



## DAVĀZDAH ROḶ

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**DAVĀZDAH ROḶ** (Twelve combats), designation of a relatively long episode in the *Šāh-nāma* (2,500 verses; Moscow, V, pp. 86-234), in which a battle takes place on the borders of Tūrān between Iranians under the command of Gūdarz and Turanians under the command of Pīrān. The battle begins when Hūmān, a brother of Pīrān, challenges the Iranians and is killed by Bīžan, Gūdarz's grandson, in single combat. Then the two armies join in an inconclusive battle. Finally the two sides agree that the battle should be decided by single combat between eleven pairs of heroes from the two armies. In each encounter the Iranian warrior kills his adversary, and in the eleventh Pīrān is slain by Gūdarz. Then Gostaham, an Iranian hero who had not been chosen by Gūdarz for single combat, sets off in pursuit of Pīrān's two brothers and kills them in a fight. He himself is seriously wounded, however, and is taken by Bīžan to Kay Ḷosrow, who saves his life by tying his own armllet, which has healing powers, around Gostaham's arm and appointing physicians to tend him.

The story is one of the finest in the *Šāh-nāma*, in terms of plot, dramatic description, and insight into human nature. In some manuscripts it is entitled "Yāzdah roḶ," referring to the eleven single combats; in others "Davāzdah RoḶ," including the battle between Gostaham and Pīrān's brothers as the twelfth combat; and in still others "Razm-e Gūdarz o Pīrān" (Battle of Gūdarz and Pīrān).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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