

HŪNAS IN AVESTA AND PAHLAVI

BY J. J. MODI

THE writer of the article on the Huns in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*¹ says that the authentic history of the Huns in Europe practically begins about the year A. D. 372, when Balamir or Balambir led a westward movement from their settlements in the steppes on the north of the Caspian sea. A side issue of this movement was the downfall of the Gupta dynasty in India, regarding which Mr. Vincent Smith² in his *History of India* says—

The Golden age of the Guptas comprised a period of a century and a quarter (A. D. 330-455), covered by three reigns of exceptional length. The death of Kumāragupta I, which can be fixed definitely as having occurred early in 455, marks the beginning of the decline and fall of the empire.....When Skandagupta (455-480 A. D.) came to the throne, in the spring of 455, he encountered a sea of troubles. The Pusyamitra danger had been averted, but one more formidable closely followed it—an irruption of the savage Huns, who had poured down from the steppes of Central Asia through the north-western passes, and carried devastation over the smiling plains and crowded cities of India. Skandagupta, who probably was a man of mature years and ripe experience, proved equal to the need, and inflicted upon the barbarians a defeat so decisive that India was saved for a time.

The Bhitari³ stone pillar inscription of Skandagupta takes a note of this victory over the Huns.⁴

Then there were fresh inroads between A. D. 465 and 470. Skandagupta was succeeded on the throne by his son Puragupta (480-485), who was succeeded by his son Nar-simhagupta Bālāditya. In or about 484, there were other stronger and further inroads of the Huns under their king Toramāna, who had established himself in Mālwa (500 to

1 *Ninth Ed. Vol. XII. p. 381.* 2 *Third Edition (1914) pp. 308 ff.*

3 A village in the Sayyidpur Tahsil of the Ghazipur district in the N. W. Provinces.

4 *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III, Inscriptions of the Early Gupta kings and their successors, by John Faithful Fleet, (1888), Inscription No. 13, Plate VII, pp. 52-56.*

510). This Toramāna was succeeded by Mihiragula or Mihirkula.

The above-mentioned Bālāditya was the king of Magadha at this time and Yaśodharman (Vikramāditya) was the ruler of Mālwā in Central India. Round the names of these two kings there rages a conflict of opinions among scholars, as to which of these two Rājas, defeated Mihirkula and put an end to the Hūna supremacy in India. Dr. Rudolf Hoernle¹ says it was Yaśodharman. He rests for his authority on epigraphical, numismatic, and literary evidence, of which the first is the most important. The inscriptions of Yaśodharman on his two *rana-stambhas* or "Columns of Victory in War," commemorate this victory.² The second column, which is much mutilated, is, as it were, a duplicate. Mr. Vincent Smith,³ on the other hand, advocates, that it was Bālāditya who defeated the Hūna king. He rests for his authority on the statement of the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang⁴ who represents Bālāditya as defeating Mihirkula.

This question has been also indirectly touched by Professor K. B. Pathak⁵ and Babu Manmohan Chakravarti.⁶ In the solution of this question, the Persian history of the Sassanian times has also been appealed to. I do not wish to enter into the controversy, but simply say that, on weighing the arguments on both sides, I am inclined to believe that the credit of the defeat of the Huns belongs to Yaśodharman. The authority of the Chinese traveller is second-hand and late. His statement that Mihirkula, the Hūna king who is the hero of this controversy, lived 'some centuries ago'⁷ should make one pause before taking him

1 Journal, Royal Asiatic Society, 1909, pp. 88-144.

2 Fleet's Gupta Inscriptions, No. 33 and 34, pp. 142-50.

3 History of India, 3rd edition (1914) pp. 318-21.

4 Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World, by Samuel Beal Vol. I. (1884) pp. 165-71.

5 Journal. B. B. R. A. Society, Vol. XIX, pp. 35-43.

6 Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1903, pp. 183-86.

7 Beal's Buddhist Records, Vol. I, p. 169.

as an authority. By that statement, he carries the date of Bālāditya also 'some centuries ago,' which is against chronological facts. Thus, the authority of a pilgrim-traveller who speaks in later times, and that on second-hand hearsay information, and whose statement on the fact of the date of a king is incorrect, must be set aside, when placed by the side of the contemporary evidence of the inscriptions of the king who claims the victory. If Yaśodharman had not been the real victor, he would not have dared to get that inscription put up. He ran the risk of being taken for a braggart or a boaster by his contemporaries,—princes and peasants alike. The court-poet, while preparing the inscription verses, may praise the king and even make a god of him if he liked, but he would not dare, and his royal patron himself would not allow him to dare, to attribute to the king, in the inscription, a feat or a deed which the king did not do. Exaggeration in praise is one thing but a false statement is another thing. The latter would lower the king in the esteem of his people who knew all the contemporary events.

The above Hun kings, Toramāna and Mihirkula, speak of themselves on their coins, as "Shāhi" kings. We learn from Firdousi, that the king of the Haetalite Huns, who helped Firuz, was spoken of as the Shāh of Haitāl.¹ He is also spoken of as the Chagāni Shāhi.² So, I think, the term "Shāhi," used by the Hun kings of India, refers to the title which they had assumed, and that the Huns who settled in India were of the same tribe as those who invaded Persia.

Though the above historical references and the epigraphical evidence speak of the inroads of the Huns in the 5th and 6th centuries after Christ, looking to the history of this great nation of the Huns, who had a running history of about 2000 years, it appears, that there were inroads of these people in times much anterior to these later times of the Guptas. According to M. Deguignes the his-

¹ Mecan's Calcutta edition of the Shah-nameh, Vol. III, p. 1589.

² Ibid.

tory of the Huns is the history "of a nation almost ignored which established at different times powerful monarchies in Asia, Europe and Africa. The Huns, who, later, bore the name of 'Turks', natives of a country situated in the North of China, between the rivers Irtush and Amur, made themselves, by degrees, masters of the whole of the great Tartary. Since 200 B. C. several royal families have successively reigned in their vast countries. They had empires more extensive than that of Rome, some illustrious emperors, some legislators and conquerors, who have given rise to considerable evolutions."¹ The Huns in their long history of about 2000 years, and in their distant marches of more than 2000 miles, one way or another in the East or in the West, in the North or in the South, were known under a dozen different names at different times and different places.

The history of Persia, the history which one may perhaps like to call comparatively the pre-historic history of Persia, points to the existence of the Huns centuries before Christ. The Avesta writings clearly show this. These writings show that the name of the Huns, by which these people are known, is a very old name of times long anterior to Christ; and this further confirms the views of M. Deguignes in the matter.

The Huns are spoken of in the Avesta as the *Hunus*. We find the following references to them.

I. We read thus in the *Ābān Yasht*—

(53) *Tām Yazata takhmō Tusō rathaēštārō barēšaēsu paiti aspanām zāvarē jaidhyantō hitaēibyō dravātātem tanubyō pouru-spakhštīm tbiṣyantām paiti-jaitīm duṣmainyavanām hathrānivāitīm hamerethenām aurvathanam tbiṣyantām.* (54) *Āat hīm jaidhyat avat āiyapteam dazdi mē vanguhi sevīštē Ardvīšūra anāhitē yat bavāni aiwi-vanyāu aurva Hunavō vaeskaya upa dvarem*

¹ I give my own translation from "Histoire Générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mogûls, et des autres Tartares, occidentaux etc., avant et depuis Jesus Christ jusqu'à present," par M. Deguignes (1756), Tome I, Partie I, Préface, p. V.

khsathrōsaokem apanōtemem kanghaya bērezantya aṣavanaya yatha azem nijanāni Tūiryanām dakhyunām pancasagnāi satagnāišca satagnāi hazangragnāišca hazangragnāi baēvaregnāišca baēvaregnāi ahānkhštagnāišca. (55) Dathat ahmāi tat avat āyaptem Ardvīsūra anāhita hadha zaotrō barāi arēdrāi yazemnāi jaidhyantāi dāthris āyaptem.

Translation:—(53) The brave warrior Tusa invoked her (Ardvīsūra) riding on horse-back and praying for strength to his horses, strength to [his own] body, great watchfulness over those who annoyed him, power to strike his enemies, power to run down his foes, adversaries and annoyers. (54) Then he asked of her: O good beneficent holy Ardvīsūra! give me this gift, that I may be the overcomer of the brave *Hunus* of Vaēśaka¹ at the gate of the lofty [fort of] Khsathrōsaoka of the high and holy Kangā² [and] that I may kill the fifties and the hundreds, the hundreds and the thousands, the thousands and the ten-thousands [and] the ten-thousands and the innumerable [the people of] the country of Turan. (55) Holy Ardvīsta granted the desire of him who carried offerings, gave gifts made invocations [and] sought the fulfilment of desires.

II. We further read in the *Ābān Yasht* :

(57) Tām yazenta aurva *Hunavō* Vaēskaya upa dvare: khsathrō-saokem apanōtemem Kanghaya berezantya aṣavanaya sateē aspanām arṣnam hazangrē gavam baēvare ammayanam. (58) Āat hīm jaidhyen avat āyaptem daznō vanguhī sevištē Ardvīsūra anāhitē yat bavāma aiv vanyāu takhmem Tusem rathaēstārem yatha vaēm nijnāma airyanām dakhyunām pancasagnāi satagnāišca satagnāi hazangragnāišca hazangragnāi baēvarēgnāišca.

¹ Dr. West is wrong in translating "*Hunavō Vaēskaya*" as "Hunus in Vaēska" and thus taking Vaēska to be the name of a place (Legends relating to Keresasp, Fakhri Texts, Part II, G. B. E. XV. p. 371, n. 4).

² Firdousi places the fortress of Kangā (Kangīn) at the end of a great distance from China. Maçoudi (II, p. 161, ch. 31) also places it (Kangīn) in China.

baēvaregnāi ahañkhstagnāišca. (59) Nōit aēibyāscit dathat tat avat āyaptem Ardvisūra anāhita.

Translation:—(57) The brave *Hunus* of Vaēsaka invoked her (Ardvisūra) at the gate of the lofty [fort of] Khsathrōsaoka of the high and holy Kanga, with one hundred horses, one thousand oxen, [and] ten thousand lambs. (58) Then [thus invoking] they asked of her: "O good beneficent holy Ardvisura! give us this gift; that we may be the overcomers of the brave warrior Tusa [and] that we may kill the fifties and the hundreds, the hundreds and the thousands, the thousands and the ten-thousands, [and] the ten-thousands and the innumerable of [the people of] the country of Iran." (59) Holy Ardvisūra did not grant this gift to them.

We gather the following facts from the above passages of the *Ābān Yasht* on the *Hunus*: (1) Vaēsaka was one of the brave leaders, or rather the family of the leaders, of the *Hunus*. This Vaēsaka of the Avesta seems to be the same as Visak of the Pahlavi Bundelesh (chap. xxxi, 16, 17),¹ one of the ancestors of the Turanians, an uncle of Afrāsiāb² and the father of Pirān, the Turanian Nestor. He is the Viseh of Firdousi's *Shah-nameh*. (2) An Iranian hero Tusa³ was a great enemy, or rather Tusa's family and descendants were great enemies of Vaēsaka or of Vaēsaka's family and descendants. We learn from Firdousi, the special reason why these two families were so very hostile. In the war between the Iranian Naodar the father of Tusa, and the Turanian Afrāsiāb the nephew of Viseh, Bārmān,

1 Vide my Bundelesh p. 169.

2 According to M. Gabriel Bonvalot, travellers are, even now, shown at Samarkand, a place known as that of the Cemetery of Aprosiab (Afrāsiāb). The present ruins of Samarkand include the ruins of Afrāsiāb and are known as the city of Afrāsiāb (Through the Heart of Asia by M. Gabriel Bonvalot, translated from the French by Pitman, Vol. II, pp. 7 and 31). For further particulars about him, vide my Dictionary of Avesta Proper Names, p. 130. Vide also Tārikh-i-Rashid by Elias, pp. 286-7.

3 It is this Tus that is said to have been the founder of the city of Tus the birth-place of the great Firdousi Tousei.

a son of Viseh was killed. Naodar was killed by Afrāsiāb in revenge.¹ (3) The head-quarters of this Hun hero Vaēsaka and his tribe was, at that time, at a place called Kanga, somewhere in Central Asia. It is the Kangdez, i. e. the Fortress of Kang of the Shah-nameh. (4) The time of this war between the Iranian Tus and the Turanian Hun Vaēsaka or Visa, was long anterior to that of king Vistāsp, who, according to later Pahlavi writers, lived, at least, about seven centuries before Christ. Thus, we see from the Avesta, that the *Hunus* or the Huns appear first in history as fighting with the Iranians long before the 7th century before Christ.

III. The next reference to the Hūnas in the Avesta is in the Meher Yasht (x. 113) where we read as follows—

Tat nō jamyāt āvanghē Mithra Ahura berezanta yat berezem barāt astra vācim aspanāmea srifa khšufsān aštrāu kahyān jyāu nivaithyān tigrāunghō astayō tadha *Hunavō* gouru-zaothranān jata paithyāunti frā-varesa.

Translation:—May the great Mithra and Ahura come to our help there where the weapons of war jingle (lit. raise loud noise), the hoofs of horses rattle, the daggers clink, [and] bows shoot forth sharp arrows. There [by the arrival of Mithra and Ahura for assistance] the *Hunus*, the malefide offerers of sacrifices, go about smitten and with dishevelled hair.

The word *Hunu* in the Avesta also means a son. It is used for bad or wicked sons. It is the Sanskrit *sūnu*, Eng. son. So, Darmesteter, Kavasji E. Kanga, Harlez, Spiegel and others take the word here as a common noun in the sense of 'sons' or 'descendants.' But, I think, there is here a clear reference to the battles with the *Hunus* or Huns.

In the present passage there is an invocation to Mithra and Ahura for help in the battle field, so that, with their help, certain persons may be smitten. These persons, all the translators take to be the descendants or sons (*hunu*) of some evil-minded persons. I would ask: Why are Mithra and

¹ Le Livre des Rois, par M. Mohl. Vol. I, p. 422.

Ahura invoked for smiting the children of the evil-doers and not the evil-doers themselves? One cannot admit the justice of such an invocation. So, I submit that it is clear that it is the evil-doers themselves, the *Hunus*, against whom the invocation is made. We are not in a sure and certain position to determine the time of this reference to the Huns.

IV. We read as follows in the *Jamyād Yasht* about a great Iranian hero *Keresasp*—

41. *Yō janat Hunavō yat pathanya nava Hunavaś-ca Nivikahē Hunavaś ca Dāstayānois.*

Translation:—Who (*Karesāspa*) smote the *Hunus*, the nine highway men, the *Hunus* of the *Nivika*, the *Hunus* of the *Dāstaya* tribe.

Other translators like *Kanga*, *Darmesteter*, *Spiegel*, have taken the word *Hunu*, which occurs thrice in this passage, as a common noun for 'sons or descendants.' *West*¹ and *Harlez* have taken the word in its first place, as a proper noun for the *Hunas*, and in the next two places, for common nouns. I think that it is a proper noun in all the three places and refers to a fight with the *Hunus*.

Harlez gives the following note over the word *Hunus*: "Personages légendaires Inconnu. Les légendes recueillies dans les *Shahnāme* parlent aussi de brigands tués par des héros et de brigands au nombre de cinq ou sept."²

Harlez supposes this name to be legendary, but it seems to be a reference to the Huns. The time of this reference seems to be well-nigh the same as, or even a little anterior to, that referred to in the *Ābān Yasht*. The *Haoma Yasht* (*Yaçna IX 6-13*) places *Keresasp's* time long before *Zoroaster*. The *Ābān Yasht* (*Yt. V, 37*) places his time somewhat before that of *Afrāsiāb*, the nephew of the *Vaēsaka* or *Visa* above referred to. The *Rām Yasht* (*Yt. XV, 27*) also places him before *Zoroaster*.

¹ Legends relating to *Keresasp*. *Pahlavi Texts Part II, S. B. E. Vol. XVIII, p. 370.*

² *Le Zend Avesta, p. 546, n. 5.*

Keresasp was a great Iranian hero who is more than once referred to in the Avesta. Some of his exploits are referred to in the Zamyād Yasht. One of these exploits was, as said above, that of smiting the *Hunus*. It seems that these exploits were described at some length in the Sudgar Nask, one of the lost books out of the twenty-one books of the Avesta that are believed to have been extant at one time. Though almost all the Nasks have been lost, we know from the ninth book of the Dinkard what their contents were. Similarly, we find therein, in brief, the contents of the Sudgar Nask.¹ In the contents of the fourteenth Fargard Ad-fravakhsyā we find the exploits of Keresasp. Therein, we find that the above-mentioned exploit with the Huns, referred to in the Zamyād Yasht, is described thus—

“When the Veskō progeny who (were descendants) of Nivik [and] Dāstānik [were] slain by him.”²

Here in the Pahlavi passage, we do not find the word *Hunu* repeated as in the Zamyād Yasht with the two proper names Nivika and Dāstāyana, i. e. the word for ‘son,’ as understood by the different translators, has not been given. Dr. West has himself added the word ‘descendants.’ This fact seems to me to show that the word *Hunu* in the Zamyād Yasht is used as a proper noun for the *Hunus* or Huns in all the three places and not as a common noun in the sense of ‘sons.’

The Pahlavi legend is also preserved in the Pahlavi Rivāyet accompanying the Dādīstān-i-Dini.³ Therein,

1 For the Pahlavi Text, vide Dinkard compiled by Mr. D. M. Madon, Vol. II, pp. 802–803 and West's Dinkard (S. B. E. XXXVII, Pahlavi Texts Pt. IV, pp. 197–99) Bk. IX, Ch. XV. Vide also West's legend relating to Keresasp in the S. B. E. Vol. XVIII (Pahlavi Texts, Pt. II, pp. 370–72). For the Persian rendering of the legend, vide the Saddar Bundelesh (Chap. XX, pp. 86–92), edited by Ervad Bomanji N. Dhabhar. For the translation of this Persian legend, vide Ervad Edalji Kersaspji Antia's Paper “The Legend of Keresasp,” in the Spiegel Memorial Volume edited by me (pp. 93–98).

2 West S. B. E. XXXVII p. 198, XVIII, p. 372.

3 For the Text of this, vide “The Pahlavi Rivāyet accompanying the Dādīstān-i-Dinik,” edited by Ervad Bomanji N. Dhabhar (1913) pp. 65 to 74, No. XVII.

where the particular exploit of Kerasasp in connection with the *Hunus* mentioned in the above passage of the Zamyād Yasht is referred to, we do not find the name *Hunu* but we find that the persons whom Kerpsasp smote are spoken of only as *rūçdār*,¹ i. e. highway men, which is a Pahlavi equivalent of the Avesta 'Pathan.'

In the Persian Legend of Keresasp, which is the rendering of the above Pahlavi Revāyats, we find the word *rūh-dār* which is the same as Pahlavi *rūçdār*.

These Pahlavi and Persian renderings of the original exploit show, that the *Hunus* or Huns, with whom Keresasp fought, were by profession, as it were, highway men. The Avesta Zamyād Yasht, gives the number of their leaders as nine (*nava*). The Pahlavi Revāyat gives no number. But the Persian Revāyat has reduced the number to seven.

Now, what was the time of this fight of the Iranians with the Huns referred to in the Zamyād Yasht? From the fact that this war or battle was led by Keresasp, we may properly conclude that it referred to times long anterior to king Vištāsp and Zoroaster, i. e. long anterior to at least about B. C. 700.

V. The next references to the Huns are in the Farvardin (xiii. 100) and Zamyād (xix. 86) Yashts, where we read thus about king Vištāsp (Gustāsp)—

Yō him stātām hitām haitīm uzvazat haca *Hunū-wyo*.

Translation:—Who (King Vištāsp) separated it (i. e. the Zoroastrian religion referred to in the preceding para), strong holy-existing from [the influence of] the *Hunus*.

Darmesteter, Spiegel, Harlez and Haug very properly take the word *Hunu* in this passage for a proper noun, but Kanga takes it for a common noun.

In the Farvardin and Zamyād Yashts, king Vištāsp or Gustāsp, the patron of Zoroaster and of the Zoroastrian religion, is spoken of, as said above, as separating the religion of Iran from the influence of the *Hunus*. In the Gos

1 Ibid p. 69, i. 7.

Yasht¹ Vištāsp prays for overcoming eight foreign kings or chiefs. Among them, one is Khyaona Arejatāspa, who is spoken of in the Pahlavi Aiyādgār-i-Zarirān (Memoirs of Zarir) as Arjāsp-i-Khyōnān Khudāi², i.e. Arjāsp the king of the Khyaonas. We find a similar prayer in the Aṣisvang Yasht.³ Vištāsp had to fight three wars with this Turanian king Arjāsp. Firdousi refers to these at some length. The wars were due to the appearance of Zoroaster as a prophet in the court of Vištāsp. According to Firdousi, Zoroaster advised his royal patron to free himself from the yoke and influence of this Turanian king. So, taking the above passage of the Farvardin Yasht in connection with the passage of the Gos Yasht above referred to and with the Pahlavi writing of the Aiyādgār, it seems that Arjāsp the Turanian with whom Vištāsp fought, and his tribesmen the Khyaonas, were all Huns.

From the passages of the Yashts, at least of the Farvardin and Zamyād Yashts, we find that the *Hunus* or Huns lived in the time of king Vištāsp and Zoroaster, which, if not anterior to, was at least not later than, that of the 7th century before Christ.

These *Hunus* seem to have belonged to the same group of hostile tribes to which the Varedhakas and the Khyaonas belonged. King Vištāsp, the patron king of Zoroaster, who is represented as opposing the *Hunus*,⁴ is also represented as opposing the Varedhakas⁵ and the Khyaonas.⁶

According to Darmesteter, the Varedhakas referred to in the Avesta as a hostile tribe like the *Hunus*, may be the later Vertae. Similarly the Khyaonas were the Chionitae. They lived somewhere on the western coast of the Caspian.⁷

1 Yt. IX. 31, 32.

2 Vide my "Aiyādgār-i-Zarirān, Shatrōiha-i-Airan and Afdiya va Sahigiya-i-Seistan" (1899) p. 5.

3 Yt. XVII, 49-50.

4 Farvardin Yasht 100.

5 Gosh Yasht, 31; Aṣisvang Yasht 51.

6 Ibid and Zamyād Yasht 87.

7 Darmesteter, S. B. E. Vol. XXIII, p. 117 n. 6, Yasht IX, 100 n. 6.

From this rather long examination of the Avesta passages we find that the *Hunus* were known in Persia as a wandering and pillaging nation or tribe before the 7th century of the Christian era.

Among the several passages of the Avesta which we have examined we find that there is some difference about the meaning of the word *Hunu* in some passages. But there are some for which there is no difference, especially the passages referred to in the *Ābān Yasht* and which referred to the war between the Iranians of Tusa and the *Hunus* of the Turanian *Vaēsaka*.

The early *Hūns*, i.e. the Huns of the times of the Avesta, seem to have professed well-nigh the same religion as that of the early Iranians. We see this from the ceremonial form of their prayers, referred to in the *Ābān Yasht* (Yt. V. 53, 58). We see, from the passages of this *Yasht* given above, that both the Iranian Tusa and the *Hunus* of *Vaēsaka* invoke *Ardvīsūra* with the same ceremonial offering. They both offer 100 horses, 1000 oxen and 10000 lambs. Secondly, we learn from the Pahlavi *Aiyādgār-i-Zarirān* that *Arjāsp* raised a war against *Vistāsp* because the latter acknowledged the new religion of Zoroaster. Why should he have done so had they professed different religions? Though hostile and though differing in the details of their belief, they seem to have followed a common religion, a religion the main elements of which were the same. Had it not been so, there was no special reason for *Arjāsp* to declare war for the sake of religion. We read in the Pahlavi *Aryādgār*: “*Arjāsp*, the king of the *Khyaonas*, had the startling news that king *Vistāsp* had, with his sons, brothers and family, chiefs and equals, accepted from *Oharmazd* this holy religion of the *Mazdayasnāns*. Thereby he was much distressed.”¹ Further on, we read the following message of *Arjāsp* to *Vistāsp*: “I have heard that Your Majesty has accepted from *Oharmazd* the pure *Mazdayasnān* religion. If you will not think of it, great harm and unhappiness may result to us from that (religion). But

1 Vide my *Aryādgār-i-Zarirān* etc. p. 3.

if it please Your Majesty, and you give up this pure religion, and be of the same religion with us, then we will pay homage to you as a king."¹ These passages show that Arjāsp resents Vistāsp's forsaking the common ancestral religion and adopting the new Mazdayasnān one of Zoroaster. Again, according to the Iranian tradition, recorded in the Pahlavi Bundehesh, the Iranians and the Turanians at first belonged to the same group. They had a common ancestor. This fact also shows that they had well-nigh the same religion. We find from the above passages of the Farvardin (100) and the Zamyād (86) Yashts that with the help of king Guštāsp, Zoroaster separated the good elements from the bad ones, and rejecting the latter purified the old religion. That was his great work of reform. Firdousi (Calcutta ed. III. p. 1548) represents even the later Huns as praying in fire-temples with *būz* and *barsam*, the sacred requisites of Zoroastrian worship. According to Firdousi, king Behrangore sent the queen of the Khokan of the Hunnic Turks to the fire-temple of Azor Goushasp as a state prisoner to serve there.

We also learn from Indian history based on epigraphical, numismatic, and literary materials that Mihirakula was a foreign Hun king whom the Indian king Yaśodharman, or as said by Mr. Vincent Smith, both Yaśodharman and Bālāditya combined, defeated. *Rājataranginī*,² the history of Kāśmīr by Kalhana, refers to this Mihirakula at some length. We learn the following facts from this work about Mihirakula. (1) He founded the temple of Mihireśvara and the city of Mihirapura. (2) He allowed the Gandhāri Brahmans, a low race, to seize upon the endowments of the more respectable orders of the Hindu priesthood. (3) These Gandhāri Brahmans of Mihirakula had the custom of the

¹ Ibid p. 5.

² Bk. I, stanzas 306 et seq., Troyer's French Translation of 1840, Vol. I, pp. 33 et seq. Vide also Sir Aurel Stein's Text and Translation and Wilson's Essay on the Hindu History of Kāśmīr in the *Asiatick Researches*, Volume V (pp. 1-11), n. 23.

next-of-kin marriages among them.¹ (4) A number of flesh-devouring birds followed the army of this king.²

The very name Mihirakula is, as said by Dr. Stein, Iranian. The names of the temple and city founded by him are Iranian. The marriage custom attributed to him is the matriarchal custom alleged to be tribal with some Persian people.³ The reference to the flesh-eating birds points to the Iranian custom of the disposal of the dead. All these facts and references point to an inference that the religion of this Hun king, Mihirakula, had many elements which were common to the religion of the early Iranians.

According to the Iranians of the Avestic⁴ times, the people of the then known world were divided into five groups: (1) the Airyas, (2) the Turyas, (3) the Sarimyas or the people who dwelt in Syria, (4) the Sāini, or the Chinese and (5) the Dāhæ. Of these five stocks, the first three are traced from the three sons of king Faridun, the Thraëtaona of the Avesta. These three sons were Salam, Tur and Irach. From Salam descended the stock of the Sarimyas, from Tur that of the Turanians and from Irach that of the Iranians. Vištāsp came from the stock of Irach and Arjāsp from that of Tur.

Vaēsaka, the typical Hūna or Hun, and Tusa, the typical Iranian, descended, according to the Pahlavi Bundesh, from a common ancestor. The following geneological tree, prepared from the account of the Bundesh, gives their descent from Gayomard, supposed to be the

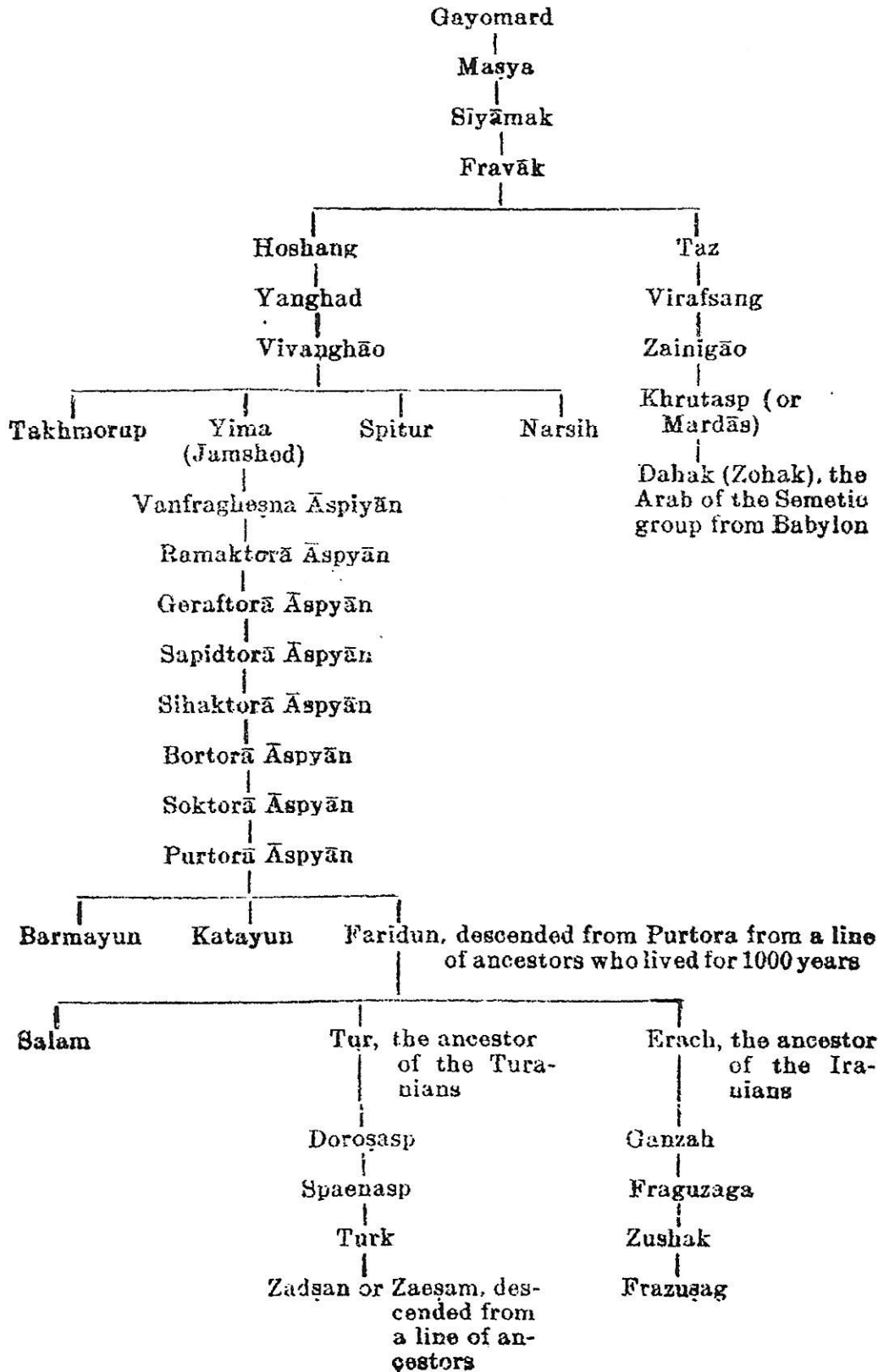
1 The stanza referring to this custom is omitted in Dr. Stein's Text but is found in Troyer's Text, p. 38. Dr. Stein refers to this omission in the foot-note. As to Mihirkula, Dr. Stein also thinks that the name is Iranian.

2 Rāj., stanza i. 291.

3 For this custom see a Paper on "Royal Marriages and Matri-lineal Descent" by Miss Margaret Murray (Journal of the Anthropological Institute of England, July-December 1915.)

4 Farvardin Yasht, Yt. XIII, 144

first king of the countries, of which Airyana Vaeja or Iran formed a part.



Modi: Hūnas in Avesta