

neglect; he did not shut off the field runnels. When he dug them, he left them open, and the precious waters flowed over the fields unchecked, thus destroying their property. Prominent men were imprisoned."

## FERIDUN

Ved. Trētana<sup>1</sup>, Av. Thraētaona, Pahl. Friton<sup>2</sup> or Frēdūn<sup>3</sup>.

In the *Šāhnāma* he is shown as a providential king. Together with the smith Kāveh he saves Iran from the alien, monstrous usurper, Zohāk.

The *Avesta* ascribes to him a magic power, since he flung into the air the warden of the Rangha river, changing him into a vulture<sup>4</sup>.

"An allusion is made here — explains Darmesteter<sup>5</sup> — to a myth, belonging to the Thraētaona cyclis (...). It referred most likely to the time when Thraētaona, on his march to Bawri, the capital of Aži (...) arrived at the Tigris (the Rangha)<sup>6</sup>; an angel then came and taught him magic to enable him to baffle the sortileges of Aži (Shāh Nāmah). We have in this passage an instance of his talents as a wizard, and one which helps us to understand why Thraētaona is considered as the inventor of magic, and his name is invoked in spells and incantations (...)"

The episode between Feridun and the warden of the Arvand river is also described by Ferdousi (see above pp. 29—30).

Cyrus must have been reputed as a worker of miracles in the eyes of his contemporaries, since he dug canals as to annihilate a natural barrier on his way in the shape of the Arvand river (In Herodotus' work the Gyndes) and who gained so unexpected by a great victory near Opis on the Tigris bank<sup>7</sup>.

Ibn Balxi<sup>8</sup> writes that all the ten subsequent predecessors of Feridun, descended from Ġamšid had in their names the word *gāw*. In his view it suggests that Feridun was a descendant of a rich clan of Iranian herdsmen and that is why later on he used a mace in the shape of a bull (or cow)-head as a weapon.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., H. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *FNA*, I, p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., *Bd*, XXIII, 3, *PT*, I, p. 87. etc.

<sup>4</sup> *Yt* V, 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Av*, D, O, II, p. 68—69, n. 3.

<sup>6</sup> It is not sure whether Rangha denotes the Tigris, as it is suggested by Darmesteter (cf., *FNA*, II, pp. 552—559). In *Šāhnāme*, *Seyāvuš*, v. 3441—3494, we also have miraculous crossing of the rough waters of Ġeyhun, undertaken by Kay Xosrow, Farangis and Giv.

<sup>7</sup> Olmst, p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> *Fārname*, 16—17; cf., *FNA*, I, p. 396.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Balxi is not isolated in this subject. Acc. to Bir, p. 113, Aferidun was a son of Asfiāngāw, the son of Asfiān Nigāw, the son of Asfiān, the son of Šahrgāw, the son of Asfiān Ahunbagāw, the son of Asfiān Ispedgāw, the son of Asfiān Dizagāw, the son of Asfiān Nigāw, the son of Nefuruš, the son of king Ġam. Cf., also *Dānešnāme-ye Irān o Eslām*, I, the entry *Ābtin*, where the names of Feridun's predecessors are enumerated acc. to Persian and Arabic historians.

This association of Feridun with the herdsmen clan brings to mind a legend, mentioned by Herodotus, concerning Cyrus' childhood<sup>10</sup>.

Acc. to Ferdousi, Feridun's father was called Ābtin<sup>11</sup> and his mother Ferānek<sup>12</sup>.

Ābtin, Av. Athwya, seems to be, acc. to the *Avesta*, a family name. Compare, for example, *Yt* XIII, 131: "We worship Fravashi of the holy Thraētaona, of the Āthwya house (...), or *Yt* V, 33: "(...) Traētaona, the heir of the valiant Āthwya clan (...)"

In *Yašt* XXIII (*Āfrin Paighambar Zartūšt*), 4, we read: "Mayest thou be rich in cattle like an Āthwyanide [Feridun]"

Acc. to Ferdousi<sup>13</sup>, Zohāk "put an end to the days" of Ābtin. Judging from what Feridun told Arnevāz and Šahrenāz who were delivered from Zohāk, Ābtin was carried away from the Iranian land by Zohāk<sup>14</sup>.

Feridun's mother, Ferānek, Av. Freni, was, acc. to *Yt* XIII, 140, Usinemah's wife. So, acc. to the *Avesta*, that was the name of Feridun's father. Āthwya was his family name.

"One of the four Frāni in *Yt* XIII, 140, wife of Usinemah — writes Herzfeld<sup>15</sup> — is considered in the Sasanian legend to be the ancestress of the kavi-dynasty; in Firdausi, Frānak is the mother of Frēdōn".

Acc. to Tha'alibi, Feridun was born when his father was still alive:

"Or, la femme d'un descendant de Tahmourath nommé Ābtin, se trouvant enceinte, cachait sa grossesse et lorsqu'elle eut mis au monde un fils, son père le nomma Afriddōun et le porta, pour qu'il fut en sureté, dans quelque pré éloigné et situé dans un profond vallon (...)"<sup>16</sup>.

Acc. to the religious tradition, Feridun conquered Media (Pahl. Māda) and Māzanderān.

## Media

*Dinkārd* VII, I, 26 — PT, V, p. 10:

"And Frēdūn, through that triumphant splendour, became a responder to Dahāk from the pregnant womb, and that degraded fiend was averted and paralysed by him; *having* come to nine years of age, he proceeded about his destruction, and through that victory Dahāk was smitten by him, the creatures were saved and relieved thereby, those of Māzandar and Māda were smitten, their ravage and mischief were removed from the region of Khvaniras, and the region of Khvaniras was preserved for his three sons".

<sup>10</sup> Cf., pp. 33—35.

<sup>11</sup> *Zohāk*, v. 117, 154.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 121—122.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 120.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 323.

<sup>15</sup> *Hfd, Zor*, I, p. 59.

<sup>16</sup> *Tha, Hist*, p. 31.

So both in Media and in Māzanderān, Zohāk was the enemy of Feridun. These are the reasons why Feridun came out against him (Dinkārd IX, V, 1—2 PT, IV, p. 177):

"[...] these five misusers [*of life*] — greediness, want of energy, indolence, defilement, and illicit intercourse — are not with one. (...) these five defects existed in Dahāk, and owing to that, moreover, Frēdūn is irritated with *him*, and smites him (...).

"Astyages now ruled Media in place of his Father Cyaxares. His name in Iranian, Arshtivaiga, meant "lance-hurler", but it was quite inappropriate for the son, who in his long reign (585—550) showed only weakness<sup>17</sup>".

### Māzanderān

*Vendīdād*, farg. I — *AvD,O*, I, p. 9:

"18 (67). The fourteenth of the good lands and countries which I, Ahura Mazda, created, was the four-cornered Varena, for which was born Thraētaona, who smote Aži Dahāka".

*Yt* XV, 23—24 — *AvD,O*, II, p. 254:

"23. Unto him (*Vayu*) did Thraētaona, the heir of the valiant Āthwya clan, offer up a sacrifice in the four-cornered Varena, on a golden throne, under golden beams and a golden canopy, with bundles of baresma and offerings of full-boiling (milk).

24. He begged of him a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o *Vayu*! who dost work highly, that I may overcome Aži Dahāka, the threemouthed' (...)." *Dinkārd*, VIII, XIII, 1, 9 — PT, IV, p. 25, 28:

1. "The *Kitradād* contains particulars about the race of mankind (...)

9. A report of Frēdūn, the ruler of Khavaniras; as to the smiting of Dahāk, the conquering of the country of Māzandarān (...)." *Varena* — acc. to Darmesteter<sup>18</sup> — Varn, identified by the Comm. either with Patashkhvārgar or with Dailam (that is to say Tabaristān or Gilān). The *Gr. Bd.* identifies it with Mount Demāvend (which belongs to Patashkhvārgar): this is mountain where Aži Dahāka was bound with iron bonds by Thraētaona. — 'Four-cornered': Tabaristān has rudely the shape of a quadrilateral".

So this country is more or less identical with Māzanderān. Here, the argument of Darmesteter concerning a "four-cornered" shape of Varn seems to be almost convincing. It appears that the attributes of the Indian Varuna (the god) were ascribed in the Avesta to Varn (the country). Acc. to Herzfeld<sup>19</sup>, 'qarnu' is the usual word in Assy., and Arab., hence the 'horns', i.e. battlements of the temples, altars etc. and horns of the moon etc. in Hebr. and Assy. A syn.

<sup>17</sup> Olmst, p. 34.

<sup>18</sup> *AvD,O*, I, p. 9, n. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Hfd, *Zor*, II, p. 678.

is 'goša, ear' hence OP.\* gōšaka > NP gūšah 'corner', in caθrugōša 'four-cornered' as epithet of varuna 'heaven' (...).

"Varuna was an old and powerful Indian god, the embodiment of the all-inclusive heaven, (...) but in Rigveda he is inferior to Indra. Varuna is said to be the creator of the world (...), he is omnipotent, just, compassionate, the protector of the good, the guardian of the everlasting law which he himself laid down<sup>20</sup>".

"Indra rules amongst the storm, clouds, rains and thunders; he is a victor over Vritra, i.e. probably over the clouds which enclosed the waters, and the god of the warriors who conquered the distant lands and routed the black aborigines (...) <sup>21</sup>".

It was Feridun himself (Avestan Thraētaona) who was such a hero. As the conqueror of Zohāk — the king-dragon, i.e. a venomous reptile, he is described in the Avesta as physician who cures the injuries due to snake bites and as the first man who invented an antidote to snake venom<sup>22</sup>.

Acc. to the *Avesta*, in Varena, Thraētaona prays to Ardvi Sūra Anāhita (Yt V) and to Aši Vanguhi (Yt XVII) for a victory over Aži Dahāka and for the release of his two wives, the daughters of Yima — Savanghāvāk and Erenavāk (in the *Šāhnāme* — Šahrenāz and Arnevāz).

Yt V, IX, 33—35 — AvD,O, v. II, p. 61—62:

"33. To her (Ardvi Sūra Anāhita) did Thraētaona, the heir of the valiant Athwya clan, offer up a sacrifice in the four-cornered Varena, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

34. He begged of a boon, saying: "Grant me this (...) that I may overcome Aži Dahāka (...); and that I may deliver his wives, Savanghāvāk and Erenavāk, who are the fairest of body amongst women, and the most wonderful creatures in the world".

The text of his prayer to Aši Vanguhi (Yt XVII, 33—35) is almost identical.

Who are then, these two beautiful daughters of Yima, who after a thousand years' bondage to the monstrous Aži Dahāka so enchanted Feridun?

Acc. to the *Šāhnāme* (Zohāk, v. 6—11), when Zohāk ascended the Iranian throne:

برون آوريدند لرزان چو بيد  
سر بانوان را چو افسر بدند  
دگر پاك دامن بنام ارنواز  
بران ازدهافش سپردندشان  
بياموختشان كزى و بدخوى  
جز از كشتن و غارت و سوختن

دو پاكيزه از خانه جمشيد  
كه جمشيد را هر دو دختر بدند  
زپوشيده رويان يكي شهرناز  
بايوان ضحك بردندشان  
بيروردشان از ره جادوى  
ندانست جز كزى آموختن

"Two chaste (women) from the house of Ġamšid were brought — trembling like the poplars, both were the daughters of Ġamšid and both were like the

<sup>20</sup> Stanisław F. Michalski, *Hymny Rigwedey*, pp. 14—15.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>22</sup> Cf., *FNA*, I, p. 398.

crown among the women. One of them who veiled their faces, was called Šahrenāz, the second — Arnevāz. They were brought to the chamber of Zohāk and given to this monster. And he reared them for the witches, taught them prevarications and bad manners. He was not able to teach anything but how to prevaricate, how to kill, to plunder and burn”.

Who was it really that Zohak deprived in that way? What kind of women were they really, being taught to kill, to plunder and to burn? These lines (10—11) Bertels put into brackets in his critical edition as their authenticity seemed to be dubious, though they can be found in all the old manuscripts<sup>23</sup>.

It seems to be doubtless that both these characters have a symbolic meaning in the Iranian epos. The woman, predestined to be a mother, symbolizes the earth, the country<sup>24</sup>.

### Lydia

از آثار فریدون ، بارو - و خندق شهرهاست . جهت آنکه در آخر دولت ، از تور و سلم ایمن نبود . فریدون افسونهای نیکو دانستی . تریاک مارا فعی از بهر دفع زهر او ساخت . خبر بر مادیان بر عهد او جهاندیدند تا از ایشان استر آمد . در عهد او کوش فیل دندان ، برادرزاده ضحاک ، بر ولایت بربر مستولی شد و دعوی خدایی کرد . فریدون سام بن یریمان را به جنگ او فرستاد و میان شان محاربات عظیم برفت اما ظفر سام را بود و «کوش» به مطاوعت در آمد . نمرود بن کنعان از تخم کوش است . فریدون بعد از قتل هر سه پسر نمازد . مدت پادشاهی پانصد سال .

”Feridun left — writes Hamdo'l-lāh Mostoufi Qazwini<sup>25</sup> — defence walls and moats. It was because on no account he could feel save from Tur and Salm. Feridun was well experienced in witchcraft. He made a medicine against snake-venom. He let a donkey to a mare so as to get a mule. His order brought about the death of Kuš the Elephant-teethed, the nephew of Zohāk, in the region of Barbar, and the god's order was fulfilled. Feridun sent Sām, the son of Narimān, to fight with him and they fought desperately but the victory fell on Sām and Kuš had to surrender. Nemrod ibn Kana'ān comes from the Kuš clan. Feridun, after the death of all his three sons, was not left (alive). He was the king for five hundred years”.

The statement about letting the donkey to the mare seems to be amusing and irrelevant to this story, but it would not have been inserted in this relation concerning the epochal wars if it had not been an allusion (considerably distorted, in fact) to a very important matter. It also concerns a story from the life of Cyrus: his descent. As we know, his father was a Persian and his mother a Mede. It was he who was mentioned by Pythia of Delphi in her speech to Croesus: ”When comes the day that a mule shall sit on the Median throne, Then, tender-footed Lydian, by pebbly Hermus

<sup>23</sup> ŠVost, I, p. 51.

<sup>24</sup> Cf., J.E. Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols*, pp. 375—376.

<sup>25</sup> Cf., *FNA*, I, p. 398.

Run and abide not, nor think it shame to be a coward<sup>26</sup>”.

قال وبلغنا ان افريدون وهو من نسل جم الملك الذي كان قبل الضحاك ويزعمون انه التاسع من ولده وكان مولده بدنياوند خرج حتى ورد منزل الضحاك وهو عنه غائب بالهند فحوى على منزله وما فيه فبلغ الضحاك ذلك فاقبل وقد سلبه الله قوته وذبيت دولته فوثب به افريدون فاوثقه وصيَّره بجبال دنباوند فالعجم تزعم انه الى اليوم موثق في الحديد يُعَذَّب هناك، وذكر غير هشام ان الضحاك لم يكن غائبا عن مسكنه ولكن افريدون بن اثفيان جاء الى مسكن له في حصن يدعى زرنج ماه مهر روزمهر فنكح امرأتين له تسمي احدهما اروناز والاخرى سنوار فوهل بيوراسب لما عاين ذلك وخر مدلها لا بعقل فضرب افريدون هامته بجُرْز له ملكوى الرأس فزاده ذلك وهلا وعزوب عقل

They say — writes Tabari<sup>27</sup> — We have heard that Afridun was from the Ġam generation, who ruled before Zohāk, and they think that he was the ninth descendant of Ġam and that he was born in Dambāvand and from there he came to the capital of Zohāk who, at that time, remained in Hind; and that he kept his seat with all what was inside, and Zohāk learnt about it and came, and the Lord deprived him of his strength and that fortune left him; that Afridun invaded and seized him and took towards the mountain Dambāvand and that in the opinion of the Persians he is still there in the iron fetters and undergoes sufferings. Some also say that Zohāk did not leave his capital and that Afridun, the son of Athfiān, on the day of Mehr in the month of Mehr came to his seat, which was the fortress Zaranğ, and took his two wives whose names were Arvanāz and Sanavār. When Bivarāsp saw that, he was terrified and prostrated himself, perplexed and out of senses. And Afridun smashed his head with a curved mace, what made him more perplexed and senseless”.

The day of Mehr of the month of Mehr is the sixteenth day of the month which begins on 23rd September, so it is 8th October. Babylon was conquered by Gobryas on 13th October<sup>28</sup>.

وايدون گویند که آفریدون از پیش کاوه دویست سال بدین جهان اندر بزیست و جهان پر عدل و داد گردید و مغان گویند که او آتش پرست بود و هندوان گویند بت پرست بود، و همه مقرند که دادگر بود و علما و حکمارا بزرگ داشتی

”And they say — we read in Tārix-e Tabari — that Afridun lived in this world (still) two hundred years after Kāveh and that he filled the world with justice and law. And the magi say, that he was worshipper of fire, and the Hindu say that he was a heathen. And he did justice in all towns and he held scholars and sages in high esteem...”<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Her., I, 55.

<sup>27</sup> Tab, Tar, I. pp., 205—206.

<sup>28</sup> Olmst., p. 50.

<sup>29</sup> Cf., FNA, I, p. 397.

## SALM, TUR, IRAČ

After fifty years of Feridun's rule, he decided to find for his three sons, not named yet, three wives also without names yet. Ġandal, a wise and faithful dastur found such three girls — daughters of Sarv, the king of Yemen:

*Feridun*, v. 67—89:

بیامد بر سرو شاه یمن  
سه دختر چنان چون فریدون بجست  
چنان چون بپیش گل اندر تذر  
بر آن کهتری آفرین بر فزود  
که بی افرینت مبادا دهن  
فرستاده گر گرامی رهی  
همیشه ز تو دور دست بدی  
پیام آوریده بشاه یمن  
سخن هرچه پرسند پاسخ دهم  
بزرگ آنکسی کو نداردش خرد  
که برگاه تاشک بوید بیوی  
کز اختر بدی جاودان بی زیان  
همان گنج و مردی و نیروی دست  
اگر داستانرا بود گاه گاه  
بهر آرزو دست ایشان دراز  
بباید کنون شاه زاده سه جفت  
بدین آگهی تیز بشتافتم  
سه پاکیزه داری توای نامجوی  
چو بشنیدم این دل شدم شادکام  
چو اندر خور آید نکردیم یاد  
بباید بر آمیخت با یکدگر  
سزارا سزاوار بی گفت و گوی  
تو پاسخ گزار آنچه آیدت یاد

خردمند و روشن دل و پاک تن  
نشان یافت جندل مر اورا درست  
خرامان بیامد بنزدیک سرو  
زمین را ببوسید و چربی نمود  
بجندل چنین گفت شاه یمن  
چه پیغام داری چه فرمان دهی  
بدو گفت جندل که خرم بدی  
از ایران یکی کهترم چون شمن  
درود فریدون فرخ دهم  
ترا آفرین از فریدون کرد  
مرا گفت شاه یمن را بگوی  
بدان ای سرمایه تازیان  
مرا پادشاهی آباد هست  
سه فرزند شایسته تاج و گاه  
ز هر کام و هر خواسته بی نیاز  
مر این سه گرانمایه را در نهفت  
ز کار آگهان آگهی یافتم  
کجا از پیش پرده پوشیده روی  
مران هر سه را نوز ناکرده نام  
که مانیز نام سه فرخ نژاد  
کنون این گرامی دو گونه گهر  
سه پوشیده رخ را سه دیهم جوی  
فریدون پیام بدین گونه داد

"Came this wise and enlightened and chaste man to Sarv, the king of Yemen. And he saw the right sign that Sarv had these three daughters Feridun had told him about. So he came to Sarv with dignity like a pheasant when it comes to a rose. He kissed the ground and humbly paid homage to this inferior one. Thus said the king of Yemen to Ġandal:

— Let there be enough words of praise in my mouth. What message have you brought? What will you order me? Are you an envoy or a free wanderer?

Replied Ġandal:

— May thou be happy! May the hand of evil be far from thee. I am a humble subject from Iran. I have brought a message for the king of Yemen. Feridun the fortunate pays thee his respect and I will answer all thine questions. Feridun the brave is greeting thee, and that one is great who does not belittle him. He ordered me: "Tell the king of Yemen: he shall remain in his royal glory as long as musk retains its smell! Know, oh the mighty ruler of the Arabs, may the star never harm thee, that I am a lord over a happy, brave, wealthy and mighty country. I have three sons, worthy of the crown and throne, but why to praise the splendours of the moon, which may fulfil each of

their desire and every wish they can fulfil, and to these three mighty princes I mean now to give three wives in secret. And, as I had learned from the well-informed in these matters, I hastened when I heard that behind thine veil you have three chaste girls who you have not named yet. I also have not given yet the suitable names to my three sons, happily born. Today these precious stones of the two kings should be joined, one with the other. Today we should give to the three noble and avid of the crown, the three deserving girls with their faces veiled. This was the message Feridun entrusted me with and you shall tell me what you think about it".

Having heard Feridun's message, Sarv, being afraid of the power of Iran, seemingly agreed to submit to this demand. But when the young princes came for his daughters, he wanted to kill them deceitfully<sup>1</sup>.

In the same way the king of Hāmāverān wanted to get rid of Kay Kāwus when the latter demanded his daughter for himself.

According to the contemporary law, giving one's daughter away in marriage meant to give up the succession to the throne, whereas in the stories, it meant to give up the country<sup>2</sup>.

Because the Iranian princes did not let Sarv to deceive them, he gave them his daughters.

*Feridun*, v. 1—49, after v. 177, *ŠVost*, I, pp. 256—259:

شد آگه فریدون پیامد بره  
ز بدها گمانیش کوته شود  
کزو شیر گشتی نیاید رها  
همی از دهانش آتش آمد برون  
بگرد اندرون کوه تاریک دید  
جهان گشت از آواز او پر خروش  
که او بود پرمایه و تاجور  
نسازد خرد یافته مرد سنگ  
پدر زی برادرش بنهاد روی  
کمان را بزه کرد و اندر کشید  
چه شیر دمنده چه جنگی سوار  
خروشید کان اژدها را بدید  
نهنگی تو بر راه شیران مرو  
رسیدست هر گز بدین سان مکوش  
همه گرزداران پرخاشخیر  
و گر نه نهمت افسر بدخوشی  
هنرها بدانست و شد ناپدید  
چنان چون سزاید بآیین خویش  
همان گرزۀ گاوپیگر بدست  
جهان آمده پاک درمشت او  
پیاده دوان برگرفتند راه  
فرومانده بر جای پیلان وکوس  
باندازه بر پایگه ساختشان  
بپیش جهانداور آمد براز

چو از باز گردیدن آن سه شاه  
ز دلشان همی خواست کاکه شود  
بیامد بسان یکی اژدها  
خروشان و جوشان بجوش اندرون  
چو هر سه پسر را بنزدیک دید  
بر انگیخت گرد و بر آورد جوش  
بیامد دمان نزد مهتر پسر  
پسر گفت با اژدها روی جنگ  
سبک پشت بنمود و بگریخت ازوی  
میانه برادر چو او را بدید  
مرا گفت گر کارزار ست کار  
چو کهنتر پسر نزد ایشان رسید  
بدو گفت کز پیش مادور شو  
گرت نام شاه افریدون بگوش  
که فرزندان اویم هر سه پسر  
گر از راه بی راه یکسو شوی  
فریدون فرخ چو بشنید و دید  
برفت و بیامد پدروار پیش  
ابا کوس و بانای و پیلان مست  
بزرگان لشکر پس پشت او  
چو دیدند پرمایگان روی شاه  
برفتند و بر خاک دادند بوس  
بپرسیدشان شاه و بنواختشان  
چو آمد بکاخ گرانمایه باز

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Feridun*, v. 1—34, *Molhaqāt*, after v. 162, *ŠVost*, I, pp. 254—256.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., Hfd, *Zor*, I, p. 48.



کزو دید نیک و بد روزگار  
 بتخت گرانمایگان بر نشاند  
 کجا خواست گیتی بسوزد بدم  
 چو بشناخت برگشت باخرمی  
 چنان چون بیاید بیاکیزه مغز  
 بگیتی بر آگنده کام تو باد  
 بگاه گریزش نکردی درنگ  
 تو دیوانه خوانش مخوانش دلیر  
 از آن پس مر اورا دلیری فزود  
 کجا زنده پیلش نیارد بزیور  
 که بد دل نباشد شزاوار گاه  
 که هم باشتابست و هم با درنگ  
 چنانک از ره هوشیاران سزید  
 بگیتی جز اورا نباید ستود  
 در مهتری باد فرجام تو  
 بگاه درشتی دلیری فزود  
 کنون برکشایم بشتادی دولب  
 زن توررا ماه آزاده خوی  
 کجاید بخوبی سهیلش رهی  
 که اختر شناسان نمودند چهر  
 بدید اختر نامداران خویش  
 سبب مشتری بود و طالع کمان  
 خداوند خورشید سعد دلیر  
 کشف طالع آمد خداوند ماه  
 که آشوبش و جنگ بایست بود

همی آفرین کرد بر کردگار  
 وزان پیش جهادیدگار ترا بخواند  
 چنین گفت کان ازدهای دژم  
 پدر بد که جست از شما مردمی  
 کنون نامتان ساختستیم نفز  
 تویی مهترین سلم نام تو باد  
 که جستی سلامت ز چنگ نهنگ  
 دلاور که تندپشد از پیل و شیر  
 میانه کز آغاز تندی نمود  
 ورا تور خوانیم شیر دلیر  
 هنر خود دلیربست بر جایگاه  
 دگر کهنترین مرد با سنگ و چنگ  
 ز خاک و ز آتش میانه گزید  
 دلیر و جوان و هشیوار بود  
 کنون ایرج اندر خورد نام تو  
 بدانک او باغاز تندی نمود  
 بنام پریچه رگان روز و شب  
 زن سلم را کرد نام آرزوی  
 زن ایرج نیک پی را سهی  
 پیش از اختر گرد گردان سپهر  
 نوشته بیاورد و بنهاد پیش  
 بسلم اندرون جست ز اختر نشان  
 دگر طالع تور فرخنده شیر  
 چو کرد اختر فرخ ایرج نگاه  
 از اختر بریشان نشانی نمود

"When Feridun heard about the return of these three princes, he stepped out on the road. He wished to reveal the truth of their hearts, to suppress his ill thoughts. And he assumed the shape of a dragon, which, you may say, would not let even a lion run away. He roared, belched anger, sew terror, and flames came out from his mouth. When his three sons drew near, he saw the mountains having darkened around; he arose, with the clouds of dust about his feet, bearing rage and filled the world with roar and howl. He rushed at his older son, the brave one that deserved the crown.

The son said unto himself:

— A prudent man does not struggle with a bodefull dragon. Soon he turned his back and ran away. The father turned his eyes on his brother. When the middle brother saw him, he strung his bow and set an arrow. He said:

— Once I enter the fight, it does not make a difference to me: a wheezing lion or a brave warrior?

When the youngest son approached, he cried out at the sight of the dragon. He called to him:

— Vanish from before our eyes, do not stand on the path of the lions! Do not dare, if thou hast heard the name of Feridun at all! For we are all his sons, able to carry the maces, easy to fight. Vanish soon somewhere into the wilderness or I will prepare a crown fitting thy base nature!

Seeing and hearing this, Feridun the fortunate learnt their nature and retreated. He vanished. Soon he came back as their father, with the drum and the flute as the custom demanded, with the fierce elephants, with the mace like a bull head in his hand. His formidable troops behind him, it was evident that he wielded power over the world.

When the noble princes saw his countenance, they met him half-way, on foot. They came, kissed the ground; the elephants and the drums came to a halt. The king asked them about everything, and praised them with lofty words.

When they came back to the splendid palace, he confessed to the Lord, the Judge of the world. He praised the Creator who sent both good and bad for him. And he called these widely travelled sons and seated them on the throne. Thus spoke he:

— This fierce dragon which wished to burn the world with his breath, was your father who wanted to see your bravery and then, happy, retreated. Now I will give ye suitable names as my cautious mind advises me. Thou art my eldest, I will call thee Salm, let the earth fulfill thy desires, for thou, seized with fear, hurried to find a safe shelter. A dare-devil, who does not care for elephants and lions, you should call a madman, not a courageous man. My second son, who first boiled with anger and then gathered his courage, we will call Tur, since he, as a bold lion does not dread even a wild elephant. His virtue is his courage in fight — the faint-hearted would not be worthy of the throne. And the youngest, the man like the arrow-head or the stone, who knows when to hasten and when to linger, stood between the earth and fire, for he chose the way of the prudent men. The bold, brave yet prudent, none can surpass him in praise. Today I will call him Irağ, with dignity he bends his steps towards the gates of might, because from the beginning I have seen in him neither anger nor impudence in his bravery. And now know the names of those fair ones, with faces as *peri*, which my mouth shall announce.

To the wife of Salm he gave the name *Ārzuy*, to the wife of Tur — *Māh-e Āzāde Xuy* and to the wife of Irağ, who had good intentions, and who fortunately pursued the Southern Star, he gave the name *Sahi*.

Then Feridun ordered to bring the tables of stars of the revolving sky, which revealed their nature to the sages, and he saw the stars of his three famous sons. *Moštari* in the sign of the *Sagittarius* was in Salm's horoscope, the Sun in the sign of the *Leo* was in the horoscope of Tur, the fortunate lion. And when he glanced at the star of *Irağ*, he saw the Moon in the sign of the *Cancer*. These signs in the sky showed that the war and confusion would come between them".

Feridun, v. 178—189:

بسه بخش کرد آفریدون جهان  
 سیم دشت گردان و ایران زمین  
 همه روم و خاور مر اورا سزید  
 گرازان سوی خاور اندر کشید  
 همی خواندندیش خاور خدای  
 ورا کرد سالار ترکان و چین  
 کشید آنگهی تور لشکر براه  
 کمر بر میان بست و بگشاد دست  
 همی پاک توران شهنش خواندند  
 مر اورا پدر شاه ایران گزید  
 هم آن تخت شاهی و تاج سران  
 همان کرسی و مهر و آن تخت عاج

نهفته چو بیرون کشید از نهان  
 یکی روم و خاور دگر ترك و چین  
 نخستین بسلم اندرون بنگرید  
 بنمود تا لشکری برگزید  
 بتخت کیان اندر آورد پای  
 دگر تور راداد توران زمین  
 یکی لشکری نامزد کرد شاه  
 بیامد بتخت کئی بر نشست  
 بزرگان برو گوهر افشاندند  
 از ایشان چو نوبت بایرج رسید  
 هم ایران و هم دشت نیزه وران  
 بدو داد کورا سزا بود تاج

"When Feridun revealed his secret, he divided the world into three heirlooms. One of them was Rum and Xāvar, the second Turān and China, the third the Warriors Steppe and the land of Iran. First he glanced at Salm who inherited the whole Rum and Xāvar. He ordered him to gather his warriors and march with dignity to the north. So Salm came to the throne and was acclaimed the king of Xāvar. Tur was given the land of Turān and became the lord of China. Also to him Feridun gave the troops and Tur set off on his way. He came and sat on a lofty throne, girt his loins, spread his arms. And the noble lavished pearls on him and called him the holy ruler of Turān. Then came the turn of Irağ, the father chose him for the king of Iran and of the Spears-Bearing Steppe, gave the royal throne and the diadem to him, who was worthy of the throne and of the crown and the ivory throne".

Having been dissatisfied with the division of the kingdom made by Feridun, Salm and Tur sent the envoys to their father demanding to change his will and to deprive Irağ of his heirloom. Irağ himself resolved to mediate between the father and the rebellious brothers. Tur, having been enticed by Salm, killed him.

I think it is worth discussing here the meaning of the four mysterious elements of this story:

1. the names of Feridun's sons
2. the names of their wives
3. their horoscopes
4. division of Feridun's kingdom.

The horoscope of Feridun's sons might be here the most revealing. Let us start with it.

The first thing we notice is the Sun in the sign of Leo assigned for Tur. These two elements compose the coat of arms of Iran. Why then, if Iran was to be the heritage of Irağ, did these auguries fell to the lot of Tur? Could there been a mistake in one of the links of the tradition, as a result of which the figures of Tur and Irağ have been transposed? Or, perhaps, the present coat of arms of Iran has been inherited not from Persian but from Median tribes with which among the others, as we have seen on more than one occasion, the notion of Turān is associated in the epos?

But let us see first what the symbolic sense of these prophecies is.

Salm's horoscope:

"Sagittaire (...) Symbole du mouvement, des instincts nomades, de l'indépendance et des réflexes vifs. Cette parti du ciel est placé généralement sous la domination de Jupiter (...)".<sup>3</sup>

Tur's horoscope:

"Le lion est symbol de puissance, de souverainte, symbole aussi du soleil, de l'or, de la force pénétrante de la lumière et du verbe (...)".<sup>4</sup>

Irağ's horoscope:

"Cancer (...) Son hiéroglyphe qui ressemble a deux spirales exprime le changement de sens du mouvement solaire, qui devient descendant, alors que jusqu'ici il était ascendant, et represente schématiquement les vagues de la vie. Signe lunaire, il signifie le retrait sur soi, la sensibilité, la timidité et la ténacité (...)".<sup>5</sup>

And thus the associations of Moštari with Sagittarius, the Sun with Leo and the Moon with Cancer are self-explanatory. Yet, there is another significant element in Irağ's horoscope: the Persian word *māh* which we translate (in this case, in the horoscope, rightly) as the moon, also meant Media<sup>6</sup>. So it looks as though the horoscope foretold Tur the conquest of Persia, while Irağ was told the reverse and that he would conquer Media. Salm's horoscope was simpler: he was to subdue the land of the nomads.

So, it is not surprising that Feridun saw in this horoscope a war between his sons.

Let us now return to the problem of the names of Feridun's sons.

The name of the eldest son, in whose opinion "with a bodeful dragon a wise man does not strive" and who fled from the spurious dragon, can easily be associated with the nomadic nation of the Sarmatians. Biruni<sup>7</sup> associates it with Salmanazar. Yet, it would be difficult to find any traces in this character of the historical ruler of Assyria of the 9th century B.C. — apart, perhaps, from the fact that Feridun assigns "Rum and Xāvar" for Salm. These names have been translated as "Rum (...) and the West"<sup>8</sup>, and among others, as Assyria. But is it correct?

Ferdousi himself explains the etymology of this name by an Arabic word *salāmat* (*Feridun*, v. 31, cf. note 50) which, with reference to the events described, is a striking anachronism.

To the middle son, the dare-devil who does not care for lions or elephants, Feridun gave the name of Tur, which is associated in an obvious way with the

<sup>3</sup> Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheenbrant, *Dictionnaire des symboles*, Paris 1974, IV, p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 132.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup> Māh — Media; cf., E. Herzfeld, *The Persian Empire*, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Bir, p. 117.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., R. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 161.