

Title

Similar Portrayal of Two Invulnerable Heroes in Homer's *Iliad* and Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh*

Author

Mohammad Ghazanfari (Ph.D)

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Biodata

Mohammad Ghazanfari, a member of Asia TEFL, and associate professor of applied linguistics at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran. He has published articles in the field of applied linguistics (TEFL, translation studies, and discourse analysis) in both Persian and English. He has also published a couple of Persian translations from English and has been co-author to an English book on ESP.

Abstract

From the very beginning of life on earth, man has learned that life by itself is valuable. The notion of *invulnerability* is a reflection of human beings' desire to live as longer as possible in this world and to achieve immortality. The idea may as well be approached in terms of man's desire to achieve supremacy over other human beings. There are a few heroes in world mythology who are famous for their invulnerability, among whom one may mention Achilles—the famous Greek hero in the Trojan War, who, according to myths, was invulnerable except for the heel—and the other, named Esfandiar, the legendary Persian prince and a heroic figure in Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh*—the national epic of Persia—whose invulnerability owed to Zoroaster, the ancient Iranian prophet. It seems that, from among the invulnerable heroes in world mythology, these two, possessing certain distinguishing characteristics, look more similar than other heroes in many respects. For instance, enjoying a distinguished royal origin; being young, brave, adventurous, arrogant, and unrivalled; enjoying supernatural, divine attributes; being out for fame; being vulnerable in a certain point of the body; and, finally, dying a tragic, premature death. This study compares and contrasts Achilles and Esfandiar on the basis of Greek and Persian mythology.

Keywords: Greek mythology, Persian mythology, Invulnerability in world mythology, Persian heroic epic, Homeric epic poetry

1. Introduction

Myths have been described as clear manifestations of a people's collective conscience, as reflections of their insights and attitudes towards material, spiritual, and moral aspects of life, of how to run a community, and how to associate with other human beings and other nations. Therefore, the study of world mythology in all its aspects will help us recognize the fountain-heads of human civilizations and cultures. Moreover, since a great number of traditions and beliefs tend to stubbornly resist the passage of time and even can be located within some of our own current attitudes and beliefs, it is likely that such a study reveal part of those long-staying customs, traditions, and insights, still, unconsciously, lingering in the minds of people (cf. Bahar, 2007; Haghshenas, 1991).

There are certain themes in world mythology that appear to be common across nations, including those which have to do with mythical heroes. Heroes are ordinarily born in high-ranking classes of societies, or they are usually children of gods, goddesses, powerful rulers, or kings (see, for example, Rosenberg, 1992). They also have an unusual birth. In Persian mythology, for instance, Rostam, the great Iranian hero, is delivered abnormally, in a miraculous way, through a medical method which in later centuries came to be known as the Caesarian section (after Julius Caesar, who was supposedly born this way), by cutting through the wall of his mother's abdomen by a sharp dagger (See Reza, 2007, pp. 297-305). As Ferdowsi describes the event in his *Shah-nameh*, when the time came for Rudaba, mother of Rostam, to give birth to her baby, "she could not deliver her enormously large baby in the normal way and in agony lost consciousness" (Shapur Shahbazi, 2002, paragraph 2). On the Simorgh's advice, she was made intoxicated with wine by a dexterous Zoroastrian clergy, who cut her side open without pain and delivered the child safely:

biamæd yeki moubæd-e chærbdæst/mær an mahrokh ra be mey kærd mæst
bekafid bi rænj pæhlou-ye mah/betabid mæx bæch-cheh ra sæx ze rah
chonân bi gæzændæsh boroun aværid/ke kæx dæx jæhan in shegefti nædid

(Ferdowsi, 2009, p. 71)

English translation:

*There came a skilled (Zoroastrian) priest,
Who made the moon-faced dame intoxicated with wine,
Then cut her side open while she was all unconscious,
And having turned the infant's head toward the opening,
He brought the baby forth so safely that*

No one in the world had ever seen such a wonder.

(Adapted with minor changes from: Davis, 2007, p. 105; Warner & Warner, 1909, p. 322)

Moreover, mythical heroes possessed extraordinary strength, had to engage in combats with monsters, demons, or devils, usually applied special weapons to defeat their enemies, and eventually faced an uncommon tragic death.

Since the very dawn of human life on earth, men have learned that life by itself is precious and should be enjoyed to the fullest. The idea of invulnerability may be an allusion to man's time-honored wish of not being wounded or hurt, a reflection of his desire to live as long as possible in this world, and even to defeat death, to achieve immortality. The idea of seeking permanent life on earth has so immensely preoccupied human beings' minds that, about 1300 years before *The Iliad* came into being by Homer, it came to be the major theme of the earliest recorded work of literature, that is, the epic of *Gilgamesh*, where we are told the dramatic story of the first human hero searching for immortality. Heroic myths of the world tell us that many of the world's greatest heroes could not convince themselves that they finally had to submit to death. As Rosenberg (1992, p. xvii) points out, "Hector and Beowulf are forced to choose heroic deaths because they cannot live with the stain of cowardice." Gilgamesh is so afraid of death that he embarks on a long and perilous journey in search of the secret of immortality. Achilles has to deal with the dilemma of either dying with honor or living a long, undistinguished life.

Viewed from another angle, invulnerability may be considered in terms of supremacy or pre-eminence, a reflection of man's desire to be more powerful, more dominant, or more important than other human beings. The myth of Esfandiar may be regarded from such a viewpoint. Having relied on his invulnerability, he was driven into a fatal battle with Rostam, the famous legendary Persian hero, in the hope of realizing his ambition of succeeding King Goshtasp, his father, to the throne.

There are a few heroes in the world mythology, as well as in the world literature, who are famous for their invulnerability, among whom one may name:

- (1) Achilles, the famous Greek hero in the Trojan War, being invulnerable except for the heel, from which the well-known phrase *Achilles' heel* has been originated;
- (2) Siegfried, the legendary German hero, originally based on Scandinavian legends, whose skin, according to the legend, becomes almost entirely invulnerable except for a spot covered by a fallen leaf when he bathed in the blood of a dragon he had slain;
- (3) Balder, in Norse mythology, the god of light, summer, innocence, and purity, being famous as "the good," whose mother, according to one version of the legend,

bound all creatures by oath not to harm him, but she accidentally omitted the mistletoe. Loki, one of the gods, having learned this, armed his blind brother, Hoder, with a mistletoe twig, with which Balder was slain;

(4) Esfandiar, the legendary Persian prince and a heroic figure in the *Shah-nameh*, the national Persian epic, whose invulnerability owed to Zoroaster, the ancient Iranian prophet.

In this article, the mystery of invulnerability has been approached from the viewpoint of the two famous epic poets, Homer and Ferdowsi, each belonging to a certain era and a different nationality, whose epics, nevertheless, appear to have portrayed the two invulnerable heroes as having similar characteristics. The question that may be raised in this regard would be: Is it probable that Ferdowsi was to some extent aware of the myth on Achilles' invulnerability?

2. Greek and Roman myths on Achilles and his invulnerability

In Greek mythology, Achilles, son of Peleus and the sea goddess Thetis, and king of the Myrmidons, a Thessalian tribe, is the hero of Homer's *Iliad* and since remote centuries has been considered as the prototype of Greeks' conception of manly valor and beauty, "the personification of the heroic ideal" (Sfyrroera, 2003, p. 254). Homer tells us that he took part in the Trojan War as the Greeks' most illustrious warrior and slew the Trojan hero, Hector. The importance of masterpieces like Homer's *Iliad* or Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh* may be better understood in the light of some comments actually made by, or attributed to, historical figures like Alexander the great. Legend has it that on his way to invading Persia, after Alexander occupied the western coasts of Asia Minor, without encountering real resistance by Persian forces (334 BC), having visited Troy, he paid tribute to Achilles by laying a wreath on his tomb, where "he complained that while Achilles had Homer to sing his praises, he Alexander had found no one" (Georgios, 2003, p. 160).

As his father was a mortal, Achilles was doomed to die. But his mother could not accept this fact. When Achilles was an infant, she tried to burn away his mortality by secretly placing him in a fire at night. "The myth relates that Achilles was the seventh child of Peleus and Thetis . . . tried to eliminate all the mortal elements from her children by exposing them to fire, causing their deaths" (Impelluso, 2008, p. 644). According to a slightly different account of the myth, she dipped Achilles in a cauldron of boiling water (see Sfyrroera, 2003, p. 254). However, in the case of Achilles, Peleus suddenly awakened in the middle of the

night and commanded her to stop the ritual, leaving the child's immortality incomplete. Thetis was so infuriated, the myth tells us, that she left both her husband and son forever and went to live in the depths of the sea.

Despite the fact that Homer does not allude to Achilles' invulnerability in *The Iliad*, nor is there any mention of a vulnerable heel in his epic poem, and while Homer explicitly tells us that Achilles is as vulnerable as anyone else, a Roman poet writing more than 1,000 years after the Trojan War has related a myth claiming that Achilles had been dipped in the waters of the Styx, the infernal river that gave invulnerability to all those who bathed in it, by his mother, rendering him invulnerable except in the back of one heel by which she held him (see Rosenberg, 1992; Impelluso, 2008). According to mythology, he was struck at this exact spot of the body by Paris, causing his death. On the basis of that myth, the phrase *Achilles' heel* has ever been used to describe the vulnerable point in the character of a person, nation, etc.

Anyway, as Homer has related it, during the Trojan War, Achilles was fatally wounded by an arrow shot by Paris—Hector's younger brother, whose abduction of Helen from Sparta caused the war. Still, another version of the story relates that the arrow was shot by the god Apollo, who had assumed Paris' shape (see Benét, 1987). Such discrepancies in the stories handed down from remote pasts may be explained by the fact that myths underwent changes throughout the centuries before and after Homer.

3. Persian myths on Esfandiar and his invulnerability

According to Iranian legendary history, Esfandiar, son of Goshtasp, king of Persia, was a prince of Kayanian dynasty, a hero of Zoroastrian holy wars, and is best remembered for his tragic combat with Rostam, the mightiest hero and warrior of the Iranian national epic—namely, Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh* [lit., *The Book of Kings*]. Yarshater (1998) maintains that Esfandiar's name in Avestan (that is, the language of Zoroastrians' holy book, *Avesta*) is *Spantodata*, literally meaning "created/given by the holy" (see also Yahaghi, 2007; Safa, 2008, p. 596). "He is a man of exceptional qualities: Youth, prowess in fighting, heroism, princeliness, and invulnerability are the scarcely-gathered virtues he possesses at the same time, and with such qualities, he is the most perfect and the most befitting man of his age" (Eslami Nodoushan, 1997, p. 354).

According to a Persian Zoroastrian work, the versified *Zaratosht-nama*, as cited by Yarshater (op. cit.) and Eslami Nodoushan (1972, p. 146), after Esfandiar, the young Persian

prince-hero, led the army to defeat the enemies of Persia—namely, invaders coming from *Turan* (the legendary Turkistan or Transoxiana)—and proved himself as a champion of the Zoroastrian faith, the prophet Zoroaster gave him a pomegranate as a holy reward, which rendered him invulnerable, *ruyin-tan* (lit., "brazen body"), "so that no sharp knives (*kaard*) could hurt his body" (Eslami Nodoushan, 1972, pp. 140-159; Yarshater, 1998). Certain oral traditions handed down from ancient Persia relate it differently, claiming that "Zoroaster submerged Esfandiar in a holy water to render him invulnerable, but while being dipped in the water, he instinctively closed his eyes, unknowingly not letting the miraculous water touch his eyes, and, as a consequence, being left with a 'vulnerable spot' in his body" (Meskoub, 1977, p. 24). Like the legend related to Achilles' invulnerability, on the basis of the myths concerning Esfandiar's invulnerability, in the Persian language, the well-known phrase "Esfandiar's eye" has been used to describe the vulnerable point in the character of a nation, the policy of a government, and so forth.

While Homer in his *Iliad* does not allude to Achilles' invincibility, Ferdowsi (940-1020? A.D.) in his *Shah-nameh* explicitly mentions Esfandiar's invulnerability. Bahman, son of Esfandiar, having taken a message from his father to Rostam, introduces himself to Zāl, father of Rostam, as "the son of the *invulnerable* prince":

chonin dad pasokh ke mæn bæhmæn æm/ze posht-e jæhandar ruyeentænæm
(Ferdowsi, 2006, p. 389)

English translation:

*He answered, "I am Bahman, son to **invincible** Esfandiar, lord of the world."*
(Davis, 2007, p. 379; emphasis added)

Elsewhere, in the same episode, namely "The combat of Rostam and Esfandiar", Ferdowsi tells us that after the two mighty heroes engage in their first single combat and, consequently, Rostam is badly wounded by Esfandiar, the Simorgh, the all-knowing, fabulous bird, appears and admonishes him for "taking the risk of combating the *invulnerable* Esfandiar":

chera ræzm josti ze esfandiar/ke ou hæst ruyeen tæn o namdar
(Yahaghi, 1992, p. 419)

English translation:

*Why did you fight with Esfandiar, as he is **invincible** and celebrated?*

In the final verses of this tragic episode, when Esfandiar is mortally wounded in his vulnerable eyes and falls to the ground, Rostam, though profoundly grieved, hastens to his side and admonishingly tells him, "Thou art the same who boasted of thy invulnerability":

to ani ke gofti ke **ruyeen tæɲæm**/boland aseman bæɹ zæmeen bæɹ zænæm

(Ferdowsi, 2006, p. 402)

English translation:

You were the man who said, 'I am invincible, I can bow the heavens down to the earth.' (Davis, 2007, p. 414; emphasis added)

4. The tragic death of Esfandiar

According to several Persian sources (e.g., Ferdowsi, in the episode of “The Combat of Rostam and Esfandiar” in *Shah-nameh*, and Saidi Sirjani, 2000), Esfandiar—the eldest son and crown prince of Goshtasp—had repeatedly been promised the throne by his father on condition that he won the war against the enemies who had invaded Persia from *Turan* (that is, Turkistan, the neighboring land in north-eastern Iran), a mission that he accomplished successfully; however, when he returns triumphantly, Goshtasp, instead of fulfilling his solemn promise, “charges him with a last ordeal before he will yield the throne: to go to Seistan and bring in chains the mighty Rostam whom he accuses of arrogance and of not having paid his respects to the court” (Yarshater, 1998, The combat with Rostam, paragraph 1). Esfandiar at first rejects the proposal but finally, driven by pride, ambition, and desire for power, agrees to set out for the mission, ignoring the tearful advice of his mother and the prediction by the King’s vizier that his death would be at the hand of Rostam.

In Seistan, however, Rostam, the old mighty Iranian hero, does not surrender to the humiliation of being chained by a young, ambitious, and arrogant prince, and is finally forced to get engaged in a fatal battle with him. As Esfandiar was invulnerable, none of Rostam's weapons could hurt him; on the contrary, Rostam was badly wounded by the young prince. Rostam, having felt himself on the verge of being defeated, in dire straits, resorted to the mythical sage bird, the Simorgh, prepared a special arrow from a branch of tamarisk (*gaz*) with the aid of the bird, and on the next day of the battle aimed at Esfandiar's eyes, resulting in the tragic death of the young hero (cf. Saidi Sirjani, 2000; Eslami Nodoushan, 1997). In Ferdowsi's words, the catastrophic moment has been portrayed in the following couple of lines:

tæhæmtæn gæz ændær kæman rand zood/bedansan ke simorgh færmudeh bood

bezæd teer bæɹ chæshm-e esfandiar/siæh shod jæhan peesh-e an namdar

(Ferdowsi, 2006, p. 402) English translation:

*Rostam notched the tamarisk arrow to his bow quickly,
As the Simorgh had ordered him.
Aiming at Esfandiar's eyes, he released the arrow.
The world turned dark to the celebrated prince's eyes.*

5. Resemblances between Achilles and Esfandiar as depicted in the *Iliad* and the *Shah-nameh*

Despite the chronological distance between Homer's *Iliad* and Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh* (the former written down sometime in the 8th century B.C. and the latter in the 11th century C.E.), many scholars have found the two epics similar in certain respects. One of the aspects that make the two works seem similar is the way that the two well-known heroes, Achilles and Esfandiar, have been portrayed by the two poets. Some authors (e.g., to cite just a few, Coyajee, 1939, cited in Yarshater, 1998; Bahar, 1995; Eslami Nodoushan, 1999; Davidson, 1990) have drawn parallels between the two heroes, to a number of which I point here:

- (1) Both Achilles and Esfandiar came from a distinguished royal family.
- (2) Both heroes were young, brave, adventurous, arrogant, and unmatched.
- (3) Both were invulnerable except for a certain spot in the body, Achilles in the back of the heel and Esfandiar in the eyes.
- (4) Both young heroes were out for fame, seeking excellence or *arête*, in terms of ancient Greek culture.
- (5) The two heroes look similar in temperament as well—both are easily-offended and moved by anger; and both, as soon as infuriated, are unrivalled so that nobody can prevent their wrath. Homer (1984, p. 1) describes “Achilles’ anger,” in the opening verses of *The Iliad*, as “doomed and ruinous” (Book I). But his wrath is best portrayed when he drags Hector's dead body behind his chariot round the walls of Troy.
- (6) Both heroes initially showed reluctance to engage in battle with the enemy.
- (7) Both of them were warned by their mothers not to enter the mortal battle.
- (8) Both heroes initially stood away from the battlefield because of a grudge against an unjust king (Agamemnon and Goshtasp).
- (9) Both were spurred to join the fray by the death of dear ones—Achilles determined to fight after his great friend, Patroclus, was slain by Hector; Esfandiar was eventually moved to lead the Iranian army against *Turan* when he heard of the mortal wounds received by his brother Farshidvard.

- (10) The tragic death of both heroes was already prophesied by foretellers—Thetis, Achilles' mother, had predicted that if he joined the Trojan War, he would no longer return home alive; in a similar vein, the sage Jamasp, Goshtasp's vizier and counselor, had predicted that Esfandiar's death would be at the hand of Rostam.
- (11) The fate of both heroes was eventually determined by gods or supernatural beings: Achilles, according to one myth, was shot dead by an arrow aimed at his vulnerable heel by Apollo assuming Paris; Esfandiar was slain by Rostam after the Simorgh's intervention, who instructed Rostam to cut a special *gaz* (tamarisk) arrow, temper it in fire, soak it in wine, and aim it at Esfandiar's vulnerable eyes.
- (12) The settings of the two legends also resemble each other, with regard to the fact that the two invading armies, with which the two young heroes are associated, set out from the capital of the country to invade a rather small realm, actually being part of their own mainland—Troy being a Hellenic colony across the Aegean Sea and Seistan a remote state being part of the Iranian territory.
- (13) Both heroes are destined to engage in a fatal combat which cannot be judged as a "fair fight", since gods, goddesses, or other superhuman creatures interfere in the process of fighting.
- (14) And, last but not least, the two prince-heroes end up with a tragic, premature death on the battlefield of the small state they invaded.

6. Concluding remarks

Certain themes in world mythology seem to have been repeated in the myths associated with different nationalities, localities, or ethnic groups throughout centuries. Among such themes are included those associated with distinguished mythical heroes: unusual birth, high social rank, spectacular physical strength, beauty, struggle with monsters, applying special weapons to defeat enemies, facing a tragic death, and so on. The notion of 'invulnerability' might be a manifestation of man's time-honored desire to live longer in this world and defeat the inevitable death to which human beings are doomed. Or it might be viewed from the perspective of man's desire to gain superiority over other human beings.

Despite a time interval of over seventeen centuries between Homer and Ferdowsi, and despite some differences between the two epics, one may still find similarities between their works as to the portrayal of the two well-known heroes, Achilles and Esfandiar. The similarities might be interpreted in the light of human beings' common desires, emotions,

insights, and experiences rather than in terms of one poet imitating or duplicating the other's original ideas. In fact, no hard-and-fast historical evidence can be found as to whether Ferdowsi had access to a translation of Homer's *Iliad*, or had ever heard of the existence of such an epic. What we are actually certain about is the fact that the portrayal of the two characters in the two corresponding works resembles strikingly; however, except for the notion of 'intertextuality', according to which, in Kristeva's words (1986, as cited in Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 262), "any text is a link in a chain of texts, reacting to, drawing in, and transforming other texts", we may not become aware of other probable reasons behind such a resemblance.

References

- Benét, W. R. (1987). *The reader's encyclopedia* (3rd ed.). London: A & C Black.
- Bahar, M. (1995). *Jostari chand dar farhang-e Iran [Papers on Iranian culture]* (2nd ed.). Tehran: Fekr-e rooz.
- Bahar, M. (2007). *Pezhooheshi dar asatir-e Iran [A study of Iranian mythology]* (6th ed.). Tehran: Agah.
- Davidson, O. M. (1990). The *Haft Khwân* tradition as an intertextual phenomenon in Ferdowsi's *Shah-nameh*. *Bulletin of Asia Institute, 4: In honor of Richard Nelson Frye*, 207-15.
- Davis, D. (Trans.). (2007). *Shahnameh: The Persian book of kings*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Eslami Nodoushan, M. A. (1972). *Dastan-e dastan-ha [Legend of legends]*. Tehran: Anjoman-e Asar-e Melli.
- Eslami Nodoushan, M. A. (1997). *Zendegi va marg-e pahlavanan dar Shah-nameh [Heroes' life and death in the Shah-nameh]* (7th ed.). Tehran: Asar.
- Eslami Nodoushan, M. A. (1999). *Iran o Younan dar bastar-e bastan [Iran and Greece in antiquity]*. Tehran: Enteshar.
- Fairclough, N. & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse as social interaction: Vol. 2. Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction* (pp. 258-284). London: Sage Publications.
- Ferdowsi, A. (2009). *Shah-nameh- ye Ferdowsi [Ferdowsi's Shah-nameh]* (4th ed.). (Based on Julius Mohl's version, edited by A. Akbarian Rad). Tehran: Elham.
- Georgios, P. (2003). *Prominent Greeks of antiquity: Their lives and work*. Athens: Michael Toubis Publications.

- Haghshenas, A. M. (1991). *Maghalat-e adabi, zabanshenakhti* [Articles on literature and linguistics]. Tehran: Niloofar.
- Homer (1984). *The Iliad* (R. Fitzgerald, Trans.). Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Impelluso, L. (2008). *Myths: Tales of the Greek and Roman gods*. New York: Abrams.
- Meskoub, Sh. (1977). *Moqaddemeh 'i bar Rostam o Esfandiar* [An introduction to Rostam and Esfandiar] (3rd ed.). Tehran: Ketab-ha-ye jibi.
- Reza, F. (2007). *Pezhouhesi dar andisheh-ha-ye Ferdowsi: Tafsir o tahlil-e Shah-nameh, bar gozideh-e ash'ar* [An investigation on Ferdowsi's ideas: Interpretation and analysis of the Shah-nameh, an anthology of the poems]. Tehran: Entesharat-e 'Elmi va Farhangi.
- Rosenberg, D. (1992). *World mythology: An anthology of the great myths and epics*. Lincolnwood, Illinois: Passport Books.
- Safa, Z. (2008). *Hamaseh soraayee dar Iran* [Epic composing in Iran] (8th ed.). Tehran: Amir Kabir.
- Saidi Sirjani, A. A. (2000). *Bichareh Esfandiar* [The poor Esfandiar] (2nd ed.). Tehran: Peykan.
- Sfyroera, S. (2003). *The essential Greek mythology*. Athens: Ellinika Grammata.
- Shapur Shahbazi, A. (2002). Rudaba: Princess of Kabul, wife of Zal, and mother of Rostam in the *Shah-nameh*. In E. Yarshater (Ed.), *Encyclopedia Iranica*. Retrieved October 12, 2010, from <http://www.iranica.com/articles/rudaba>
- Warner, A. G. & Warner, E. (Trans.). (1909). *The Shahnama of Firdausi* (Vol. 1). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Truebner and Co.
- Yahaghi, M. J. (1992). *Behin-nameh-ye baastaan: Kholaseh-ye Shah-nameh-ye Ferdowsi* [The best book of antiquity: A summary of Ferdowsi's Shah-nameh] (3rd ed.). Mashhad: Astaan-e Ghods-e Razavi.
- Yahaghi, M. J. (2007). *Farhang-e asatir va dastanvareh-ha dar adabiat-e Farsi* [Dictionary of myths and legends in Persian literature]. Tehran: Farhang-e Moaser.
- Yarshater, E. (1998). Esfandiar. In E. Yarshater (Ed.), *Encyclopedia Iranica*. Retrieved July 2, 2009, from <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/>