies as numerous as ants and locusts; the earth has become like a sea of blood in this war of vengeance between Iran's and China's and Gang Dezh's warriors. If God thought to concentrate all the blood of these slain men into one place it would be like the Red Sea, and both armies would be lost in its depths."	Death	Reflection on battle	Afrasyab sends a letter to Kay Khosrow
202	421	21-26	"Go no further in this business; I, who am of the seed of the magician Feraydun, have been mother and father to you, and if you are so maddened by your father's spilt blood that you have no respect for me, you should realise that this was the fault of Seyavash himself; he was to blame, and my heart was wrung with pain and grief at what happened."	Death	Reflection on Execution	Afrasyab sends a letter to Kay Khosrow
203	422	34-37	"So many arrows were shot that it seemed they rained down from the clouds like dew, and from	Death	Reflection on battle	Afrasyab sends a letter to Kay Khosrow

			dawn until the sun turned red in the west the ground beneath the cavalry's horseshoes was awash with blood."			
204	424	30-34	"The battle was like an ocean above which neither the sun nor the moon could be seen; like waves whipped up by the wind warriors came forward squadron by squadron, and as the sun rose in the turning heavens you would say that the plain and mountain slopes were nothing but blood."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab's Night Attack on Khosrow
205	425	3-5	"The Turkish king stared in astonishment; all the plain was a mass of brains and blood, the colour of the fruits of the red jujube tree."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab's Night Attack on Khosrow
206-207	425	13-16	"Everywhere there were mountainous heaps of dead, from which flowed rivers of the blood of men belonging to both armies. The air was like a dark blue tent, the ground like a sea of blood, arrows made the sky like an eagle's wings."	Death	Battle	Afrasyab's Night Attack on Khosrow
208	428	3-4	"No matter how long it takes me, my grasp will close at last on that bloodthirsty man."	Want for death	Battle	Kay Khosrow speaking to Rostam about what he will do - post Night Attack

209	431-432	33-1	"Every year this man put his sweat and effort into shedding blood; he cut off the head of King Nozar, a man of ancient royal lineage; he killed his own brother, he was evil through and through, he killed a king; he was malevolent, infamous, and embittered."	Death	Killing	Kay Kavus's Letter in answer to Kay Khosrow
210-211	432	27-31	"He went around the gardens Seyavash had made and saw the spot where the dish that held Seyavash's blood had been emptied. He prayed to the just God, 'That You may be my guide until the same way, I shed Afrasyab's blood like water in this same place.'"	Death	Execution	Kay Khosrow receives Kay Kavus's letter
212	434	35-36	"If you do not pay attention to my words now, you will find yourself wading through the blood of many men."	Threat of death	Threat of battle	Message to King of Makran
213	443	2-5	"He has not followed Your just ways, he despises everyone in the world: You know that he is not just a man, that he does not follow a righteous path, and that he has spilled the blood of many innocent people."	Death	Battle	Kay Khosrow reaches Gang Dezh - Khosrow prays
214	447	11-12	"When a highborn person's heart becomes bloodthirsty, he will not sit on his royal throne for long."	Threat of death	Threat of battle	Hum captures Afrasyab - Afrasyab wanders alone

215- 216	447	12- 15	"No matter how splendid a monarch he may be, no matter how far his reign extends or how blessed by Fortune he is, when he sheds blood enemies will appear; it is well for that king who does not shed royal blood!"	Death	Royal assessment/Battle	Hum captures Afrasyab - Afrasyab wanders alone
217	448	31- 32	"You should not have shed royal blood, and then you wouldn't have had to hide yourself in the depths of a cave."	Death	Murder/Execution	Hum speaking to Afrasyab
218	449	28- 31	"When I went in he jumped up and set his feet firmly against the granite walls, but I tied up his arms as hard as stone with my belt, so tightly in fact that blood spurted from beneath his fingernails."	Wound	Capture	Hum telling Gudarz what he did with Afrasyab
219	451	4-5	"Garsivaz saw him emerge from the water, his eyes filled with blood, his heart with anguish, and he gave a great cry: [...]"	x	Reunification	Garsivaz sees his brother, Afrasyab
220	451	16- 17	"As Afrasyab heard this he wept, and his bloody tears dripped into the water."	x	Reunification	Afrasyab sees his brother, Garsivaz
221	452	6-12	"First I remind you that you shed the blood of your brother, who never did any harm to any nobleman; and then with a sharp sword you slit the throat of the world's king, Nozar, a great monarch descended from Iraj, an	Death	Execution	Kay Khosrow speaks to Afrasyab

			act that raised such tumult in the world it was as if the day of God's Judgement had come; and third, there was Seyavash, the noblest of all horsemen, whose head you cut off like a sheep's, defying the high heavens with your wickedness."			
222	452	23-24	"His white hair and beard were stained with ruby-coloured blood, and seeing this his brother despaired of life"	Death	Execution	Kay Khosrow kills Afrasyab
223	452	28-35	"This was a king endowed with divine glory, but his anger always meant chains and a dungeon: if a king sheds blood he will be abhorred by the turning heavens, which will see he receives his punishment. A priest once said to King Bahram, who was so impetuous, 'Do not shed the blood of the innocent! If you wish your crown to stay on your head, see that you stay always patient and compassionate. Think of what your crown itself has said to your head, May your brains and wisdom be constant companions!'"	Death	Battle, Royal authority	Kay Khosrow kills Afrasyab
224	453	1-3	"In his agony he stood before Kay Khosrow, and his cheeks that had turned a pallid blue were stained	Wound	Execution	Garsivaz is brought before Kay Khosrow

			with bloody tears."			
225	454	4-8	"You have given no one else the treasure and fame that you gave to me; I asked you for a warrior who would avenge the blood of Seyavash, and I saw my farsighted grandson, ambitious, glorious and wise, a man who outshines all former kings."	Death	Execution	Kavus speaking to god - The Occulation of Kay Khosrow
226	480	11-14	"He said: 'Evil is mine, and my knowledge brings me only evil; would that I had died before your brother Zarir, and not seen his body weltering in blood and dust, or that my father had killed me and this evil fate had not been mine."	Death/Wound	Battle	Jamasp consults the astrological tables - Rostam and Esfandiar
227	481	10-12	"You abandoned Balkh and travelled to Zavol, thinking all battles were banquets, and forgetting the sight of your father Lohrasp pierced by Arjsp's sword, lying prone in his blood."	Death	Battle	Esfandiar speaks to his father
228	483	23-25	"When he sought revenge for the death of Seyavash, and made war on Afrasyab, he turned the world to a sea of blood."	Death	War	Katayun's Advice to Esfandiar about Rostam
229	484	10-13	"If you're determined to go, this mission is the work of Ahriman; at least don't take your children to this hell, because the wise will not	x	Lament	Katayun's Advice to Esfandiar

			think well of you if you do," and as she spoke she wept bloody tears and tore out her hair."			
230	485	16-20	"Esfandyar ordered his son Bahman to come before him, and said to him: 'Saddle your black horse, and dress yourself in a robe of Chinese brocade; put a royal diadem studded with fine jewels on your head, so that whoever sees you will single you out as the most splendid of all warriors and know that you are of royal blood."	x	Farr, Family	Esfandyar instructing his son Bahman
231	500	34-36	"If Kavus's blood had flowed then, how could he have sired Seyavash, who in turn fathered Kay Khosrow, who placed the crown on Lohasp's head?"	Death	Death, What might have happened, family	Rostam speaks to Esfandyar
232	501	18-20	"He spoke and, as his grip tightened, Esfandyar's cheeks turned crimson; bloody liquid spurted from beneath his nails, and the pain showed in his face."	Wound	Battle	Rostam and Esfandyar speak and shake hands
233-234	510	7-10	"If you're set on bloodshed say so, and I'll have my Zaboli warriors come here, and you can send Persians against them, and the two groups can show their mettle. We'll watch from the sidelines, and your desire for blood and combat will be satisfied."	Death/Wound	Battle	Rostam speaks to Esfandyar

235	511	1-3	"And so they separated, sick at heart, their mouths smeared with dust and blood, their armour and bardings dented and pierced, their horses wearied by their struggle."	Wound	Battle	Rostam and Esfandyar fight
236	512	6-7	"Once he was on foot Faramarz was able to overcome him, and his red blood stained the dust of the battlefield."	Death/wound	Battle	Nushazar and Mehrnush are killed by Faramarz and Zavareh
237	512	8-12	"When Bahram saw his brother killed, and the dirt beneath him mirred with his blood, he made his way to where Esfandyar had been in combat with Rostam, and said, 'Lion-hearted warrior, an army has come up from Sistan, and your two sons Nushazar and Mehrnush have been pitifully slain by them.'	Death	Battle	Nushazar and Mehrnush are killed by Faramarz and Zavareh
238-239	512-513	34-10	"To avenge a peacock's death, no king would take The worthless life of an ignoble snake: Look to your weapons now, you wretch, defend Yourself, your days on earth are at an end: I'll stake your thighs against your horse's hide, My arrows will transfix you to his side And you and he shall be like water when It's mixed with milk and can't be found again. From now on no base slave shall ever strive To spill a prince's blood: if	Death	Battle	Esfandyar speaks to Rostam

			you survive I'll bind your arms - without delay I'll bring You as my captive to our court and king, And if my arrows leave you here for dead Thin of my sons, whose blood your warriors shed."			
240	513	23- 25	"Blood poured from Rostam's body, and as his strength ebbed from him this great mountain of a man began to tremble and shake."	Wound	Battle	Rostam and Esfandyar renew the battle
241	515	32- 35	"And I hurt him so severely that his blood turned the earth to mud; his body was a mass of arrow wounds but he made his way on foot up that mountain side, and then, still encumbered with his sword and armour, he hurried across the river."	Wound	Battle	Rostam and Esfandyar - Esfandyar speaking about Rostam
242	518	4-5	"With his beak he sucked blood from the lesions, and drew out eight arrow heads."	Wound	Battle/Healing	The Simorgh heals Rostam
243	518	26- 29	"The Simorgh said: 'Out of my love for you, I shall tell you a secret from heaven: Fate will harry whoever spills Esfandyar's blood, he will live in sorrow, and his wealth will be taken from him; his life in this world will be one of suffering, and torment will be his after death.'"	Death	Battle	Simorgh tells Rostam about a prophecy

244	522	14-15	"He grasped at his black horses' mane as his blood soaked into the earth beneath him."	Death	Battle	Rostam follows the Simorgh's instructions and shoots Esfandyar in the eye
245	522	22-24	"Slowly he came to himself, and grasped the arrow: when he withdrew it, its head and feathers were soaked in blood."	Death/wound	Battle	Esfandyar removes the arrow from his eye
246-247	522	28-29	"They ran to him, and saw him lying soaked in his blood, a bloody arrow in his hand."	Death	Battle	Bahman and Pashutan rush to Esfandyar
248-249	523	1-5	"The young men cradled the fallen hero's head, wiping away the blood. With sorrow in his heart, his face smeared with blood, Pashutan lamented over him: 'O Esfandyar, prince and world conqueror, who has toppled this mountain, who has trampled underfoot this raging lion?'"	Death/Wound	Battle	Pashutan finds Esfandyar
250-251	524	8-11	"Zal addressed Rostam: 'My son, I weep heart's blood for you, because I have heard from our priests and astrologers that whoever spills Esfandyar's blood will be harried by Fate: his life in this world will be harsh, and when he dies he will inherit torment.'"	Death	Battle aftermath	Zal, Zavareh and Faramarz rush to Rostam
252	527	21-22	"The women fainted, and their black curls were clotted with blood."	Death	Battle aftermath	Lamentation over Esfandyar's death - Goshtap learns that

						Esfandyar has been killed
253	527	34-36	"For the sake of your throne you imbrued your son in blood, and may your eyes never see the throne or good fortune again!"	Death	Battle aftermath	Pashutan speaks to the king - Goshtasp learns that Esfandyar has been killed
254	536	11-13	"Shaghad replied: 'The turning heavens have dealt justly with you. How often you've boasted of the blood you've spilt, of your devastation of Iran, and of your battles."	Death	Battle/Attack	Rostam and Shaghad speak after Shaghad attacks Rostam
255	536-537	17-2	"At that moment the king of Kabol reached them: he saw Rostam's open, bleeding wounds and said, My lord, what has happened to you here in our hunting grounds? I shall hurry to bring doctors to heal your wounds, and to dry my tears of sympathy for your suffering."	Wound	Battle/Attack	Rostam and the king speak after Rostam is attacked by Shaghad
256	538	29-32	"He made his way to the hunting grounds, where the pits had been dug, and when he saw his father's face, and his body lying on the ground, soaked in blood, he roared like a lion in pain."	Death	Battle	Faramarz finds his father in the hunting grounds of Kabol
257	539	4-5	"He removed his father's armour, and the clothes beneath it, and gently washed the blood from his body and beard."	Death	Battle	Faramarz cleans Rostam's body
258	540	23-	"Kabol's king, his body covered in	Wound	Battle	Faramarz marches on

		24	blood, was flung into a chest hoisted on an elephant's back."			Kabol
259	540	27-29	"They trussed the king so tightly that his bones showed through his skin, and he was suspended upside down in one of the pits, his body covered in filth, his mouth filled with blood."	Wound	Battle	Faramarz marches on Kabol and punishes Kabol's king
260	542	27-33	"My head is filled with pain, my heart with blood, and my brain is empty of everything but thoughts of revenge: revenge for our two warriors Nushazar and Mehrnush, whose agonies caused such sorrow, and revenge for Esfandyar who had revived the fortunes of our nobility, who was slain in Zabolestan, for whose death the very beasts were maddened with grief, and the frescoed portraits in our palaces wept."	x	Speech	Bahaman speaks to his councillors when he accedes to the throne
261	542	34-36	"Our ancestors, when they were brave young warriors, did not hide their valor in obscurity, but acted as the glorious king Feraydun did, who destroyed Zahak in revenge for the blood of Jamshid."	Death	Speech	Baham speaks to his councillors when he ascends to the throne

262- 264	543	3-9	"When Kay Khosrow escaped from Afrasyab's clutches he made the world like a lake of blood: my father demanded vengeance for Lohrasp, and piled the earth with a mountain of dead. And Faramarz, who exalts himself above the shining sun, went to Kabol pursuing vengeance for his father's blood, and razed the whole province to the ground: blood obscured all the land, and men rode their horses over the bodies of the dead."	Death/revenge	Speech	Bahman speaks to his councillors
265	543	26- 27	"I will fill all the land of Sistan with blood, to slake my longing for vengeance."	Death	Battle	Bahman invades Sistan
266	553	17- 18	"Invoking God to protect her, she said, 'Don't spill my blood; I'll tell you everything you've asked.'"	Threat of Death	Speech	Darab questions the Fuller's wife about himself and becomes a knight
267	556	12- 13	"They fought hand to hand, and blood flowed like a river."	Death	Battle	Darab meets with Greek forces
268	556	17- 18	"The lion pressed on to the Greek camp, guided by his sword's search for victims, till the earth was awash with a sea of Greek blood."	Death	Battle	Darab meets with Greek forces
269	556	31- 33	"The Persian warriors followed in his wake like lions, killing so many of the Greek troops that the ground turned to a quagmire with	Death	Battle	Darab meets with Greek forces

			their blood."			
270	560	19-21	"The land was awash with blood from the rain of javelins and arrows; cries resounded from all sides, and everywhere heaps of dead bodies could be seen."	Death	Battle	Darab defeats Sho'ayb
271	570	11-12	"Even though you have washed your hands in Greek blood, you have escaped safe and sound from the Greek army."	Death	Battle	Dara's second battle against Sekander - Sekander's heralds cry out to the Persians
272	571	1-4	"Soon he'll be here, too soon, and Persia then Will be a sea of blood, this country's men, Its women and its children, will be made The captives of this conquering renegade."	Death	Battle	Dara's second battle against Sekander - Dara addresses the messengers
273	571	31-33	"Such a cry went up from both hosts that it seemed to split the ears of the heavens; the warriors' blood transformed the earth to a sea, and headless bodies lay strewn about the battlefield."	Death	Battle	The Third battle between Sekander and Dara and Dara's flight to Kerman
274	572	5-16	"Whoever seeks out God's forgiveness for The deeds that he's committed in this war, Or looks for my protection, will soon find That I've a merciful and generous mind. I'll help the wounded, and I will not shed The blood of enemies who were misled. Since I'm aware the God	Death	Battle/Threat/Forgive	The third battle between Sekander and Dara - Sekander takes residence in Estakhr and makes a proclamation

			of victory Has given this imperial crown to me, My hand won't touch what isn't mine; my soul Has chosen light and wisdom as its goal. But as for those who'd thwart my wishes, they Will find a dragon standing in their way."			
275	575	31-32	"I will bring doctors from India and Greece, and I shall weep tears of blood for your pain."	Lament	Battle	Sekander speaks to and holds Dara as he dies
276	577	24-26	"Sekander made a splendid tomb for him according to local custom and, now that the time for Dara's eternal sleep had come, the blood was washed from his body with clear rosewater."	Death	Battle	Dara dies
277	580	23-24	"Even his enemies felt sorrow when his blood was spilled, and may God conduct him to the blue vault of heaven."	Death	Letter of Battle	Sekander's letter to Delaray, the Mother of Roshanak
278	581	32-35	"I have heard too of the tomb you made for Dara and the gibbets you made for Mahyar and that malignant slave Janushyar (when someone spills a king's blood, he is not long for this world)."	Death	Letter	Delaray's reply to Sekander
279	588	22-24	"You in turn asked, 'How can the subtle arguments of a wise man penetrate a heart that's been darkened by feasting, warfare, bloodshed, and constant fighting against enemies?'"	Death	Advice	Sekander speaks to a sage -sage gives advice

280	588	26-29	"You said that in the passing of the years your heart had rusted with spilled blood, and how was it possible for this to be righted, and for you to frame words in such darkness?"	Death	Advice	Sekander speaks to a sage - sage gives advice
281	589	17-20	"If you do as I instruct you, your blood and marrow will grow strong and your body more energetic, your heart will feel happiness of springtime, your cheeks will flush with health, and you will be eager to do noble deeds."	x	Life/Health	Indian Physician gives Sekander an ointment to keep him in good health
282	593	27-29	"If the earth becomes a sea with our blood, and the low places become hills of corpses, even if the heavens rain down mountainous rocks, no enemy will ever see our backs in battle."	Death	Battle	The army asks Sekander for his forgiveness
283	596	13-15	"With a roar the Indian warriors called out their agreement, and they came forward to gaze at Foor's hacked and bloody body."	Death	Battle	Sekander kills Foor - the Indian troops mourn
284	604	16-18	"If I had my arms and armour here, all your palace would be a sea of blood; I'd have killed you, or ripped open my own belly in front of those who hate me!"	Death	Battle	Sekander speaks to Qaydafeh
285	604	30-31	"I am not in the habit of shedding blood, nor of attacking rulers."	Death	Advice	Qaydafeh Gives Sekander Some Advice

286	604	32-33	"Know that whoever spills a king's blood will see nothing but fire as his reward."	Death	Advice	Qaydafeh Gives Sekander Some Advice
287-288	607	32-34	"He will fall suddenly into my trap and pay for the blood he has spilled in the world, the blood of Dara, and of Sind's nobility, and of brave Foor, the king of India."	Death	Revenge	Sekander takes precautions against Taynush
289	609	5-8	"If a man like Sekander who comes from Greece and turns countries into seas of blood with his sword, can be turned back from your door with a few gifts, we say that all the wealth in the world is not worth one coin if this can be achieved."	Death	Advice	Advisors speak to Qaydafeh - Sekander's treaty with Qaydafeh and his return
290	613	5-7	"And the star of those who were killed fighting against me had declined: they deserved their grief and to have their blood shed, since an unjust man cannot escape his end."	Death	Battle	Sekander travels to the land of the Brahmins
291	614	23-26	"So much blood was spilled that the land from end to end was like the sea of China, with here and there mounds of the dead piled up."	Death	Battle	Sekander reaches the western sea and Abyssinia - Sekander fights with the people of Abyssinia
292	616	9-11	"The king approached the dragon and saw that he was like a huge dark cloud: his tongue purple, his eyes blood red, and fire issuing continuously from his maw."	x	Description	Sekander fights a dragon

				x	Description	
293	623	9-10	"They have faces like animals, with black tongues and bloodshot eyes; they have black skin and teeth like a boar's."	x		Sekander constructs a wall to defeat Yajuj and Majuj
294	629	7-8	"It is not my habit to shed blood, and besides it would be unworthy of my faith for me to do evil in this way."	Death/Wound	Envoy	Sekander visits the Emperor of China disguised as his own envoy - the Emperor responds
295	631	23-25	"Live within limits and do not shed the blood of the great families, which will make you cursed until the resurrection."	Death	Letter	Arestali's Reply to Sekander's letter
296	636	11-16	"You seemed a storm cloud charged with hail: I said That you could never die, that you had shed So much blood, fought so many wars, that there must be some secret you would not declare, Some talisman that fate had given you To keep you safe whatever you might do."	Death	Lament	Sekander's mother mourns for him
297	647	10-12	"If you give the order, we shall make mountains level with the plains, and with our swords we shall make the ocean's water into blood."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir gathers an army - the warriors speak back to him
298	648	20-21	"Then they fell on one another like warring lions, and blood was spilled in rivers."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir's victory over Bahman

299	649	12-13	"With a roar the columns attacked, their banners bravely fluttering, their swords lopping off heads, empurpled with blood."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir's War against Ardavan
300	650	7-8	"Sabak left the other chieftains and cleansed Ardavan's body of blood."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir's War against Ardavan and Ardavan is killed
301	650-651	36-2	"He sought aid from God in his expedition to spill the blood of these thieves, but when he entered Kurdish territory, a numberless host welcomed him with war."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir's War with the Kurds
302	652	4-6	"The grass was crowned with their blood, the plain was filled with their severed heads and limbs, and the heaps of dead were dreadful to see."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir attacks the sleeping Kurds
303	664	26-28	"If indeed I'm worthy of the gallows and deserve to have my blood spilled, wait until this child is born, and then do as the king has ordered."	Death	Confession	Ardavan's daughter asks the priest to protect her child by Ardeshir after she tries to poison Ardeshir
304	665	5-6	"He had a place set aside for the princess in his palace and looked after her as if she were his own flesh and blood."	x	Family	The priest/vizier takes Ardavan's daughter into his care
305	666	13-15	"The king asked what was hidden under its seal, and the vizier answered, 'My own warm blood is, there, and my shameful parts,	Wound	Castration	Vizier gives the king his parts in a box so he could not be accused of getting

			cut cleanly from my body."			Ardavan's daughter pregnant whilst in his care
306	673	13-17	"He raised above the mass of men those who were skilled in strategy, and proclaimed, 'Let anyone who seeks to satisfy the king, who has soaked the ground in his enemies' blood, come forward and receive a royal robe from me, and his name will be remembered in the world.'"	Death	Speech	Ardeshir's reforms
307	674	25-27	"But if his head was filled with rebellion, his heart with hatred, and his entrails with bloodlust, Ardesir would distribute money to the army, so that there were no malcontents in the ranks."	x	Reform	Ardeshir's reforms
308	675	15-17	"After you are victorious, shed no one's blood, because if men have to flee from you, they will hate you the more."	Death	Battle	Ardeshir's instructions to the commander
309	683	14-15	"The Roman emperor sent an envoy to Shapur, saying 'How much blood will you shed before God, for the sake of money?'"	Death	Envoy	Shapur's war against Rome
310	694	6-8	"Two weeks passed, and finally the ass's skin became pliable enough for Shapur to emerge from it, his body covered in blood, his heart filled with pain."	Wound	Release	The Empress's servant frees Shapur from the Ass's skin

311	699	9-12	"Cries of combat and the noise of arms crashing against armour came from every side: you'd have said the sky had split open, and that the sun dripped blood down through the air."	Wound/Death	Battle	Shapur attacks by night and takes the Roman Emperor prisoner
312	713	22-24	"Then he shot two arrows in the doe's head, so that they protruded like antlers, while the blood ran down over her muzzle."	Wound	Hunting	The story of Bahram and the Harp-Player - Bahram takes the harp-girl out hunting
313	713	32-34	"He trampled her beneath his camel's hooves, and blood spurted from her breast and arms."	Death	Hunting/murder	The story of Bahram and the Harp-Player - Bahram kills the slave girl
314	714	3-5	"The lion lay drenched in blood atop the ass, and their hunter returned in triumph to the palace, razed the whole province to the ground: blood obscured all the land, and men rode their horses over"	Death	Hunting	Bahram shows his prowess as a hunter with a group of companions
315-316	718	4-9	"So three months passed, and then the world was thrown into turmoil by a rumour about the king's blood, causing men to say that he had been an unjust shepherd to his flock, and now all his sins were returning to him. Blood began to flow from Yazdegerd's nose one day, and doctors came to him from every quarter."	Life/wound	Rumour/Illness	Yazdegerd travels to Tus and is killed by a white horse

317	718	19-20	"He stayed in his litter day and night, and still from time to time blood flowed from his nose."	Wound	Illness	Yazdegerd travels to Tus and is killed by a white horse
318	718	23-24	"In a short time the flow of blood from his nose stopped, and he and his advisors rested in relief."	Wound	Illness	Yazdegerd travels to Tus and is killed by a white horse
319	721	25-32	"They chose an eloquent and perceptive priest named Javanui as their messenger; he was to go to Monzer and say to him, 'Protector of Iran and support of the valiant; when our throne became vacant our country turned as red with blood as a francolin's wing, and we asked you to be our lord, since we thought our land worthy of you. But now you are plundering us, shedding our blood, and spreading rapine and warfare through our land, although previously you were not an evil ruler."	Death	Letter	The Persians write to Monzer
320	722	23-26	"Bahram Gur, the King of Kings, is here, splendid, powerful, and possessed of an army, and if you drag a serpent from its hole, you're likely to see your skirts dragged through blood."	x	Letter	Monzer's response to the Persians
321	723	18-21	"If things go easily, we can put aside thoughts of war, and if they want to fight, if they won't fall in	Death	Battle	Bahram Gur travels to Jahrom, and the Persians come to

			with our plans and show themselves like leopards eager for prey, then I'll convert this plain of Jahrom into a sea of blood."			meet him. - Monzer replies to Baharam Gur with advice
322	723	27-31	"When they see our innumerable army and our dignity and discipline, and when they reflect that kingship is your inheritance, passed down from father to son as is right, and when they consider that bloodshed is our trade and that God is our support, then they are not going to want anyone but you as their king."	Death	Battle	Bahram Gur travels to Jahrom, and the Persians come to meet him. - Monzer replies to Baharam Gur with advice
323	729	11-13	"Then he turned to the other one and struck him too a mighty blow on the head, so that the blood flowed down from his eyes onto his chest."	Death/Wound	Battle	Bahram fights the lions - Bahram takes the crown from between the lions
324	742	8-11	"It was spring and the males were searching for females and fighting with one another; they bit one another's hides so viciously that the ground was stained ruby red with blood."	Death/Wound	Fight	Bahram Gur and the Jeweller's Daughter - Bahram, Ruzbeh and a thousand horsemen go hunting and come across wild asses in a plain
325	743	36-37	"Once a month is sufficient for sex; if it's more often than that a man is just pouring his blood away."	Genes	Family	Bahram Gur and the Jeweller's Daughter - Ruzbeh speaks to the priests and courtiers about Bahram Gur

326	743-744	38-2	"If you do it more often it weakens you, and when a man gets soft like that his body becomes bloodless."	Genes	Family	Bahram Gur and the Jeweller's Daughter - Ruzbeh speaks to the priests and courtiers about Bahram Gur
327	754	7-8	"He didn't amass his wealth by theft and bloodshed, nor did he lead anyone else into evil ways."	Death	Letter	Bahram Gur, the Landowner Farshidvard, and the Gatherer of Thorns - Bahram Gur writes back to Bahram the knight about the thorn cutter
328	758	7-9	"The earth of the battlefield was so soaked in blood that it seemed to have rained down from the moon."	Death	Battle	Bahram Gur attacks the Emperor of China
329	759	5-7	"Do not then shed the blood of innocents, Such cruelty mars a king's magnificence; If you want tribute, this is just - but why Should guiltless people be condemned to die?"	Death	Supplication	Bahram Gur erects a column to mark the border between Iran and Turan - the leaders of the Turks supplicate to Bahram Gur
330	759	11-12	"The God-fearing king became thoughtful and forbade his warriors to shed any more blood."	Death	Response	Bahram Gur erects a column to mark the border between Iran and Turan - Bahram replies to the Turk leaders
331	765	19-21	"Beginning with praise of God, of wisdom, and of those who act	Death?	Letter	Bahram Gur writes a letter to Shangal, the

			wisely, it continued, 'But you do not know your own limits, and your soul wallows in blood."			King of India
332	765-767	36-6	"Bahram said, 'I bring a letter to the king of India, written in Pahlavi on silk, from my king, born of kings, the like of whom no mother ever bore, who lifts up his head in glory, whose justice turns poison to its antidote; to whom the great of the world pay tribute, whose prey is lions, whose sword in battle turns the desert to a sea of blood, whose generosity is like a cloud that rains down pearls, and who has contempt for gold treasures."	Death	Letter	Bahram Gur travels to India with his own letter
333	768	3-7	"Three hundred thousand warriors call me their king; one thousand two hundred allies, each of them related to me by blood, protect me and give no one access to me, and lions bite their nails in terror when they attack."	x	Family ties	Shangal's answer to Bahram's letter
334	769	3-4	"Shangal laughed and said 'Go on then, and if you bring one of them down, shed his blood!'"	Death	Wrestling	Bahram wrestles before Shangal and shows his prowess
335	771	24-26	"Bahram said, 'I shall need a guide, and when I catch sight of this animal, by the strength that God has given me, you'll see his	Death	Fight	Bahram fights a rhinoceros and kills it

			hide soaked in blood."			
336-337	773	26-29	"Then Bahram struck its head, and mingled blood and poison coursed down its chest. The dragon's body was weakening, and the ground was awash with blood and poison; Bahram drew his glittering sword and split open the monster's heart."	Death/Wound	Battle	Bahram Gur kills a dragon
338	776	15-16	"If the secret of who I am is known in India, Persia's soul will be drenched in blood."	Death	Threat	Bahram disguises himself and speaks to the Persians escorting him - Bahram Gur flees from India with Shangal's daughter
339	778	7-9	"If I and my thirty companions are armoured and have our Persian swords, we can fill the land of India with blood, and leave not one person alive."	Death	Battle	Shagal pursues Bahram and learns who he is - Bahram speaks to Shangal
340	783	29-32	"They did as they were ordered, but letters came in from every province saying that wisdom was deserting men's minds, that the world was full of battles and bloodshed."	Death	Letters	Bahram remits the taxes paid by landowners
341	784	5-8	"The intention was to stop the bloodshed caused by men being led astray, but the king's agents wrote to him that justice and security were disappearing from	Death	Taxes/bureaucracy	Bahram remits the taxes paid by landowners

			the world: the rich paid no taxes, but in their arrogance though only of squabbles and arguments."			
342	784	9-13	"He chose lords of the marches, righteous men such as the situation required, gave them financial support for a year, and ordered them to apply God's law against those who were shedding blood, so that men should be at peace again."	Death	Taxes/bureaucracy	Bahram remits the taxes paid by landowners
343	787	18-20	"He should be hanged at the gates as punishment for the dead man's blood, as one hangs an enemy one has been captured."	Death	Punishment/Murder	The story of Mazdak - the King responds to Mazdak asking what he thinks should happen if a man is poisoned and what should happen to the man who has the antidote
344	788	11-12	"The king replied, 'Destroy the wretch; by not acting he has another man's blood on his hands.'"	Death	Punishment	The story of Mazdak - King responds to Mazdak about what should happen to a man who denies a beggar bread
345	788	25-27	"The king told me that the man who had the antidote had committed a sin, and that if someone shed his blood there would be nothing wrong in this."	Death	Punishment	Mazdak tells Qobad about what the king said

346	794	28-31	"If the earth were to open and reveal what is hidden within her, we'd see her lap filled with past kings and with the blood of warriors, and the pockets of her skirts stuffed with wise men and beautiful women."	Death	Personification	Personification of Death - Kesra Nuhin-Ravan's Illness and Nushzad's Rebellion
347	795	18-21	"A man loses his senses and pays no attention to the faith of his ancestors; but when this fool turns his head away from justice I shouldn't curse him since he is from my blood and body, and to curse him is to curse myself."	x	Family	Kesra Nuhin-Ravan's Illness and Nushzad's Rebellion
348	796	23-25	"The Roman priests and patriarchs, with Shemas at their head, took their places in his army, whose hands were soaked in blood."	Death/Wound	Battle	Ram-Borzin Prepares for Battle against Nushzad; Piruz's words to Nushzad
349	801	7-9	"The man hurried them away and they were hanged in the king's harem, with their bodies upside down and covered in blood."	Death	Punishment	Bozorjmehr interprets the King's dream - Nushin-Ravan orders the hanging of one of the harem women and her brother who veiled himself
350	824	17-19	"The blood must be drawn off from the trunk of my body, so that it dries, and then it must be filled with camphor and musk."	Death	Funeral rites	Kesra Nushin-Ravan nominates his son Hormozd as his successor and writes a document to him setting out advice and

						final wishes
351-352	828	13-16	"This bloodthirsty king, who was unworthy to sit on the throne, gave no thought to the evils that were to come. He prepared to shed more blood and decided to use Bahram Azar-Mahan for this purpose."	Death	Battle/Fight/Murder	Hormozd kills Sima-Borzin and Bahram Azar-Mahn after poisoning the chief priest
353	830	31-32	"Bahram said to him, 'You are born of a Turkish woman, and you can never be sated with bloodshed."	Death	Battle/Family lines	Hormozd kills Sima-Borzin and Bahram Azar-Mahn after poisoning the chief priest - Bahram speaks to Hormozd
354	830-831	34-1	"Hormozd knew that if this man stayed alive he would need no prompting to shed his king's blood; hearing these unwelcome words, he had Bahram taken back to the prison."	Death	Murder	Hormozd kills Sima-Borzin and Bahram Azar-Mahn after poisoning the chief priest - Bahram speaks to Hormozd
355	842	3-5	"I've heard that you've fled from Persia, that you're a fugitive who has blood on his hands."	Death	Murder	Hormozd sends Khorad-Borzin to Saveh Shah with a deceitful message - the prince speaks to Bahram
356	845-846	36-2	"But the sun will not shine on our deeds for two more days before I send your bloody head spitted on a lance to my king."	Death	Murder	Bahram Chubineh's answer to Saveh Shah

357	849	24-25	"Prepare your hearts to shed blood now: lift your shields above your heads and draw your swords."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh fights against Saveh Shah - Bahram speaks to his commanders
358	849	34-36	"Shoot three of your poplar arrows tipped with heads that draw blood into the elephants' trunks, then flourish your maces and go forward to kill the enemy."	Wound	Battle	Bahram Chubineh fights against Saveh Shah - Saveh Shah addresses his officers
359	850	1-2	"The elephants' trunks were wounded by the arrows, and the plain grew sodden with their blood."	Death/Wound	Battle	Bahram Chubineh fights against Saveh Shah
360	850	5-6	"Bahram's troops pursued the elephants, and the earth was like a Nile of blood."	Death/Wound	Battle	Bahram Chubineh fights against Saveh Shah
361	850	26-27	"Saveh Shah's head descended into the dust, and the earth beneath him ran with his blood."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh fights against Saveh Shah - Saveh Shah is killed by an arrow to the spine
362	851	7-8	"The ground was like a sea of blood from the dead, and everywhere saddled horses stood ownerless."	Death	Battle aftermath	Bahram Chubineh kills a magician
363	855	13-15	"Filled with anxiety, he said to his men, 'This leader is like a lion in his pride and ferocity, and the black earth where he stands will run with blood."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh's battle with Parmoudeh, the son of Saveh Shah - Parmoudeh speaks to his men

364	855	34-36	"Bahram fought with a javelin in his hand, like a man who was half-drunk; he was so eager for blood that no one he encountered escaped him."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh's battle with Parmoudeh - Bahram and his men go through a breach in garden wall and attack Parmoudeh's forces
365	856	11-12	"Few Turks remained alive, and their blood made the stones there resemble nothing so much as coral"	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh's battle with Parmoudeh - Bahram attacks the Turks by night
366	856	20-23	"And Parmoudeh replied, 'How much blood must you shed before you'll be sacrificed? When they fight, leopards on land and crocodiles in the rivers eventually become sated with blood: but you've never had enough, you're like an insatiable lion."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh's battle with Parmoudeh - Bahram attacks by night and Parmoudeh responds to Bahram
367	857	16-18	"The two of them were to attack whomever they could find, in the hope that when he saw the plains flowing with blood, Parmoudeh would be lured out of his castle."	Death	Battle	Parmoudeh asks Bahram Chubineh for asylum
368-370	858	17-19	"Any man who makes bloodshed his profession will have enemies plot against him, and they will spill his blood as he has spilled the blood of other warriors."	Death	Battle	Parmoudeh asks Bahram Chubineh for asylum
371	861	26-27	"Khorad-Borzin saw this and was afraid that his bloodthirsty master would kill Parmoudeh in his fury."	Death	Battle	Bahram Chubineh's anger against Parmoudeh

372-373	871	8-12	"Gordyeh addressed them: 'You are noble and ambitious men, why do you remain silent at his words, although you bleed inwardly? You are Persia's leaders, her wise men, her magicians; what's your opinion of all this, what game do you intend to play on this blood-soaked plain?'"	Death	Counsel	Bahram takes counsel with his advisors; His sister Gordyeh's intervention
374	873	13-15	"A stranger to the royal blood would disgrace the crown, and it is lineage that makes a man worthy of greatness."	x	Family ties/lineage	Bahram takes counsel with his advisors; His sister Gordyeh's intervention - Gordyeh speaks to Bahram
375	876	4-7	"Then he wrote, 'In my dreams I never see the splendour of the king's face; when your noble son Khosrow Parviz sits on the throne, I shall level the mountains and make them plains if he orders me to, and turn the deserts to an Oxus of his enemies' blood.'"	Death	Letter	Bahram writes to Hormozd, and Khosrow Parviz flees from his father's court
376	876	28	"This will be better than shedding his blood."	Death	Advice	Bahram writes to Hormozd, and Khosrow Parviz flees from his father's court
377	877	21-22	"It's my blood he secretly wants to shed, because I was the first person to humiliate him."	Death	Murder	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed. Ayin-Goshasp speaks to Hormozd

378	878	10	"And he handed this bloodthirsty devil over to Ayin-Goshasp."	Death	Prisoner exchange	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed. The king give him a prisoner
379	878	30-31	"He will confront you during a long journey; you will cry out for help, and he will shed your blood."	Death	Death	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed. Ayin-Goshasp remembers word of an astrologer
380	879	6-7	"God got me out of that terrible mess, and now my blood and brains are boiling at the thought of going back to Ctesiphon."	x	Anger	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed. The envoy/young man takes the letter to king
381-382	879	10-14	"He said, 'This is my neighbour who begged me from the king, who said it was a noble deed to spare me, and now he wants to shed my blood. Did this idea come to him in a dream? Well, now he's going to find out what bloodshed means, and all his troubles will be over.'"	Death	Response to letter	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed. Young man reads the letter and reacts
383	879	18-19	"When his neighbour entered the tent Ayin-Goshasp knew that he had come to shed his blood."	Death	Battle	Hormozd sends Ayin-Goshasp to fight against Bahram; He is killed.
384	879	26-28	"Knowing he would be condemned for shedding his	Death	Aftermath of battle	The young man kills Ayin-Goshasp and

			commander's blood, he made his way as quickly as he could to Bahram Chubineh."			aftermath
385	881	5-6	"At Gostahm's words, as one man the troops cursed the king and cried, 'May there never again be a king who seeks to shed his son's blood!'"	Death	Army response	Gostahm and Banduy blind Hormozd - Gostahm riles up the army who drag king from the throne and blind him
386	882	8-9	"Even though my father tried to shed my blood and I fled from Iran, I am still his slave and will listen to all he has to say."	Death	Attempted murder	Khosrow receives a message from Banduy and Gostahm and reacts
387	885	29-31	"We'll put a spell on the waters with our swords and fill the desert from end to end with blood."	Death	Talk of Battle	Khosrow Parviz and Bahram Chubineh address one another
388	892	19-21	"To his brother Niatus, who was in charge of the Byzantine troops sent to Khosrow, he said, 'Mariam is of your own blood, and so I have entrusted her to you."	x	Family ties	The Emperor of Byzantium sends Khosrow Parviz an army and his daughter
389	897	22-23	"It is not right that blood should be shed needlessly, or that a king attack his subjects."	Death	Battle	The battle between Khosrow Parviz and Bahram Chubineh
390	906	1-2	"Blood flowed from his wound; his cheeks were flushed and sighs escaped his lips."	Wound	Assault	Qalun is attacked after stabbing Bahram Chubineh
391	907-908	37-3	"Then he spoke at length to his sister, first pressing her beloved head against his chest, then putting his mouth to her ear; in this fashion, his eyes filled with	Death	Murder	Bahram dies after being attacked by Qalun

			blood and he gave up his soul."			
392	910	6-8	"But if one of them should attack you, then play the man and don't hesitate to fight: make Marv their graveyard and its earth as bright as a pheasant's feathers with their blood."	Death	Battle	The Chinese emperor sends Tovorg after Gordyeh; she kills him - the Emperor gives Tovorg instructions
393	911	6-9	"The Persians pursued them for two parsangs, and few of them remained mounted; the plain was like a river of blood, with headless bodies and others sprawling in the dust."	Death	Battle	The Chinese emperor sends Tovorg after Gordyeh; she kills him
394	911	18-21	"But knowing that Khosrow Parviz was young and bloodthirsty, when Gostahm received this order he gathered his forces together and went to cities ruled by men of authority, visiting Sari, Amol and Gorgan."	Death	Character	Gostahm revolts against Khosrow Parviz after being called to Khosrow
395	912	7-9	"He said, 'It was as though the king had forgotten that he is the son of Banduy's sister, and that Banduy had shed his own blood for him.'	Death	Murder	Gostahm revolts against Khosrow Parviz -Gostahm speaks to Gordyeh
396	920	33-35	"Warm blood had been poured into the bowl, and he offered it gently to each of them, but each man turned his face away."	Sacrifice	Address	Khosrow's nobles give him counsel

397-398	921	1-3	"Finally, the king said to the Persians gathered there, 'Whose blood is this, and why has it been placed in this bowl?' The chief priest said, 'This blood is polluted and everyone who sees it loathes it.'"	Sacrifice	Address	Khosrow's nobles give him counsel
398	921	12-14	"Khosrow said, 'In this land Shirin was considered to be like that bowl of polluted blood; but the bowl in my harem is now filled with wine; it is my scent that fills her now.'"	Sacrifice	Address	Khosrow's nobles give him counsel
399	935	1	"May no man flourish who spills his own father's blood!"	Death	Murder	Shirin speaks about Shirui, Khosrow's son
400	944	37	"Instead they'll spill the blood of fellow men."	Death	Battle	Rostam, son of Hormozd, consults his astrolabe and writes a letter to his brother
401	945	12-17	"The noble warriors who are with me here Despise the Arabs, and they show no fear, They think they'll turn the plain into a flood, An Oxus flowing with these Arabs' blood; None of them knows the heavens' will, or how Immense task awaits our armies now."	Death	Battle	Rostam, son of Hormozd, consults his astrolabe and writes a letter to his brother
402	945	22-23	"My grave is Qadesiya's battlefield, My crown will be my blood, my shroud my shield."	Death/wound	Battle	Rostam, son of Hormozd, consults his astrolabe and writes a letter to his brother

403	950	3-5	"Blood poured from Rostam's head, filling his eyes, and the ambitious Arab triumphed over him."	Wound - death	Battle	Rostam's battle with Sa'd; the death of Rostam
404	950	8-10	"When they saw Rostam lying bloody in the dust and his pavilion slashed into pieces, the Persians fled, and many of their noblemen were slaughtered."	Death	Battle	Rostam's battle with Sa'd; the death of Rostam
405	954	32-34	"When Yazdegerd saw the Turks' forces, he clapped his hands together and drew his sword; he appeared before the army, massive as an elephant, and the ground was awash with blood like the Nile."	Death	Battle	Mahuy encourages Bizhan to attack the king; the King (Yazdegerd) flees to a mill
406	956	34-35	"When Mahuy had heard his son out, he turned to the miller and said, 'Get on with it; go now, and spill our enemy's blood.'"	Death	Murder	Yazdegerd is killed by the miller Khosrow
407	957	2-6	"Mahuy left the court, his eyes filled with tears, his heart with fury, and sent horsemen after the miller, saying to them, 'The crown and earrings, his seal ring and the royal clothes must not be stained with blood; remove his clothes from his body.'"	Death	Murder	Yazdegerd is killed by the miller Khosrow
408	957	16-21	"A man who understands the world soon says There is no sense or wisdom in its ways: If this is how imperial blood is	Death	Murder	Yazdegerd is killed by the miller Khosrow

			spilled And innocents like Yazdegerd are killed, The seven spheres from weary of their roles - No longer do they cherish mortal souls."			
409	957	29-31	"Then, as they stood again before the king, they spoke at last and said, 'May Mahuy's body be like his, weltering in its blood on the ground.'"	Death	Revenge/Murder	Yazdegerd is killed by the miller Khosrow - Mahuy's knights find Yazdegerd has been killed
410	957	34-36	"Two callous servants hurried to carry out his command; unaware of its rank, they dragged the bloody body outside and threw it in the mill pond."	Death	Murder	Yazdegerd is killed by the miller Khosrow - Mahuy orders the king's body to be thrown in a river at night
411	959	6-8	"There were other alternatives to the things I did in secret; why did I shed the blood of the king of the world?"	Death	Murder	Mahuy assumes the throne - Mahuy speaks to his vizier
412	961	12-13	"He was afraid that he would be flayed alive, and that his body would be dragged along, weltering in its blood."	Death/Wound	Murder/Revenge	Bizhan fights against Mahuy and kills him - Mahuy speaks to Bizhan upon seeing him