

## The religious and royal traditions and the end of the Achaemenian Kingship

According to the Avesta tradition, the first period of the millennium of Zaratuštra (1-300) will end with a catastrophic event, the onslaught of a *mairya*.

### Vohumanah: Artaxšaça

Of the rulers who arrived after the time of Vīštāspa, the Daēnā (the Scripture) mentions Vohumanah<sup>1</sup>: « Such as Vohumanah son of Spəntōdāta among the kings, about whom it is said in the Avesta this: Vohumanah the straight, the most efficient in challenging among the Mazdayasnians. »<sup>2</sup>

This king is identified with an Achaemenian king, one Artaxarxes<sup>3</sup> (probably Artaxšaça abiyātaka<sup>4</sup>). There was a chief town, in the Sasanian times, called Vahman-Ardašēr<sup>5</sup>. Vohumanah reigned over the Aryan land for 112 years.<sup>6</sup> Tabarī, Ḥamza and others, influenced by foreign traditions, especially Jewish, identified this kavi with the Achaemenian king Artaxerxes Longimanus (Μακρόχειρ), son of Xerxes.<sup>7</sup>

### Humāyā

According to the Drvāspā Yašt, two girls Humāyā and Vāriḍkanā were prisoners in the country of the Hiyonians; Kavi Vīštāspa conducted battle with the Hiyonian bad man, Arəjaṭ.aspa; and after his victory, he brought them back home.<sup>8</sup> One “Parthian” fragment of the

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<sup>1</sup>. Av. *vohu-manah*-, Elam. Ma-u-man-na- < OPers. *vaumanah*- pr.n.m. Pers. *vahman*. In the Mahā Bhārata, *Vasu-manas*- is the name of a king of Kosala.

<sup>2</sup>. Not found in the extant Avesta. Cf. Dk vii M 650.

<sup>3</sup>. Bd 232 *ardaxšahr kē vahuman ī spendōyādān guft*, ZVY 3.24 *x<sup>v</sup> adāyīh ī ardaxšahr ī kay ka vahuman ī spendōyādān x<sup>v</sup> ānīhed*.

<sup>4</sup>. OPers. *artaxšaça abiyātaka* ≈ Gr. Ἀρταξέρξης μνήμων. Cf. the Hesychian gloss: ἀβιάτακα μνήμονα Πέρσαι.

<sup>5</sup>. From *vohumanah*- *artaxšaθrā*-. Syr. ܘܚܡܢܐܝܐ ≈ ܘܚܡܢܐܝܐ, Arab. بهمن اردشير ≈ فرات البصرة.

<sup>6</sup>. Cf. J 15; Bd 240.

<sup>7</sup>. See

طبری، تاریخ الرسل والملوک، بیروت، ۱۹۶۵، ۱، ۶۸۷، حمزه، تاریخ سنی ملوک الأرض والأنبياء، ۳۷.

تاریخنامه طبری، ۲، ۹۶۰ «بهمن به نشست از پس گشتاسپ ... و او را به لقب اردشیر درازدست (ع). اردشیر طویل الباع) خواندندی و گفتندی اردشیر بهمن.» بیرونی، الآثار الباقیه، ۶، ۴۲ «کی اردشیر- بهمن بن اسفندیار بن بشتاسف: طویل الباع.» فارسنامه ابن بلخی، شیراز، ۱۳۷۴، ۵۳-۱۵۲ «و را اردشیر بهمن درازدست گفتندی.» مجمل التواریخ، ۴۱۸ «بهمن: درازانگل.»

<sup>8</sup>. Cf. Yt 9.29-31.

epic cycle, the Memorial of the Zairivari family that relates the war of Vīštāspa against the Hiyonians, tells of Humāyā thus:

<sup>9</sup> *humāy ī man duxt ... kē andar hamāg šahr ērān zan-ē az ōy huzīhrdar nēst.*

‘Humāyā, who is my (=Vīštāspa’s) daughter ... a more beautiful woman than whom there is none in the whole land of the Aryans.’<sup>9</sup>

The Dēnkird ix cites a lost passage of the translation of the Avesta about her:

*ēn-z kū: kerbān abddum az nārīgān, humāy ī āzāttōhmag ī vištāspān.*

‘And this, too, (has been said in the Avesta): The most wonderful of shapes of women is Humāyā of the noble seed of Vīštāspa.’<sup>10</sup>

Humāyā (and, probably also Vāriḍkanā) shares the epithets of “the most beautiful body” (*kāhrp sraēštā*) and “the most wonderful” (*abdō.tāmā*) with the two beloved women of Ōraētaona, Arənavācī and Saṅhavācī, who were held captive by Aži Dahāka.<sup>11</sup> She also shares the epithets “noble” (*āzātā*) and “of (wealthy) seed” (*raēvasciθrā*) with the Lady Anāhitā.<sup>12</sup> She bears, in Pārsīg texts, the distinctive epithet *āzāttōhmag* (from Av. *āzātəm ciθrəm\**) / *cihrāzād* (from Av. *ciθrəm āzātəm\**) ‘of noble seed’. The (lost) Pārsīg book entitled *A Thousand Stories* (*hazār afsān\**) had begun with the story of two women in the seraglio of a tyrant: one, Cīhrāzād<sup>13</sup>, a concubine of royal blood; the other, Dēnāzād<sup>14</sup>, a head of the household.<sup>15</sup> « It is said that this book was composed for Humāyā. »<sup>16</sup>

The Book of Kings has told of “another” Humāyā, daughter of Vohumanah, who bears the surname of Cīhrāzād, and reigns for 30 years.<sup>17</sup> Ḥamza and some other chroniclers, influenced by foreign sources, identified Humāyā with Semiramis (Sa-am-mu-ra-mat) who had reigned a few years in Assyria (from 809 B.C. to 806 B.C.).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>9</sup> . AZ 77.

<sup>10</sup> . Dk ix M 815.

<sup>11</sup> . Cf. Yt 5.34.

<sup>12</sup> . Cf. Yt 5.64.

<sup>13</sup> . Arab. شهرزاد /*šihr-āzād*/ (Parth. inscr. šyhr = Pers. cīhr).

<sup>14</sup> . Arab. دینزاد /*dēn-āzād*/ ‘Daēnā who is noble’. Cf. Hn 2.9 *daēna kainīnō kāhrpā srīrayā ... āzātayā raēvasciθrayā* ‘... Daēnā in the shape of a beautiful young woman ... noble, of wealthy stock’.

<sup>15</sup> . Arab. قهرمانه. (Arab. قهرمان ‘majordomo; manager’, Mid. Aram. qhrmn.

‘commander’ < Parth. *kār-hramān*, Pers. *kār-framān*.)

<sup>16</sup> . The Fihrist of al-Nadīm, 8, 1.

<sup>17</sup> . Cf. J 15. See also Vestiges, 6, 42 «خای بنت اردشیر بهمن: همرازاد»

<sup>18</sup> . Cf. Ḥamza Annalium, 38 «های همرازاد هی شمیران بنت بهمن والها لقب لها.»

Cf. also Mujmal

«پارسیان گویند: او خود دختر بهمن بود، و از این زن زاد که دختر ملک مصر بود، و او را شمیران بنت

بهمن نام بود، به لقب او را همای خواندندی.» ۳۰ «سمیراندخت: همای» ۳۱۸

There is no Achaemenian “queen” corresponding to Humāyā, but Humāyā may correspond to the Lady Anāhitā, promoted by the Achaemenian king Artaxerxes Μνήμων.

### Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u

After a reign of 30 years Humāyā was succeeded by two kings, who both were called Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u (Darius), one “the Great”, the other “the Second”.<sup>19</sup> Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u the Great who was son of Humāyā<sup>20</sup> reigned for 12 years.<sup>21</sup> Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u the Second, son of Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u, reigned for 14 years till he was killed by Alexander the Greek.<sup>22</sup>

### Mairya : Alexander

The religious and royal traditions knew Alexander as a “bad man” (Av. *mairya*-) and “destroyer” (Pers. *avīrāngarak\**)<sup>23</sup>, who had devastated the Aryan land. « Such were, e.g. the calamities which Alexander and his Greek lieutenants brought upon them, further the conflagration of all fine arts which were the recreation and the desire of the people. And more than that. Alexander burned the greatest part of their religious codices, he destroyed the wonderful architectural monuments, e.g. those in the mountains of Staxr, ... »<sup>24</sup>

This synchronism of mairya and Alexander is the reason why in the Religious scripture (the Zand of the Avesta) and also in the Book of Kings (the X<sup>v</sup>adāy-nāmag) the end of Kavi-dynasty is connected to the end of the Achaemenian kingship.<sup>25</sup>

After the Greek invasion of the Aryan Land (/ Persia), with the butchery at Persepolis and other places, the huge plunder of the treasures of Pasargadae and other places, the widespread slaughter of priests, Alexander was logically identified, by the Magi, as corresponding to the “Bad Man” (Av. *mairya*-) of the end of the first period of the millennium of Zaratuštra. It is but natural that the Magi should have synchronized the counter-action of the Mairya in the 300<sup>th</sup> year of the religion with Alexander’s invasion of Persia.

From the Dēnkird vii, M 650

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Gr. Σεμίραμις, Armen. *Šamiram*, Fars. سَمِيرَان، شمیران).

<sup>19</sup> . Cf. Bērōnī, *Vestiges*, 6, 42

«دارا بن اردشیر همن: الكبير. دارا بن دارا الى قتله الاسكندر اليوناني: الثاني». مجل، ٤١٨ «داراب: وزرك. داراي: كوچك».

<sup>20</sup> . However, Hamza relates that Dārayava<sub>h</sub>u was her brother. See *Annalium*, 13.

<sup>21</sup> . Cf. Bd 240.

<sup>22</sup> . Cf. Bd 240, Bērōnī, *Vestiges*, 6, 42.

<sup>23</sup> . اسکندر: ویرانگره (مجمل التوارخ والقصص، تهران، ١٣١٨، ٤١٨).

<sup>24</sup> . Bērōnī, *Vestiges*, 6, 68. This is, according to Bērōnī, the reason why the Persian neglected to preserve their chronology.

<sup>25</sup> . Av. *kavi*- ‘wise man’ (= Skt. *kaví*-), ‘king’, Pers. *kay/ kav, kavān* (≈ Arab. (الجبارة، الكيانة). OPers. *xšāyaθya*- ‘king’, Parth.-Pers. *šāh*, Bactr. *βαο*.

*az višuftārān aleksander, cōn-iš andar dēn ēn-z gōbed kū: ē hān ī*  
*زیمستان و ی خشم ابار پد آذ دامان نیهانیه مار کuned ī*  
*dušfarr [aleksander].*

‘Of the devastators (of that period) is Alexander, as it is said this of him in the Scripture: In that winter (= year), Wrath fabricates, secretly, among the creatures of Greed the bad man of evil Fortune [Alexander].’

From the Dēnkird viii, M 679

*pas az višōbišn ī mar ī dušfarr xēšmkird aleksander mad, aziš būd ī*  
*ēdōn abāz nē vindād ī ped dastvar dāštan šāyist hē.*

‘After the devastation which came on from the bad man, of evil Fortune, fabricated by Wrath, Alexander, it happened that some of (the Avesta texts) were not so recovered as would be possible to regard (them) canonical.’

From the Dēnkird iii, M 405-406

*andar vizend ī az mar ī dušfarr aleksander ō ērān šahr dēn ud*  
*x<sup>v</sup>adāyīh madn, hān ī ped diz ī nibišt ō sōzišn, hān ī ped ganz ī*  
*šasabīgān dast ī hrōmīgān madan, u-š ō-z yōnāyīg uzvān vizārdan, ped*  
*āgāhīh ī pēšēnīgān peyvastag.*

‘During the harm which came upon the religion and kingdom of the Aryan Land (/ Persia) from the bad man, of evil Fortune, Alexander, (the copy of the Avesta) in the Record Fortress was burnt, and (the original text) in the Royal Treasury –connected with the Knowledge left from the Ancients – came into the hands of the “Greeks” who translated it into the Greek language.’

From the Ardā Vīrāz Nāmag 1.1-4

*ēdōn gōbend kū: ēv-bār ī zardušt dēn pedīrift ud andar gēhān*  
*ravāg bē kird dā bavandagīh ī si-sad sāl dēn andar abēzagīh, ud*  
*mardōm andar abēgumānīh būd hend. pas guzastag gennāg mēnōg ī*  
*durvand gumān kirdan ī mardōmān ped ēn dēn rāy ōy guzastag*  
*aleksander ī hrōmāyīg ī muzrāyīg-mānišn viyābānēnīd ī ped grān sizd*  
*ud nibard ud višēg ō ērānšahr āmad, u-š ōy ēran dahyubed ōzad, ud*  
*dar ud x<sup>v</sup>adāyīh višuft ud avīrān kird.*

‘They say thus: Once the truthful Zaratustra accepted the religion and propagated it in the world and till the end of 300 years<sup>27</sup> the

<sup>26</sup> . *ham-ayābag* rendering Av. *hamapah*-?

<sup>27</sup> . Cf. also علمای اسلام

پس زرادشت اسفندمان به پیغامبری آمد و اوستا و زند و بازند بیاورد. گشتاسپ شاه قبول کرد و در جهان روا کرد و چهار یکی از جهان دین زرادشت قبول کردند تا سیصد سال کار دینداران هر روز بهتر بود تا اسکندر رومی بیامد، دیگر باره گفتگوی زیادت شد.

religion was in purity and men were free from doubt. Afterwards the accursed Anra Mainyu ('Evil Spirit'), possessed by Lie, to cause doubt of this religion among men deluded the accursed Alexander the Greek, who dwelt in Egypt<sup>28</sup>, who came with grievous violence, quarrel, and terror to the Aryan Land (Persia). He slew the ruler (Av. *daŋhu.paiti*- 'lord of land') of the Aryans, and destroyed the palaces and Kingdom and laid (the Aryan Land) waste.'

- From Chardin's *Travels in Persia*

It would not be surprising to find the Pārsīs attributing to Alexander and Muḥammad two evil personae that caused the devastation of their countries and cities and the ruin of the illustrious and ancient Aryan community of Persia.

« Je n'ai rien trouvé de plus sensé dans leurs enseignemens, que le mal qu'ils disent d'Alexandre le Grand. Au lieu de l'admirer, & de révéler son nom, comme font tant d'autres Peuples, ils le méprisent, le détestent, & le maudissent, le regardant comme un Pirate, comme un Brigand, comme un homme sans justice & sans cervelle, né pour troubler l'ordre du Monde, & pour détruire une partie du Genre-humain. Ils se disent à l'oreille la même chose de Mahammed, & ils les mettent tous deux à la tête des méchants Princes ; l'un, pour avoir été lui-même l'Instrument de tant de malheurs, comme sont l'Incendie, le Meurtre, le Viol, & le Sacrilege ; l'autre, pour en avoir été la cause & l'occasion. Ils connoissent assez que leur perte vient de ces deux Usurpateurs, Alexandre & Mahammed ; en quoi ils ne se trompent pas. »<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> . « De toutes les fictions qui ont fait de l'histoire d'Alexandre un pur roman, la plus ancienne, la plus accréditée, celle qu'on peut regarder comme la mère de toutes les autres, et sur laquelle s'accordent tous les manuscrits grecs et latins, et les ouvrages arabes des chrétiens d'Orient, est celle qui donne pour père à ce prince Necténabo ou Nectanébo, roi d'Égypte, lequel, chassé de ses états par les Perses, vint en Macédoine, et eut avec Olympias, femme de Philippe, un commerce auquel Alexandre dut la naissance. » J.B. de Xivrey, « Notice de la plupart des manuscrits grecs, latins et en vieux français, contenant l'histoire fabuleuse d'Alexandre le grand », *Acad. Inst. et B.-L.*, T. 13, 1838, (162-306), 169.

<sup>29</sup> . *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin, en Perse et autres lieux de l'Orient*, (Nouvelle Edition), Tome seconde, Amsterdam, 1735, 185-86.