

Władysław DULĘBA

THE EPOS AND HISTORY ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE STORY
OF FERIDUN IN ŠĀHNĀME

Is it possible at all to search for any historical data in an epos? Can one look for truth in the accounts of such an epos as Šāhnāme which, before it crystallized in the work of Ferdousi, emerged and was being transformed for hundreds of years in the oral tradition, was subjected to the change of language by the Middle Persian and New Persian editors of the prose record, and only after all these changes was finally reconstructed by the poet? ¹.

One could yet attempt a comparison of some of the plots of Šāhnāme with the relations of modern science and with the work of Herodotus, the very first - and probably preserved to a large extent - crystallization of the Iranian epos.

"I could, if I wished, give three versions of Cyrus' history, all different from what follows; but I propose to base my account on those Persian authorities who seem to tell the simple truth about him without trying to exaggerate his exploits" ².

The version of Cyrus' history considered to be the most truthful, and recorded by Herodotus, proves closer to the traditions composing Šāhnāme than other versions of these stories mentioned by him, which have

partly been reconstructed by J. V. Pjankov on the basis of the accounts by Ctesias, Xenophon, Hellenicus, Diodor, Nicolaus of Damascus, Charon and Strabon³.

Examining the relations of the plots of Šāhnāme with history we meet a number of basic difficulties.

1. Persian traditions often contain contradictory accounts⁴. This difficulty is easier overcome if we remember the fairly obvious fact that a number of different stories added up to Šāhnāme, stories which initially were not connected with one another at all. They were more like 'ballads', created in various circumstances and undergoing various changes during the ages of tradition.

2. As Theodor Nöldeke suggests, some characters of Šāhnāme are already known in Rigveda⁵, from which one may conclude that they were known in the Indo-Iranian tradition already before the Aryans arrived on the territory of the present-day Iran. However, at closer examination, we observe that in Šāhnāme they are either totally Iranian characters, like Feridun or Key Kāūs, only dressed up in the names from the world of Indo-European myths, the names which have nothing to do with their royal power or their history as we learn it from Ferdousi's work; or they are such characters as Zohāk, in whose name some authors trace the name of Dejokes⁶ (Med. Dajukku + Av. aži = Aži Dahāka), and who does not appear in Rigveda at all (there is only ahi⁷ there, simply a dragon).

3. Legendary, or prehistoric - according to some claims - rulers and dynasties known to us from Avesta and Šāhnāme, among others, appear in the works of some historians next to truly historical characters⁸. According to Biruni, for instance, the Chaldeans were "the Keyānids' deputies in Babylon"⁹; according to Bal'ami, Nebuchadnezzar was given "Syria, Iraq, Yemen and the whole West" by Lohrāsf, the king of Balch¹⁰; Goštāsp sent a general called Kureš to Iraq and Babylon, which were the seat of Nebuchadnezzar, and ordered him to send Nebuchadnezzar back to Balch¹¹; in the time of Bāhmān, a kinglet of Balch, Nebuchadnezzar collected an army of fifty thousand men and took three wise men with him (whom he made his visiers): Dāriuš the son of Mehri, Kuruš the son of Aikun and Ahaswerus the son of Kuruš¹².

4. Historical improbabilities (for instance, it may easily be counted that the two beautiful daughters of Ġamšīd were over a thousand years old when Feridun married them; Rostam lived over six hundred years) suggest poetic hyperboles, or a symbolic meaning of these characters, or - maybe - that some events were presented several times in the epos, as successive events¹³.

5. Identification of some geographical names, such as Barbar (or Berber, Barber), Māzanderān, Dež e Safid, Gang, presents similar difficulties. Some of them seem mythical and it is not known whether they ever referred to any definite places (e. g. Dež e Safid), some (like Berber), bringing association to a particular nation, may lead to far fetched hypotheses¹⁴. Others still, like Māzanderān, create particular difficulties because of the discrepancies between their reality and the relations about them in Šāhnāme.

Thus, since the occurrence in Šāhnāme of both mythological elements and historical evidence is a fact, the historical evidence being often an account of several distant epochs at a time¹⁵, we must realize, possibly clearly, the mechanism of the origin of particular stories.

It is not difficult to imagine that at the news of some important event (a war expedition to distant countries, the death of a hero) the primitive creator took up a tale. And as some elements of the episode he extolled were incomprehensible to him, he chose to interpret them by means of myths, which had shaped his philosophy of life. Thus, like a weaver who entwines colourful wefts around the warp, he entwined the stories he had heard with myths. As the song spread around the world, new performers, never devoid of creative inventiveness¹⁶, embellished it with new interpretations of new events - the heroes often achieved superhuman qualities and their names, forgotten or simply meaning very little to the singers, were substituted by new ones, closer to the people's imagination. It was only later that the songs were joined into cycles. And then, already learned editors and poets would compose them into a work in which they wanted to present the nation's history. In this way the progenitor of a cruel dynasty could get a dragon's name and a dragon's face, a hero could take the shape of the god of victory and a subjugated river - of a defeated enemy...

A number of scholars, like Nöldeke, Justi, Herzfeld, Kowalski, agree that the history of Key Xosrau reflects partly the legend of Cyrus the Great. The same and other scholars think that Dārā is an epic portrait of Darius III. Without questioning those theories, probably true to a large extent, I shall try to present here the possibility of interpreting historically another character of the epos, namely Feridun. Placed in *Šāhnāme* long before the so-called dynasty of Keyānides, he is usually associated with the remotest prehistory of Iran and treated generally as a truly mythical character, though his enemy and predecessor - Zohāk - is considered by some scholars to be the king of Babylon, and by others - the king of the Medes, Dejokes or Astyages¹⁷. It seems to me that examining the historicity of the prototype, or prototypes of Feridun is important for theoretical literary considerations since in the analysis of this character's origin a significant role is played by elements other than the plot or onomatology.

Feridun, Ved. *Trētana*¹⁸, Av. *Thraētaona*, Pahl. *Friton*¹⁹ or *Frē-dun*²⁰, according to Avesta, "the heir of the valliant Āthwya clan [...]"²¹ was "rich in cattle [...]"²². He was the son of Frani, the wife of Usinemah²³. Unto (Vayu) did Thraētaona [...] offer up a sacrifice in the four cornered Varena [...], saying: "Grant me this, o Vayu! [...] that I may overcome Aži Dahāka, the threemouthed [...]"²⁴. Thraētaona, as the conqueror of that dragon-king, is described in Avesta as a physician, healing the wounds of snake bites, and as the first man to prepare the antidote against snake venom²⁵. Furthermore, Avesta credits him with magic power, since "when on his march to Bawri, the capital of Aži, he came at the Rongha, he flung the warder of this river up in a shape of a vulture"²⁶.

According to *Šāhnāme*, Feridun was a son of Ābtin²⁷ who, still before Feridun's birth, was captured from the Iranian land and killed by Zohāk²⁸. Feridun's mother, Ferānek, of whose origin Ferdousi says nothing, hid him in the mountains from Zohāk's wrath²⁹ because Zohāk had a dream that Feridun would cast him from his throne³⁰. Analogically, Key Xosrau, a descendant of the Iranian kings had to hide away from the wrath of Afrāsiyāb³¹, a foreign king and young Cyrus had, according to Herodotus, to hide away from the wrath of a Median king, Astyages³². There are more coincidences between the epic history of Feridun, Key Qobād or Key Xosrau and the real, or legendary, history of Cyrus the Great:

Feridun³³ and Key Xosrau³⁴ hide, like Cyrus, among shepherds in the mountains.

Feridun is challenged to fight Zohāk by Kāveh³⁵, Key Qobād is challenged to fight Afrāsiyāb by Rostam³⁶, Key Xosrau is challenged to fight Afrāsiyāb by Giv³⁷, just like Cyrus is challenged to fight Astyages by Harpagus³⁸.

Feridun³⁹ and Key Xosrau⁴⁰ cross a flush river in a miraculous way, just like Cyrus⁴¹, whose crossing of the Gyndes could have seemed miraculous to his contemporaries.

Cyrus set forth against the Massagets to satisfy his own pride⁴², for these very reasons Key Kāūs set forth against Māzanderān⁴³ and, according to Asadi of Tus, for the same reasons Feridun started from Māzanderān for Xāvar⁴⁴.

We do not know if Feridun was a descendant of two hostile royal dynasties (like the epic Key Xosrau and the historical Cyrus) but Hamdollah Mostaufi Qazvini gives us a strange, as it might seem, detail about him: "By his order an ass was let unto a mare, so that a mule would come out of it". This mention will not seem so strange if we remember what Pythia of Delphi once prophessed to Croesos:

When comes the day that a mule shall sit on the Median throne,
Then, tender-footed Lydian, by pebbly Hermus
Run and abide not, nor think it shame to be a coward.

The mule, of course, was Cyrus⁴⁵.

The story of Feridun and his three sons is not less interesting and may also suggest deeply rooted historical truth. It tells partly of the times somewhat earlier than Cyrus' epoch and its truth can be discovered, I think, by deciphering its symbolism.

After his fifty years' rule, Feridun decided to find for his three sons whom he had not given any names yet, three wives who also had yet got no names. Ġandal, a wise and faithful dastur, found such three girls, daughters of Sarv, the king of Yemen⁴⁶. When Feridun's demand was submitted to him, Sarv, afraid of Iran's power, pretended to agree. Yet, when the young princes came to take his daughters, he wanted to kill them guilefully⁴⁷.

Giving one's daughter away in marriage meant, according to the law of that time, giving away the succession to the throne;⁴⁸ in the tales it meant giving away one's country. For it was the woman who, created to play the role of the mother, symbolized the land, the country⁴⁹.

When the Iranian princes were not deceived by his wizardry, Sarv gave his daughters to them.

When Feridun heard of the return of those three sons - says Ferdousi - he went out on the road. He wanted to learn the truth of their hearts, to curtail his ill thoughts. And he took on himself the shape of a dragon from whom, you could say, even a lion could not flee [...]. When he saw the three sons nearby, [...] he sprang up, kicked up a swirl of dust, boiled and filled the world with howling and roaring. He dashed at the eldest son, a brave one, worthy of the crown. The son said to himself:

- With a bodeful dragon a wise man does not strive.

And he soon turned his back and fled. The father turned his eyes on his brother. The middle brother, when he saw him, braced his bowstring, fixed an arrow. He said:

- What is for me, when I stand up to fight, a wheezing lion or a valiant knight?

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

- Vanish from our sight, step thou not, monster, on the lions' path! Do not dare against us if you have ever heard the name of Feridun! For we are all here his sons, for cludges fit and eager to fight. Vanish soon somewhere in roadless roads or I shall fix thee a fit crown!

Seeing and hearing this, blissful Feridun came to know their nature and hid himself. Vanished. And soon he returned as their father, as it should be done according to the tradition - with a drum and a syrinx, with fierce elephants, and with a bull-headed cludge in his hand. Following him, the mighty of his retinue, it is apparent that he holds the world in his hand.

When the mighty men saw the king's countenance, they walked to meet him. They came and kissed the ground, the elephants stopped and the timbals. The king asked them tenderly about everything, he spoke with extremely honourable words to them.

When he returned to his grand castle, he confided in the Lord, the Judge of the world. He lauded the Creator, who passed good and evil unto him. And he called in those who had been in foreign lands, placed them on the high throne. So he said to them:

- That cruel dragon, who with his breath wanted to burn the world, was your father who wanted to test your bravery, then he returned happy. Now I shall give you bold names, such as my wise wit suggests. Thou art my eldest, I shall call thee Salm, may the earth fulfil thy wishes, for, taken by fear only you have hurried greatly to safe places. Call the daredevil who does not care for lions or elephants a madman, not a brave man. The middle one, who first moved himself to

rage and then still increased the courage in himself, we shall call Tur, for like a brave lion, he does not fear even a wild elephant. His bravery in battle is his virtue - a fainthearted man would not be worthy of the throne. While the youngest one, a man like fluke and stone, who can hurry up but also hang back, stood between the earth and the fire, for he took the path of wise men. Bold, brave but wise, nobody can be praised above him. To him I shall now give the name of Irag, he marches in dignity to the gates of power, for from the beginning I do not see rage in him. I do not see impudence in his bravery. And now, from my joyful lips you will hear the names of those fair ones, with cheeks like peri.

To Salm's wife he gave the name of Arzuj, to Tur's - Māh-e Āzāde Chuj, while to the wife of Irag, who had fair intentions and blissfully steered for the Southern Star he gave the name of the lofty one - Sahi.

And then Feridun ordered to bring the tables of the stars on the spinning sky, which showed their face to the wise men and saw the stars of his three famous ones. For Salm the augury among the stars was Moštari in the sign of Sagittarius, while for Tur, that blissful lion, the fate was foretold by the Sun in the sign of Leo. And when he looked at Irag's star, he saw the Moon in the sign of Cancer. These auguries in the sky showed that turmoil will enter between them, and war⁵⁰.

When Feridun disclosed his secret - continues Ferdousi - he divided the world into three heirlooms. The first one was Rum and Xāvar, the second one was Turān and China, the third one, the Steppe of Warriors and the land of Iran. First he looked at Salm, to him Rum and Xāvar fell as sahare. He ordered him to take his knights and march boldly to the west. Thus Salm stepped on the royal throne and was acclaimed king of Xāvar. Now, to Tur he gave the land of Turān and made him the lord of China. For him also did Feridun appoint a retinue and Tur started on his way. He came and sat on a bold throne; girded his loins, flung out his arms. And the magnates strewed pearls over him and called him the holy ruler of Turān. After them, when it was Irag's turn, his father chose him for the king of Iran, the Steppe of Those Wielding the Spears, and the royal throne, and the diadem did the king give to him, who was worthy of the post and the crown, and the throne of ivory⁵¹.

Salm and Tur, dissatisfied with the division of Feridun's kingdom, sent their envoys to their father with a demand to change his decision and de-

pose Irağ from the patrimony. Irağ himself undertook to mediate between his father and his rebellious brathers. Acting on Salm's instigation, Tur killed him.

I think it is worth to ponder on the sense of the four puzzling elements of the tale:

1. the names of Feridun's sons,
2. the names of their wives,
3. their horoscope,
4. The division of Feridun's country.

The horoscope of Feridun's sons may shed most light on this matter. Let us start with it.

The first thing we notice here 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 aurigies fall to the lot of Tur? Could there have been a mistake in one of the links of the tradition, as a result of which the persons of Tur and Irağ have been transported? Or, maybe, the present coat of arms of Iran has been inherited not from Persian but from Median tribes with whom, as we have seen on more than one occasion, the notion of Turan 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 part du ciel est placée généralement sous la domination de Jupiter [...] ⁵²

Tur's horoscope:

Le lion est symbole de puissance, de souveraineté, symbole aussi du soleil, de l'or, de la force pénétrante de la lumière et du verbe [...] ⁵³

Irağ's horoscope:

Cancer [...] Son hiéroglyphe qui ressemble à deux spirales exprime le changement de sens du mouvement solaire, qui devient descendant, alors que jusqu'ici il était ascendant, et représente schématiquement les vagues de la vie. Signe lunaire, il signifie le retrait sur soi, la sensibilité, la timidité et la ténacité. [...] ⁵⁴

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 moment in Irağ's horoscope: the Persian word māh which we translate (in this case, in the horoscope, rightly) as the moon means of course also a month but, apart from this, it also meant Media ⁵⁵. So it looks as though the horoscope foretold the conquest of Persia to Tur, while to Irağ reversing this fate and conquering 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 ⁵⁶ associates it with Salmanazar. Yet, it would be difficult to find any traces in this character of the historical ruler of Assyria from 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" ⁵⁷, and so, among others, Assyria. But is it correct?

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

To the middle son, the daredevil who does not care for lions or elephants, Feridun gave the name of Tur, which is associated in an obvious way with the mythical bull. "Le taureau - we read in Dictionnaire des symboles, quoted already above - évoque l'idée du pouvoir et de fougue irrésistibles" ⁵⁸.

Thus, in the fight of a lion with a bull, suggested by these horoscopes, we see an ancient scene, commemorated among others on the reliefs in Persepolis, "... Le lion dévorant périodiquement le taureau exprime depuis des millénaires la dualité antagoniste fondamentale du jour et de la nuit, de l'été et de l'hiver" ⁵⁹.

The name of Irağ's is, as it seems, associated with the lands which were bequeathed to him in Feridun's will, just like the names of the wives of Salm and Tur.

Salm, the eponym of the nomads, thus got a wife who was given the name of Arzuj - "a wish", "a desire". It may be an allusion to the lands changed freely by the nomads, as they "desired".

To the wife of Tur Feridun gave the name of Māh e Azāde Chuj - "Media of a free nature" - and thus Tur subdued Media.

The name of Irağ's wife, Sahi - "the lofty one" - does not tell much, except, perhaps, for a manifestation of Persian patriotism.

To Salm, as we have seen, Feridun bequeathed "Rum and Xāvar". Xā-var zamin means Chorasm⁶⁰, but the word had lost its etymological meaning probably already in pre-Moslem times. It was used in the sense of East or - more often - West⁶¹.

"Māh Farvartin - says Herzfeld⁶² - composed under Xusrau II, says, § 12: "Frēdōn devided the world, hrōm o salm dāt u turkistān o tuč dāt ērāhsahr ō ērič dāt, u III duxtar ē boxtxusrav ē tāžikan šah bē vāst u pa žanīh ō pūsarān dāt, Rome he gave to Salm, Turkistan Toč, Ērānāhr Ērič, and asked for the three daughters of Boxtxusrav (Nebuchadnezzar), king of the Arabs, and gave them in marriage to his three sons". In the more detailed version of the Ayātk. Zām. Messina, in Bibl. et Orient. I 1930, 39-42, Salm and Tuč say to each other: "What has our father done there! He has given the sovereignty not to the oldest, not to the middle, but to the youngest son!". In Ferdousi's Shahnamah this thought is expressed by Ferdon's giving Ērič "Sword and seal, ring and crown", hence the sovereignty over the elder brothers. This is an infringement of Iranian custom which causes the murder of the youngest brother".

However, can one imagine that the inheritance of one brother could consist of such remote countries as Rum and Choresm? Was it not that the inheritance of Salm, as the eponym of the Sarmatians⁶³ coming from Central Asia⁶⁴, consisted simply of Chorasm? In such case, Rum was later associated with the legend, when the word Xāvar meant generally only the West. This would be suggested by etymology. Yet, we should remember that in the times of the first Achaemenids Persia had its most dangerous enemies in the west (Media, Babylon) and in the north-east (the Massagetes and other kin peoples). And therefore, the legend could have mixed up the events and heroes of the events on both territories.

In the west and north-east the fights with Turān are also concentrated. According to Tha'alibi⁶⁵, Irağ met Tur and Salm in Azerbaijan. Almost all of Iran's struggles with Turān take place in the north-east. Afrāsiyāb, the main, after Zohāk and Tur, enemy of Iran, is captured and killed in the west (again in Azerbaijan).

Moses of Choren mentions the region of Tur in Chorasm⁶⁶. There also is the motherland of Parsondas, the chief of the Kadusians mentioned by Ctesias (Herzfeld suggests that the name of Parsondas is etymologically identical with the name of Afrāsiyāb⁶⁷).

Tur is associated not so much with Azerbaijan (Media Atropatene) as such, but with Media in general, by the name of his wife, 'Māh-e Āzāde Chuj⁶⁸ and of his daughter, Māhāferid⁶⁹ (literally, Created, born of Media), who was a wife or concubine (parastande - lit. worshiper, servant or devoted) of Irağ⁷⁰. Māhāferid, after Irağ's death, gave birth to his daughter and mother of his avenger - Manučehr. The daughter's name is not mentioned by Ferdousi⁷¹.

The name of Māhāferid bears association to yet another name. Tabari⁷² says that a wife of Siyāvuš was Safāferid, a daughter of Afrāsiyāb. Her son, Siyāvuš' posthumous child, was Key Xosrau. Thus, the legend of Irağ would in its basic points be identical with the legend of Siyāvuš. Also, Safāferid سافا فرید may be a result of misreading a crabbed recording of the name Māhāferid, ماها فرید. This might be yet another clue to the hypothesis that the legend mixes up the two heroes - Tur and Afrāsiyāb, and that traces of the history of Astyages can be found in both characters.

Notes

¹ Cf. T. Nöldeke, Das iranische Nationalepos. Grundriss der iranischen Philologie, II, p. 134-146.

² Her., I, 95.

³ Obrazovanie Ahemenidov po dannym antičnyh istočnikov. Istorija iranskogo gosudarstva i kul'tury, Moskva 1971, p. 84-85.

⁴ It was pointed to already by Biruni in Al-athār al-bāqija. Cf. Biruni, Izbrannye proizvedeniya, I, Taškent 1957, p. 111.

- ⁵ Op. cit., GIP, II, p. 131.
- ⁶ Cf. I. M. Djakonov, Istorija Midii ot drevnejših vremen do kontsa IV veka do n. e., Moskva-Leningrad 1956.
- ⁷ Cf. The zend-Avestā, translated by James Darmesteter. Sacred Books of the East, IV/I-II, 2nd edition, Oxford 1895, II, p. 60.
- ⁸ Cf. A. Christensen, Les Kavanides, København 1931, p. 9.
- ⁹ Cf. Biruni, op. cit., p. 103.
- ¹⁰ Bal'ami, Chronique de Tabari, traduite [...] par M. H. Zotenberg, I-IV, Paris 1867-1874, I, p. 499.
- ¹¹ Ibid., p. 495.
- ¹² Ibid., p. 500.
- ¹³ Cf. A. T. Olmstead, History of the Persian Empire, Chicago 1970, p. 2.
- ¹⁴ Cf. D. Monchi-Zadeh, Topographisch-historische Studien zum iranischen Nationalepos, Wiesbaden 1975, p. 80-91.
- ¹⁵ E. g., on the court of Key Xosrau who by a number of scholars was considered to be a reflexion of Cyrus (cf. Firdousi, Le livre des rois, publié, traduit et commenté par Jules Mohl, I-VII, Paris 1838-1878, v. II, p. VI; T. Nöldeke, op. cit., GIP, II, p. 132-133, 136-137; F. Justi, Geschichte Irans von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Ausgang der Sasaniden, GIP, II, p. 410; E. Herzfeld, Zoroaster and his World, Princeton 1947, I, p. 104; T. Kowalski, Studia nad Šāh-nāme, I, p. 44) such characters appear as Gudārz, Milād, Bižan, considered by the same and other scholars to be characters of the Parthian era (cf. T. Nöldeke, op. cit., GIP, II, p. 136-137; J. C. Coyagee, The house of Gotarzes: a Chapter of Parthian History in the Shahnameh, JRAS, Beng., N. S. 28 /1932/, p. 207; J. C. Coyagee, Studies in the Shahnameh, JKRCOI, nr. 33 /1939/, p. 131).
- ¹⁶ Cf. G. S. Kirk, The Homeric Poems as History, p. 8.
- ¹⁷ Cf. I. M. Djakonov, as above.
- ¹⁸ Cf. H. Grassmann, Wörterbuch zum Riq-Veda, Leipzig 1873, p. 56.
- ¹⁹ Farhang-e Nāmeh-je Avestā by Hašem Rāzi, I-III, Teheran (about 1977), I, p. 311.
- ²⁰ Cf. Bundahiš, XXIII, 3, Pahlavi Texts, translated by E. W. West, I, Oxford 1880, p. 87 et al.
- ²¹ Yt. V; IX, 33.
- ²² Yt. XXXIII, 4.
- ²³ Yt. XIII, 140.
- ²⁴ Yt. XV; VI, 23-24.

- ²⁵ Farhang-e Nāmeh-je Avestā, I, p. 398.
- ²⁶ Yt. V, 61.
- ²⁷ Zohāk, b. 117, 154 (The Moscow edition of Šāhnāme, 1960-1971).
- ²⁸ Ibid., b. 120, 323.
- ²⁹ Ibid., b. 122-148.
- ³⁰ Ibid., b. 43-90.
- ³¹ Siyāvuš, b. 1438-2474.
- ³² Her., I, 108-113.
- ³³ Zohāk, b. 139-148.
- ³⁴ Siyāvuš, cf. above.
- ³⁵ Zohāk, b. 227-241.
- ³⁶ Geršāsp, b. 104-186.
- ³⁷ Siyāvuš, b. 3095-3164.
- ³⁸ Her., I, 123-124.
- ³⁹ Zohāk, b. 269-270, 275-284.
- ⁴⁰ Siyāvuš, b. 3441-3503.
- ⁴¹ Her., I, 189.
- ⁴² Her., I, 204.
- ⁴³ Key Kāūs va raftan-e u be Māzanderān, b. 15-40.
- ⁴⁴ Farhang-e Nāmeh-je Avestā, I, p. 395.
- ⁴⁵ Her., I, 55.
- ⁴⁶ Feridun, b. 67-89.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 1-34 of Molahqāt after b. 162; Šāhnāme, I, p. 254-256.
- ⁴⁸ Cf. E. Herzfeld, Zoroaster and his World, I, p. 48.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. J. E. Cirlot, Dictionary of Symbols, translated from Spanish by J. Sagl, II-nd ed., London 1967, p. 375-376.
- ⁵⁰ Feridun, b. 1-49 after b. 177; Šāhnāme, I, p. 256-259.
- ⁵¹ Feridun, b. 178-189.
- ⁵² J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, Dictionnaire des symboles, I-IV, Paris 1974; IV, p. 140.
- ⁵³ Ibid., III, p. 132.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., I, p. 258.
- ⁵⁵ Māh - Media; cf. E. Herzfeld, The Persian Empire, Wiesbaden 1968, p. 23.
- ⁵⁶ Biruni, op. cit., p. 117.

- 57 Cf. R. Frye, The Heritage of Persia, London 1962, p. 161.
- 58 Cf. above no 52: IV, p. 270.
- 59 Ibid., III, p. 134.
- 60 Old Persian huvāra 'zmī (cf. Ch. Bartholomae, Altiranisches Wörterbuch, Strassburg 1904, p. 1855-1856; cf. also E. Herzfeld, The Persian Empire, p. 325). NB., F. Wolff in his Glossar zu Firdosis Schahname, Berlin 1935, notes a double use by Ferdousi of the expression Xāvar zamin (p. 314) and his using nine times the expression ze Xāvar tā Bāxtar (p. 101), never ze Bāxtar tā Xāvar. - The Cyrus' army marched for Bactria after conquering Chorasm, and not the other way round.
- 61 Cf. F. Wolff, op. cit., p. 314.
- 62 Zoroaster and his World, II, p. 705.
- 63 Ibid., p. 707.
- 64 Cf. R. Frye, op. cit., p. 161.
- 65 Ghurur axbār mulūk al furs (H. Zotenberg, Paris 1900), p. 47.
- 66 Cf. E. Herzfeld, Zoroaster and his World, II, p. 708.
- 67 Ibid., I, p. 172.
- 68 Cf. above, note 55.
- 69 Ġang-e bozorg-e Key Xosrau bā Afrāsiyāb, b. 2960.
- 70 Feridun, b. 474.
- 71 Ibid., b. 478.
- 72 Tabari, Mohammad ibn Ġarir, Tā'rix ar-rāsul wa 'Imulūk, tar-
ğome-je Abu'l-Qāsem Pājende, I-XVI, Teheran, 1352-1354 (1974-1976), II,
p. 422.

FOLIA ORIENTALIA
Tome XXIV 1987
PL ISSN 0015-5675

Anna KRASNOWOLSKA

THE HEROES OF THE IRANIAN EPIC TALE

In the researches on the epic literature efforts have been made in order to reveal regularities of the epic plot and to formulate some, more or less universal, scheme of its development.

A concise design of epic action has been established by A. B. Lord¹ and afterwards - by P. A. Grintser² in whose comparative table the successive items of epic plot are juxtaposed with the parallel ones of the nature myth. For, according to the scholars involved, the source of the structural model of the epic tale is always a calendary myth, having a periodically dying and resurrecting god of fertility for its hero. The third genre of folklore, following the analogical compositional scheme is the fairy-tale, as described by Propp³. Thus, myth, epic and fairy-tale represent the three different applications and ways of evolution of the same plot pattern. Their common subject is, in the most general terms, the paradox of an indissoluble bond between life and death, and the search for immortality.

In all the three cases this search assumes the form of the hero's journey to a place which may be identified with the other world. The purpose of such a journey is a quest of some person disappeared, having been abducted or killed by an enemy. In the myth the hero's death is temporary; in the epics it may be somehow apparent or replaced by the death of the