



vii speaks of \*Vohumanah, the successor of Vīštāspa thus: « Such as Vohumanah, son of Spəntōdāta (son of Vīštāspa), among the kings, about whom it is said in the Avesta this: Vohumanah, the straight, the most efficient in challenging among those who worship Ahura Mazdā.<sup>7</sup> » But the Bundahišn describes the kingship of Vohumanah the period of political decadence and disintegration.<sup>8</sup> The genealogical table of the Bundahišn attributes several sons to Aurvaṭ.aspa, of whom two only are mentioned: Vīštāspa and Zairi.vari. It gives the names of the two sons of Vīštāspa, namely, Spəntōdāta and Pišīsyaoθna, and the names of the three sons of Spəntōdāta, that is, \*Vohumanah, /\*Ātərə-tərəsa(h)/, and /\*Miθrō.tərəsa(h)/<sup>9</sup>. According to the Avesta, Vīštāspa conducts battles with the Hiyonian Arəjaṭ.aspa, and with two (other) followers of the Daēva, Daršinika and Spinjauruška, and brings back home Humāyā and Vāriðkanā from the Hiyonian lands.<sup>10</sup> In a fragment of the Kavian epic, survived in Parthian, Humāyā is Vīštāspa's daughter.<sup>11</sup> After Vohumanah, she succeeds to the throne of the Aryan lordship<sup>12</sup>; and since, in the list of rulers, she is mentioned after Vohumanah –the relatively recent sources have made her his daughter<sup>13</sup>, and also his wife.<sup>14</sup>

## 1.2. The chronology of kings

<sup>7</sup> . Cf. Dk vii M 650.

<sup>8</sup> . Cf. Bd 214.

<sup>9</sup> . Cf. Bd 232.

<sup>10</sup> . Cf. Yt 9.30-31, Yt 17.50-51.

<sup>11</sup> . Cf. AZ 77 <sup>+</sup>humāy ī man duxt. Cf. also Šāhnāma, M 15: 1141-43:

به بردند پس دخترانت اسیر  
چنین کار دشخوار آسان مه گیر!  
اگر نیستش جز شکست همای  
خردمند را دل به رفتن ز جای  
دگر دختر شاه بهآفرید  
که باد هوا هرگز او را نه دید.

<sup>12</sup> . Cf. Bd 214.

<sup>13</sup> . Cf. Bd 240. Cf. also Bērōnī, *ibid.*

خانی بنت اردشیر بهمن.

Mas'ūdī

بهمن ملک مائة سنة واثنتی عشر سنة وخانی ابنته ثلاثین سنة (التبیه والإشراف، لیدن، ۱۸۹۳، ۹۴)

<sup>14</sup> . According to Mas'ūdī. Vahman's wife and her daughter were, both, called (Parth.) *šihrāzād*, (Pers. *cihrāzād*).

ثم ملكت خایة بنت بهمن بن اسفندیار بن بستاسف بن لهراسف، وكانت تصرف بأما شهرزاد (مروج الذهب ومعادن الجوهر، ۱، بیروت، ۱۴۰۶/ ۱۹۸۶، ۲۳۸)

But, in other sources, Humāy/ Šihrāzād was Vahman's daughter and also his wife. Cf. Šāhnāma, M 16: 146-48:

یکی دخترش بود نامش همای  
هنرمند و بادانش و پاکرای  
همی خواندندش ورا چهرزاد  
ز گیتی به دیدار او بود شاد.  
پدر بر پذیرفتش از نیکوئی  
بدان دین که خوانی همی پهلوی.

The Parthians maintained the older form counting from the anticipated accession of Seleucus I in the late autumn or early winter of 312, based on a 19-year cycle of 12 ordinary years of 12 lunar months and 7 intercalary years of 13 lunar months. The Seleucid era was called, by the Parthians, “Former” era<sup>15</sup>, and by the non-Aryans the era “Alexander”, and occasionally also “of the Greeks”<sup>16</sup>. The Seleucid era in the cuneiform documents of the last centuries B.C.<sup>17</sup> and in a number of Aramaic and Syriac texts was Nisannu-epoch, following Babylonian tradition. As it is said by Jacob (/ Aphraates): «The first month, that is Nisannu, is the month of flowers, the first month of the year.»<sup>18</sup> The Seleucid era in the Greek (and some Aramaic) inscriptions was Tašrītu-epoch, following Macedonian tradition. The epoch dates of the Seleucid era are:

S<sub>B</sub> 1 Nisannu 1 = Kaliyuga day 1 019 458 = April 3, 311 B.C.

S<sub>M</sub> 1 TaSrītu 1 = Kaliyuga day 1 019 274 = October 1, 312 B.C.

### 1.2.1.

<sup>15</sup> . ‘reckoning’, ἀριθμός ≈ Pers. *mar/ pedišmār*.  
‘former, ancient’, πρότερος ≈ Pers. *pēšēnag*.

Formula ὡς πρότερον (or, κατὰ τοὺς προτέροθς ἀριθμούς) is known by Greek documents of the Parthian epoch, from Susa, Babylon, and Dura Europos. See B. Haussoullier, “Inscriptions de Babylone”, *Klio*, x, 1909, 352 ; F. Cumont, “Une lettre du roi Artaban III à la ville de Suse”, CRAIB, 1932, 238-60.

F. Cumont, « Nouvelles inscriptions grecques de Suse », CRAIB, 1932, n° 4, 279-84 ; C.B. Welles etc., *The Excavations at Dura Europos*, Final Report V, Part 1, « The Parchments and Papyri », New Haven, 1959, (N° 18, 19, 20) 98-116 ; G.R. Assar, « Parthian Calendars at Babylon and Seleucia on the Tigris », *Iran*, XLI, 2003, 71-91.

<sup>16</sup> . According to Bērōnī, the Era Alexander in the Astronomical tables was in fact the Seleucid era. Cf. *Canon Masudicus*, 1. 130

وهكذا تاريخ الاسكندر للهجرة في الزيجات وهو بالتحقيقة تاريخ سولوقس. (القانون المسعودي، ١، حيدرآباد، ١٣٧٣/١٩٥٤، ١٣٠)

He stated that: «The era used by the Ahl al-Kitāb (lit. those who possess the Scripture, i.e., Jews, Christians and Muslims ≈ Pers. *kēšdārān*) is the era of the Greeks, from the beginning of that year when Seleucus sat (upon the throne) of the kingdom of Antioch, as the sole king, although this era has come to be known as the era Alexander.»

التفهيم لاوائل صناعة التنجيم، ج. هائي، تهران، ١٣٥٣/١٩٧٤، ٢٣٧.

In the ܐܘܢܘܩܢܐ (Demonstrations), Jacob (ܐܘܦܪܐܬܝܩܐ, Ἀφραάτης) uses the year reckoning of the “kingdom” ܐܘܠܡܘܬܐ of Alexander, son of Philip the Macedonian. Cf. XIV, 50; XXII, 69. Cf. also XXII, 25: «These 22 discourses, I have written according to the 22 letters. The first ten I have written in the year 648 of the kingdom of Alexander, son of Philip, the Macedonian, as is written at the end of them. The other twelve I have written in the year 655 of the empire of the Greeks and Romans, i.e., of the kingdom of Alexander, and in the year 35 of the king of the Persians.»

An example of the “Greek reckoning” is found in the Story of Pethion, written in Syriac, and translated into Sogdian. ܐܘܠܡܘܬܐ ≈ Sogd. Pr ywn’yq ptšm’r. See O. Hansen, *Berliner Sogdische Texte II*, AAWLM, N° 15, 1954, 871.

<sup>17</sup> . See O. Neugebauer, *Astronomical Cuneiform Texts*, London, 1955, 32-3.

<sup>18</sup> . *Tahwyātā*, XII, 1.

The Parthians introduced an era of their own, called the “Royal” era<sup>19</sup>, and adopted, at the same time, the luni-solar calendar attributed to the Parađāta-dynasty<sup>20</sup>, the first year of which began on 247 B.C., in the spring (the first month of the year was Dađv, Av. dađvāh/ daθuš). The Arsacid Era differed, nearly, 64 years from the Seleucid era B, and 64/65 years from the Seleucid era M.<sup>21</sup>

It is possible that the date of the first year after Alexander’s murder of Darius III was remembered by the Magi, and they did count years from that date, such that, after the end of the Sasanian period, again, the Magi counted years from the year twenty of Yazdegird (*pas az sāl vīst ī yazdegird*)<sup>22</sup>, called the Pārsīg Era (*sāl pārsīg*)<sup>23</sup>, or the Magian era<sup>24</sup>.

### 1.2.2.

The Persians, in the Sasanian period, as did the Old Persians, dated by the regnal years of the king, beginning the calculated year (i.e. the year of twelve 30 day months, with an added 5 epagomenal days) on Fravardīn (Av. *fravašinqm*), day of Ohrmazd (Av. Ahura Mazdā). As it is said in the Dēnkird<sup>25</sup>:

*ud sāg ī sālān, māhān ud rōzān ī abar zīg ī axtarān, zāyišn ī mardōm, sālmar ī xvadāyān, cand-uzīd ī sālān ī az bundahišn ī andar dast ī amaragān, zamān ī meyān mardōmān abar pašn stad ud dād dādestānīhā ped ušmurdīg sāl peyvast.*

<sup>19</sup>. ‘Royal’, βασιλείος ≈ Pers. *šāhagān*. We find ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἄγει in the letter of “king of kings Arsaces (= Ardavān), to Antiochus and Phraates, being the two archons in Susa, and to the city”, and ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων in the parchments found at Dura Europos, n° 18, 20.

<sup>20</sup>. See Bērōnī, *Vestiges of the Past*, II, 6.

<sup>21</sup>. Cf. the letter of Ardavān: Ἐξελήφθη ὀγδοὸν ἐξηκοστοῦ διακοσιοτοῦ, ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἄγει, ὡς δὲ πρότερον τρ[ίτου τριακόστου τριακοσιοτοῦ ἔτους] ‘It was received during the year two hundred and sixty-eighth, as the king reckons, and as formerly [reckoned], the [year three hundred and thirty-third].’ The parchment of Dura, n° 20: Ἔτους ΗΞΤ ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων, ὡς δὲ πρότερον ΒΛΥ ‘In the year 368 as the king of kings [reckons] and as formerly [reckoned], the year 432.’

Cf. also the Babylonian tablet (80 B.C., April): šanat 168<sup>kám</sup> šá ši-i šanat 232<sup>kám</sup> <sup>m</sup>Ar-šá-kam šarru šá it-tar-re-du <sup>m</sup>U-ru-da-a arah Nisānu (/ BĀR) ... ‘(In) the year 168 (A), which is the year 232 (S<sub>B</sub>), the Arsacid king, who has been called to reign as Virōd, ... month Nisannu ...’ See M.-L. Chaumont, “Études d’histoire parthe. I. Documents royaux à Nisa”, *Syria*, XLVIII, 1971, 161; H. Lewy, “The genesis of the faulty Persian Chronology”, *JAOS*, 64, 1944, 203.

<sup>22</sup>. Cf. Dk col. M 946 *rōz ī dēn māh ī tīr pērōzgar sāl 369 ī pas az sāl 20 ī ōy bay yazdegird šāhān sāl ī šahriyārān.*

<sup>23</sup>. Cf. Bd 240.

<sup>24</sup>. Cf. Bērōnī, *Vestiges*, VI, 115: تاريخ الجوس

<sup>25</sup>. Cf. Dk iii M 403.

<sup>+</sup>*ud sāg.*

*stad ud dād.* Cf. Dk viii M 699 *dād stad.*

*cand uzīd ī sālān ī az bundahišn*, lit. ‘how many years have passed since the initial creation’. Cf. 20.1 *uzīd ī sih sālāg az bavišn.*

‘The calculation of the years, months and days on the astronomical tables, the horoscopes of people, the chronology of kings, the year table from the initial creation which is in the hand of all (the people), the times fixed, according to law, between people over contracts and transactions are connected with the calculated year.’

They introduced a dynastic era the (only) example of which is the bilingual (Parthian and Persian) inscription of Šābuhr on a pillar found in the ruins of the Sasanian town Šābuhr<sup>26</sup>: “(In) the year 58, month of Fravardīn, (which is) the year 40 of the sacred fire of Ardašēr, the year 24 of the sacred fire of Šābuhr, the king of the sacred fires.” Therefore, the early Sasanians continued the counting of the regnal years of Ardašēr in Persis after assuming the royal title of the king of kings. The year 19 of Ardašēr was the first year of his solemn enthronement, in 538 S<sub>B</sub><sup>27</sup> (that is, 227 A.D.), and the epochal year was 520 S<sub>B</sub> (= 209 A.D.).

### 1.2.3.

Besides, there existed another calendar in use, with a year of twelve months of 30 days each plus 5 epagomenal days (*panz rōz ī gāhānīg* or *andar-gāh*, or *panz rōz ī truftag*), and one intercalary month, (allegedly) every 120 years (*sāl ī zamān-vihēzagīg*)<sup>28</sup>. The year began with the (nearly) spring equinox<sup>29</sup>, month of Day (Av. *daδvāh*).<sup>30</sup>

## 2. Religious

### 2.1. The Finite Time

The Finite Time<sup>31</sup> of the Magi consists of the cosmic year (Av. *yār-*) of four seasons (Av. *aiβi.gāma-*, Pers. *āvām*) of 3 000 years each, and each millennium corresponds to a sign of the Zodiac.<sup>32</sup>

The first period of the cosmic age is that of creating spiritually.<sup>33</sup>  
«The *Afurišn* of the creatures is, singly and first, in the spiritual state,

<sup>26</sup> See R. Ghirshman, “Inscription du monument de Châpour I<sup>er</sup> à Châpour”, *Revue des arts asiatiques*, X, 1936, 123-29, Pl. XLIV, (with observation on the chronology by A. Christensen).

<sup>27</sup> . Cf. Bērōnī, *Vestiges*, VI, 58.

<sup>28</sup> . Cf. VZ 34.49.

<sup>29</sup> . Cf. Dk iii M 403 *sāl hangām bun vahār*.

<sup>30</sup> . See: the date of Mani’s death; the date of Anāhid’s death.

<sup>31</sup> . Av. *zrvān- darəγō.x<sup>v</sup>aδāta-*, cf. Y 72.10, X<sup>v</sup>N 8, rendered by Pers. *zamān ī dagrand-x<sup>v</sup>adāy* ≈ *zamān ī kanāragumand* (Bd 10; cf. also Dk iv M 416 *kanārag-zamānīh*).

Av. *zrvan- θbaršta-*, cf. Yt 8.11 *θbarštahe zrū* ≈ Pers. *zamān ī brīn* (Purs. EA 40.5).

Cf. ĀfM *dagr-zīvišn bed cōn zurvān pādixšāy!*

<sup>32</sup> . Originally, the finite time was only the fixed time of battle between Ahura Mazda and Anra Mañyu. Later on it came to be extended to 12 000 years corresponding to the number of the signs of the zodiac and the months.

i.e. the seed or ὄλη, being spiritually, exposes, *in potentia*, the material world. »<sup>34</sup> Signs: Aries (Pers. *varrag*); Taurus (*gāv*); Gemini (*dopehikar*). Months: Daθuš (Pers. *day*); Vohu Manah (*vahman*); Spəntā Ārmaiti (*spendārmed*).

The second is the corporeal creation.<sup>35</sup> « The *dahišn* of the creatures is the conversion of them, singly, from the spiritual state to the material state, i.e. (to) the form or εἶδος from the matter which existed *in potentia*. »<sup>36</sup> During this period of « 3 000 years, creatures were corporeal but motionless. »<sup>37</sup> Signs: Cancer (*karzang*; Syr. ܟܪܙܢܘܩ < Pers. \**sar-tan*); Leo (*šagr*); Virgo or Spica (*hōšag*). Months: Fravašinqam (*fravardīn*); Aša Vahišta (*urdvahišt*); Haurvatāt (*hurdad*).

The third is the state of Mixture, produced by the Attack<sup>38</sup> of Anra Mañyu to the primeval Bull and the Primeval Man. The first millennium goes up to the Death of Yima; the bad rule of Aži Dahāka is in the second; the third, that of the heroic age, begins with the rule of Ōraētaona, and ends when Vištāspa ruled for thirty years.<sup>39</sup> Signs: Libra (*tarāzūg*); Scorpio (*gazdum*); Sagittarius (*nēmasp*). Months: Tištrya (*tīr*); Amərətāt (*amurdad*); Xšaθra Vairya (*šahrever*).

The fourth is the “eschatological” age that goes from the acceptance of the Daēnā by Zaraθuštra up to the coming of the maker of the Future Body (i.e. Astvaṭ.ərəta) and the eschatological renovation of the existence (i.e. frašō.kərəiti). The first millennium is that of the religion (*daēnā*). The second is that of Uxšyaṭ.ərəta. The third is that of Uxšyaṭ.nəmah. Toward the end of this millennium, the last saosyaṭ, that is Astvaṭ.ərəta, is born to bring about the world to its original state. Signs: Capricornus (*vahīg*; Armen. *bzasar* < Pers. *buzesar\**); Aquarius (*dōl*, Syr. ܕܘܠܐ); Pisces (*māhīg*). Months: Miθra (*mīhr*); Aṗam Napāt (*ābān*; <sup>+</sup>*Apomenapa* in the Cappadocian calendar); Āθr/ Ātar (*ādur*).

The Zand of the Vīdēvdād reports the summing-up of world ages thus:

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<sup>33</sup> . Av. *ā-frī*, *āfrīn-ā*- ‘to invite, propitiate, address with particular invocations’, Pers. *āfrīn-*: *āfrīd*, *āfur-* ‘to invoke blessings; create spiritually’, *āfurišn* ‘(spiritual) creation’.

<sup>34</sup> . Dk iii M 202 *āfurišn ēvāz ī dām fradum ped mēnōgīh*, <ī> *ast māyag ud tōhmaḡ mēnōgīg ud ped nirōg gētīg-nimāyišn*.

Av. *dāman-* ‘(material) creation’, *mañyu.stāta-* ‘spiritually established, stood in the immaterial world’.

<sup>35</sup> . Av. *dā*, *dāya-/ daya-* ‘to place; give’, Pers. *day-/ dah-*: *dād* ‘to give; create materially’, *dahišn* ‘gift; (material) creation’. Cf. Dk iv M 410 *āfurišn ... dahišn*.

<sup>36</sup> . Dk iii M 203 *dahišn ī ēvāz ī dām az mēnōgīh ō gētīgīh vardēnīdan, ud ast dēsag az māyag ī-š ped nirōg būd*.

<sup>37</sup> . VZ 1.26 *si-hazār sāl dām tanumand ud a-frāz-raftār būd*.

<sup>38</sup> . Pers. *gumēzišn* or *gumēzagīh* ‘mixture’. Cf. Dk iii M 316 *ebgadīg gumēzišn*, M 233 *ebgad ud gumēzišn*. Av. *aiβi.gaiti-* ‘arrival, onset’, Pers. *ebgad*.

<sup>39</sup> . Cf. Bd 211-214.

*ohrmazd ēn dām si-hazār sāl mēnōg-ēstišn dāšt; si-hazār sāl gētīg ēstišn abedyārag; si-hazār sāl az pedyārag ō dām madan dā dēn madan; ud si-hazār sāl az dēn madan dā tan ī pasēn.*

‘Ahura Mazdā maintained this creation 3 000 years in the spiritual state; 3 000 years in the material state without Adversary; 3 000 years from the coming of the Adversary to the creation till the coming of the Religion; and 3 000 years from the coming of the Religion till the Future Body.’<sup>40</sup>

A millennium also is divided into four ages, three of 300 years each, and a connection (\**pāti-banda-* ≈ Skt. *saṃdhi*) of 100 years. The four ages, symbolized as golden, silver, steel and iron branches on a tree, represent the three(-four) functions (Av. *pištra-*) of the Aryan society. Each millennium, in the Mixture, stages the symbolic story of a twin (or, a number of twins): in the first millennium in the Mixture, Gaya Marətān and Gao, Mašya and Mašyānīō, Yima and Yimī; in the millennium of Zaratuštra, *xšaθra* (‘royal power, kingdom’) and *daēnā* (‘conscience, religion’).

Raham Asha

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<sup>40</sup> . Vd 2.19 Z.