

# ON THE ANTIQUITY OF ZOROASTRIAN APOCALYPTIC

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'Apocalyptic', it has been pointed out, 'is only another word for "revelation", and apocalypticist for "revealer". Essentially, therefore, prophecy and apocalyptic [are] identical.'<sup>1</sup> Prophecy in its turn has been defined as 'the declaration of knowledge which cannot be apprehended through the ordinary faculties, but is acquired either by revelation from a deity or by some other mantic power inherent in the seer himself'.<sup>2</sup> Through the accidents of history a distinction came to be drawn by students of Jewish sacred literature between ancient prophecy and later apocalyptic, the latter flourishing in the intertestamental period; and in the Jewish tradition it is apocalyptic which, it has been said, 'was the first to grasp the great idea that all history, alike human, cosmological and spiritual, is a unity. . . . Apocalyptic sketched in outline the history of the world and of mankind, the origin of evil, its course, and inevitable overthrow, and the final consummation of all things'.<sup>3</sup>

This historical distinction between prophecy and apocalyptic does not apply in other ancient religions, and least of all in Zoroastrianism, whose founder was himself the first to teach 'the great idea that all history . . . is a unity'. In his *Gāthās* Zoroaster looks back to 'eternity past' and the beginning of time, and forward to the Last Judgement and 'eternity to come', and sees all that takes place in between as part of the cosmic struggle between good and evil, leading to the final overthrow of the latter, and the accomplishment thereby of God's purposes; and he has accordingly been called indeed the 'first apocalypt'.<sup>4</sup> Some elements in his teaching are likely to have been already old, parts of a long mantic tradition traceable back not only to proto-Indo-Iranian but even to proto-Indo-European origins; but as a whole it was evidently 'a revolution in theology',<sup>5</sup> a great new doctrine of immense ethical and intellectual scope; and because its basic thrust was moral, Zoroaster had a passionate concern for ultimate justice to be administered at the end of time, hence for what in Jewish studies has been termed 'apocalyptic eschatology'.<sup>6</sup> Knowledge of this the prophet sought from God himself: 'I ask Thee, Lord, about those things which indeed are coming and shall come' (*tā θwā parasā ahurā yā zī āitī jānghatičā*).<sup>7</sup>

Zoroaster, it seems, accepting finally that he would not himself live to see these things fulfilled and God's kingdom established on earth, taught that one greater than he would come after him, another 'saošyant' or benefactor, who would lead the forces of good in the last great struggle;<sup>8</sup> and this doctrine was developed by his followers into the expectation that one day Zoroaster's own son would be born miraculously, of a virgin mother, to become the world Saviour, the Saošyant. A name was given him, Astvaṭ.ərəta, 'He who embodies

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Charles, *Religious development between the Old and the New Testament*, London and New York, 1914, p. 14, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> H. M. and N. K. Chadwick, *The growth of literature*, III, Cambridge, 1940, 705.

<sup>3</sup> Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The hymns of Zarathustra*, transl. M. Henning, London, 1952, 18.

<sup>5</sup> Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 791.

<sup>6</sup> Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> *Yasna* 31.14, in the translation of S. Insler, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra*, *Acta Iranica*, 8, 1975, 41. This verse was cited in connexion with the late Zoroastrian apocalyptic text, the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt*, by E. W. West, *SBE*, xxxvii, p. 181, n. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. H. Lommel, *Die Religion Zarathustras nach dem Awesta dargestellt*, Tübingen, 1930, repr. 1971, 228-9.

truth', derived from the prophet's own words: 'May truth be embodied, strong with life' (*astvaṭ ašəm h́jāt uštānā aojōnghvat*, Y. 43.16). His virgin mother too received a name, *Vispa.taurvairi*, 'She who conquers all'; and the myth, that she will conceive the Saošyant after bathing in a lake where the prophet's seed is miraculously preserved, is alluded to in an Avestan text, *Yast* 19, of which the relevant verses are evidently older than the Achaemenian era, probably by several centuries.<sup>9</sup> These verses run as follows:<sup>10</sup> (10) '... Ahura Mazda created many and good creatures ... (11) in order that they shall make the world perfect, ... in order that the dead shall rise up, that the Living One, the Indestructible, shall come, the world be made perfect at his wish. ... (88) We worship mighty *Xvarənah* ... , (89) which will accompany the victorious Saošyant, and also his other comrades, so that he may make the world perfect. ... (92-3) When *Astvat.ərətā* comes out from Lake *Kašaoya*, messenger of Mazda Ahura, son of *Vispa.taurvairi*, brandishing the victorious weapon which ... Kavi *Vištāspa* bore to avenge *Aša* (Truth) upon the enemy host, then he will there drive the Drug (Falsehood) out from the world of *Aša*. (94) He will gaze with eyes of wisdom, he will behold all creation, ... he will gaze with eyes of sacrifice<sup>11</sup> on the whole material world, and heedfully he will make the whole material world undying. (95) His comrades advance, ... thinking well, speaking well, acting well, upholding the Good Religion; and they will utter no false word with their tongues. Before them will flee ill-fated *Aēšma* of the bloody club. *Aša* will conquer the evil Drug, hideous, dark. (96) *Aka Manah* will also be overcome, *Vohu Manah* overcomes him. Overcome will be the falsely spoken word, the truly spoken word overcomes it. ... *Haurvatāt* and *Amərətāt* will overcome both Hunger and Thirst. ... *Anra Mainyu* of evil works will flee, bereft of power' ((10) ... *dāmaṇ dābaṭ ahurō mazdā pouruča vohuča* ... (11) *yaṭ kərənavaṇ frašəm ahūm*, ... *yaṭ irista paiti usəhištaṇ, jašāt jvayō amərəxtiš, dābaite frašəm vasna anhuš*. ... (88) *uyrəm* ... *xvarəno yazamaide* ... , (89) *yaṭ upanahačat \*saošyantəm vərəθrājanəm uta anyāšcēt haṣayō, yaṭ kərənavāt frašəm ahūm*. ... (92-3) *yaṭ astvat.ərətō fraxštāite hača apat kašaoyāt, aštō mazdā ahurahe, vispa.taurvayā puθrō, vaēdəm vaējō yim vərəθraynəm yim* ... *barač kava vištāspō ašahe haēnayā ēaēšmno, tā avada drujm nizarāt ašahe hača gaēθabyō*. (94) *hō dišāt xratəuš dōiθrābyō vīspa dāmaṇ paiti vaēnāt*, ... *hō vīspəm ahūm astvantəm izayā vaēnāt dōiθrābya, darəšca dābaṭ amərəšyantim vīspəm yəm astvaitim gaēθəm*. (95) *anhe haṣayō frāyente* ... *humananhō hvačanhō hušyaoθnānhō hudaēna, naēda.čēt miθō.aojānhō aēšəm xvaēpaiθya hizvō. aēšu parō frānāmāite aēšmō \*xrvidrūš dušxvarənā. vanāt aša akəm drujim yəm duščiθraṇ təmanshaēnīm*. (96) *\*vanaite akəmčēt manō vohu manō taṭ vanaiti. \*vanaite miθaoxtō, ərəžuxdō vāxš təm vanaiti*. ... *vanāt haurvāšca amərətāšca* "va šudəmca taršnəmca. ... *frānāmāiti dužvarštavarš anrō mainyuš axšyamanō*).

This eschatological prophecy of 'making the world perfect (*fraša-*)',<sup>12</sup> i.e. restoring it to its original state of unblemished goodness, is conceived essentially in purely religious terms, and with a cosmic breadth worthy of Zoroaster's own vision; but in part of v. 93, omitted above, the prophecy is

<sup>9</sup> See Boyce, *A history of Zoroastrianism (Handbuch der Orientalistik*, ed. B. Spuler, I.8.1.2.2A) I, Leiden, 1975, 293.

<sup>10</sup> Text in K. F. Geldner, *Avesta, the Sacred Books of the Parsis*, II, Stuttgart, 1889, 244, 256-8, with asterisked words emended according to C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg, 1904, s.v.

<sup>11</sup> See H. Humbach, *IF*, LXIII, 1957, p. 43, n. 7.

<sup>12</sup> Against Insler's attractive interpretation of Gathic *fraša-* as 'healed, renovated' (op. cit., p. 172) see H. P. Schmidt, *IJ*, 21, 1979, 97-8.

linked to ancient Iranian myth and heroic legend by the statement that the 'victorious weapon' which had been wielded by Kavi Vištāspa (Zoroaster's royal patron) was the self-same weapon which earlier 'the mighty Thraētaona bore when Aži Dahāka was slain, which the Tūra Franrasyan bore when the wicked Zainigu was slain, which Kavi Haosravah bore when the Tūra Franrasyan was slain, which Kavi Vištāspa . . .', etc. (*baraṭ taxmō θraētaonō yaṭ ažiš dahākō jaini, yim baraṭ franrase tūrō yaṭ drvā zainigāuš jaini, yim baraṭ kava haosrava yaṭ tūrō jaini franrase, yim baraṭ kava vištāspō . . .*). This passage itself is clearly old, because it presents the 'Tūra Franrasyan' as an Iranian warrior-hero, not as the alien villain he becomes in the later tradition; and it thus shows an early stage of that interweaving of religious and heroic elements which is characteristic of developed Iranian apocalyptic.

A feature of this eschatological vision which allowed for the play of lesser imaginations was the concept of the 'comrades' of the Saošyant. Astvaṭ.ərəta himself is yet unborn; but among his comrades, in the developed tradition, are heroes of old who will return to aid the Iranian peoples at the end of time, as they had done in the past. This development involved adapting old tales of tribal battles among Iranians themselves, as recorded in the Avestan *yašts*, to the later conditions of an imperial people, when Iranians were matched against foreign foes—Greeks, Romans, Turks and eventually Arabs. Through this process the originally cosmic apocalyptic developed a patriotic character, and came to partake of the nature of 'political prophecy',<sup>13</sup> though never losing its dominant religious and moral elements.

Among the Iranian heroes who will fight for the Saošyant are certain 'deathless chieftains' (*rad ī ahōš*),<sup>14</sup> who, immortal in the flesh, are waiting in hidden or remote places for the call which will in the end rouse them to action. Prominent among them is Avestan Piši.šyaoθna, Pəšō.tanu, who is celebrated also in the Pahlavi books (as Pišyōtan), and in the Persian epic (as Bešutan, Fešutan).<sup>15</sup> His name occurs only twice in the extant Avesta, though more frequently in the Zand, i.e. in Middle Persian translations of lost Avestan texts. In one verse of the *Farvardīn Yašt*, Yt. 13.103, the *fravaši* of 'just Piši.šyaoθna' is honoured immediately before that of 'just and valiant Spəntōdāta' (Pahl. Spandiyād, NP Isfandiyār); and this agrees with the tradition that these two were full brothers,<sup>16</sup> sons of Kavi Vištāspa. In the epic 'Bešutan' is assigned a supporting if admirable role. 'Guštāsp' (Vištāspa) resolves that when he himself resigns the crown, Isfandiyār shall be king after him, and Bešutan commander of the army.<sup>17</sup> Meantime Isfandiyār leads the army, with Bešutan always at his side as counsellor.<sup>18</sup> When Isfandiyār undertakes single-handed the exploits of the Seven Stages, he entrusts the army to his brother;<sup>19</sup> when he swoons, Bešutan tends him;<sup>20</sup> when he is slain,

<sup>13</sup> See Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 847.

<sup>14</sup> *Zand-Akāsīh* or *Greater Bundahišn* [= *GBd.*], ed. and transl. by B. T. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1956, XXIX.5.

<sup>15</sup> On this name see F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch*, Marburg, 1895, repr. 1963, 1976, 253-4 (under Piškyaoθna) and 251 (under Peschōtanu); H. S. Nyberg, *MO*, 1929, 345; E. Herzfeld, *AMI*, II, 1930, 57; A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, Copenhagen, 1931, 56.

<sup>16</sup> See *Šāhnāme*, Beroukhim edition, Tehran, 1314/1935, VI, p. 1497, ll. 30-4; transl. A. G. and E. Warner, London, 1910, v, 32.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, text, VI, p. 1532, ll. 638-40; transl., v, p. 66.

<sup>18</sup> Explicitly so described, *ibid.*, text, VI, p. 1661, l. 2927; p. 1685, l. 3322; transl., v, pp. 196, 218.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, text, VI, p. 1591, ll. 1633 ff.; text, v, 124 ff.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, text, VI, 1593-4; transl., v, 127.

Bešutan laments for him and leads his funeral procession.<sup>21</sup> Bešutan outlives their father, Guštāsp, and at his wish becomes minister to his successor, Isfandiyār's son Bahman,<sup>22</sup> giving him in his turn wise counsel.<sup>23</sup>

There is just one suggestion in the epic that Bešutan is holy as well as sage: when snow has been falling relentlessly, Isfandiyār asks him to lead the army in prayer that it may cease; and his prayer is answered.<sup>24</sup> The other link with the developed religious tradition is that Bešutan, in contrast to Isfandiyār, is not said to have died.<sup>25</sup> The fact that Piši.šyaoθna's *fravaši* is honoured in *Yašt* 13 shows that in the early days of the faith the prince was known to have suffered the ordinary human lot; but in the one other extant Avestan passage concerning him, the late *Yt.* 24, v. 4, the blessing is given: 'May you be freed from sickness and death, like Pəšōtanu'. The legend of his immortality is repeatedly alluded to in the Pahlavi books, but how this came about is only fully told in the thirteenth-century Persian poem, the *Zarātušt Nāme*. This, though a late composition, has considerable authority, since, as its author tells us, it is a direct rendering of an old Pahlavi work which appears to have incorporated, if it did not wholly consist of, *Zand*.<sup>26</sup> His Persian text, as the modern editor says, is thus 'le dernier anneau d'une chaîne dont le commencement se perd dans la nuit de temps'.<sup>27</sup> The story which the poem transmits concerning 'Bešutan' is as follows: <sup>28</sup> Guštāsp, having accepted the faith from Zardušt, asks to have his belief confirmed by the granting of four boons: (1) that he should behold in spirit the place he will occupy in the next world; (2) that his body should be made invulnerable, since he will have to fight in defence of the faith; (3) that he should be given wisdom to know the future; and (4) that until the resurrection his soul should not leave his body. Zardušt replies that these boons are too great to be given all to one man. Let him therefore choose one for himself, and the other three shall be variously bestowed. The prophet then solemnizes the lesser religious service of the *yašt ī drōn*,<sup>29</sup> at which he consecrates wine, milk, incense and a pomegranate. The wine he gives to Guštāsp himself, and his soul ascends to behold and worship God; Jāmāsp, his minister, receives the incense, and learns to know all that is to come; Isfandiyār eats a pomegranate grain and his body becomes like 'stone and bronze' (*sang u rōy*);<sup>30</sup> and the milk is drunk by Bešutan, who 'forgets death' (*neyāvard az marg yād*).<sup>31</sup> The effect of this last gift is described more

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, text, vi, 1713–14, 1720–1; transl., v, 244, 251–2.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, text, vi, p. 174, l. 4306; transl., v, 279.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, text, vi, p. 1754, ll. 98 ff.; p. 1755, ll. 124 ff.; text, v, 280, 290.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, text, vi, 1603–4; transl., v, 137–8.

<sup>25</sup> No stress could of course be laid on this in isolation, since both major and minor characters are apt simply to fade away in the early part of the epic, interwoven as this is of a tangle of minstrels' tales; cf. M. Boyce, 'Some remarks on the transmission of the Kayanian heroic cycle', *Serta Cantabrigiensia*, Mainz, 1954, 50.

<sup>26</sup> See F. Rosenberg, ed. and transl., *Le livre de Zoroastre (Zarātusht Nāma)*, St. Petersburg, 1904, text, p. 2, ll. 14 ff.; transl., 2.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p. xxxi. A small but striking testimony to his faithfulness to his original is the fact that he makes a clear allusion to the ancient doctrine of the Amēšaspad Šahrevār's link with the sky, a doctrine generally lost sight of latterly, see text, p. 34, l. 661; transl., 36.

<sup>28</sup> Text, 57 ff.; transl., 56 ff.

<sup>29</sup> Text, p. 60, ll. 1161 ff.; transl., 58. On the terminology and nature of this service see M. Boyce and F. Kotwal, 'Zoroastrian *bāj* and *drōn*—I', *BSOAS*, xxxiv, 1, 1971, 63 ff.

<sup>30</sup> Text, p. 61, l. 1174; transl., 60; cf. his fixed epithet of 'Roγintan' in the epic. Despite the use of this epithet, Isfandiyār's invulnerability is only sporadically stressed in the *Šāhnāme*, where the Avestan hero is made to succumb at last to the non-Avestan Rustam. A recent study of the *Šāhnāme* treatment has been made by M. Omidsalar, 'Isfandiyar and the question of his invulnerability', *Iran Nameh, a Persian Journal of Iranian Studies* (published by the Foundation for Iranian Studies, Washington, D.C.), I, 1983, 254–81 (Persian text) with English abstract, pp. 319–20.

<sup>31</sup> Text, p. 61, l. 1170; transl., 60.

fully in the *Dēnkard* life of Zoroaster (also taken from the *Zand*), which says that Vištāsp then ‘ beheld his son Pišyōtan . . . immortal, not aging, needing no sustenance, mighty of body and perfect in strength, full of glory, powerful, victorious, equal to the divine beings ’ (*Pišyōtan dīd ī . . . amarg, azarmān, a-niyāz-xwarišn, wuzurg-tan ud bowandag-nērōg, purr-xwarrah, amāwand, pērōzgar, yazdān-hamtāg pus*).<sup>32</sup>

The story of the four gifts is still popular among traditionalist Zoroastrians, who are taught it in connexion with the *Āfrīnagān* ceremony. This ceremony embodies the *yašt ī drōn*, and is constantly performed as an ‘ outer ’ ritual, being thus deeply familiar to priests and laity alike. In origin the story appears indeed deliberately to link priestly and ‘ warrior ’ traditions, in that it creates a legend which both adds a new dimension to a priestly office and exalts thereby the dignity of the first ‘ warrior ’ patrons of the faith—Vištāspa, his wise minister and his two sons. It seems likely, therefore, that the legend was evolved at some remote period—perhaps around 1000 B.C.—under Eastern Iranian princes who claimed Kayanian descent, and so would have given appreciative patronage to the priests and minstrels who shaped and propagated it.<sup>33</sup>

The concept of the immortal hero who will one day return to help his people is found in the traditions of diverse Indo-European nations; and it was presumably an ancient *topos* among the Iranians, which thus became piously attached to one of Vištāspa’s sons.<sup>34</sup> The less famous Piši.šyaoθna was presumably chosen because the death of his brother, Spəntōdātā, was already widely celebrated in minstrel poems, and could not be glossed over.

As an Immortal Piši.šyaoθna needed an abode in which to await the end of time; and it was presumably because he was a Kayanian that he was allotted the most famous stronghold of the Kavis (kays), namely Pahl. Kangdiz, NP Gangdiz, the ‘ fortress of Kang/Gang ’, also often referred to simply as Kang/Gang. The *Dēnkard* says: ‘ Pišyōtan went to Kangdiz and ruled there, as Creator Ohrmazd had destined for him ’ (*ewarz ī Pišyōtan ō Kangdiz ud xwadāyih ānōh čiyōn Dādār Ohrmazd awiš baxt*).<sup>35</sup> The tradition is that this stronghold had been built by his distant kinsman Syāvaršan, Pahl. Syāvaxš, NP Siyāvaš, Siyāvuš.<sup>36</sup> ‘ The lordship of Pišyōtan is in Kangdiz. There he dwells, in illustrious Kangdiz which noble, illustrious Syāvaxš built through his glory, he who is called the son of Kayus ’ (*pišyōtan xwadāyih pad kangdiz. ānōh mānēd pad kangdiz ī bāmīg ī-š pad xwarrah kird āzādag syāva(x)š ī bāmīg ī kayūsān xwānīhēd*).<sup>37</sup> The fortress was presumably originally a stronghold of earth and stone, high in a hilly region called in Avestan *Kaṃha*, somewhere in

<sup>32</sup> *Dk.* VII.5.12, see M. Molé, *La légende de Zoroastre selon les textes pehlevi*, Paris, 1967, 64/65.

<sup>33</sup> On the well-established phenomenon of the ‘ heroisation ’ of a priestly tradition see Chadwick, *op. cit.*, I, 1932, 134; and further, in particular connexion with Iran and the Kayanian cycle, Boyce, *Serta Cantabrigiensia*, 46 ff.

<sup>34</sup> For lists of the Iranian Immortals, with varying numbers and names, see Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, 153–6.

<sup>35</sup> *loc. cit.* in n. 32.

<sup>36</sup> For a table of the family relationships see Christensen, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>37</sup> *Dādestān ī dēnīg, Pursišn* 89.5; text in P. K. Anklesaria (ed.), *A critical edition of the unedited portion of the Dādestān-ī dīnik*, unpublished London thesis, 1958, 173; cf. E. W. West, *SBE*, xviii, 257. For other references to the building of Kangdiz by Syāvaxš see *GBd.* xxxii.5; *Dk.* VII.1.38, ed. Madan, 598.15–20 (Molé, *Légende de Zoroastre*, 10/11); *Mēnōg ī Xrad (MX)* XXVII.57 (ed. and transl. by E. W. West, Stuttgart/London, 1871, 32/159); *Zand ī Vahman Yašt (ZVYt.)*, ed. and transl. by B. T. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1957, VII.19, 20; *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg (AJ)*, ed. and transl. by G. Messina, Rome, 1939, VII.2; *Pahl. Riv. Dd.* (ed. B. N. Dhabhar, Bombay, 1913) XLIX.1; *Sāhnāme*, text, III, 617 ff.; IX, p. 2927, l. 325; transl., II, 279 ff.; IX, 25.

the territory of the Tūra tribe.<sup>38</sup> The full story is preserved only in the *Šāhnāme*. There we are told that Siyāvuš, exiled by his father, Kay Kaus, took refuge with the great 'Turanian' chief, Afrāsiyāb (Av. Frarāsyān), and in due course married one of his daughters. At Afrāsiyāb's prompting he built himself 'Gangdiz'. He was subsequently accused of treachery to Afrāsiyāb, who put him to death, and thereafter took possession of Gangdiz himself. In one place Afrāsiyāb is called accordingly 'king of Gang'.<sup>39</sup> It is presumably to this stage of the story that the one Avestan reference to 'Kaṇha' belongs. Here the warrior Tūsa, a contemporary of Syāvaršan's son Kavi Haosrāvah, prays for the boon that he may slay two Tūra warriors 'at the pass Xšaθrō.sūka, the highest in lofty, righteous Kaṇha' (*upa dvarəm xšaθrō.sukəm apānō.təməm kaṇhaya bərəzaintaya ašavanaya*).<sup>40</sup> Gangdiz figures largely in the war between Kay Xosrow (Kavi Haosrāvah) and Afrāsiyāb, undertaken by the former to avenge his father's death on his maternal grandfather. Since it was paternal lineage which counted in ancient Iran, the story is told as one of a patriotic war between Iran and non-Iran. In the course of it we learn that Gang is situated in 'Tūrān', across the river Gulzaryūn,<sup>41</sup> 1,000 leagues beyond the borders of Iran.<sup>42</sup> In the end Xosrow succeeds in storming and taking possession of the fortress, Afrāsiyāb having fled.<sup>43</sup> Thereafter it becomes associated with Xosrow, who is himself one of the Iranian Immortals,<sup>44</sup> and acquires the epithet of 'kayān', i.e. 'Kangdiz of the kavis', thus, it seems, preparing the way for its subsequent association also with Pišyōtan.<sup>45</sup>

This latter association brought with it, however, yet another apparently Indo-European *topos*, that of a blessed other world, not the home of the gods, but a fortunate realm where a chosen few live free from all troubles, delighting in sweet scents and sights and sounds, and always happy.<sup>46</sup> Among the Indo-Iranians this realm came to be associated with Yama/Yima, the first king.<sup>47</sup> A description of his domain is given in the *Mahābhārata* 2.8.1-5,<sup>48</sup> where it is pictured as a vast 'divine hall', 'sparkling, bright as the sun, moving at pleasure in every direction (*sarvataḥ kāmācarinī*). It is not excessively cold,

<sup>38</sup> Otherwise Herzfeld, *AMI*, II, 1930, 56-8, who regarded Kangdiz as 'völlig mythisch'. An objection made to placing Zoroaster at the merging of stone into bronze age for his own people (see, with further references, Boyce, *A history of Zoroastrianism*, II, 1982, 1-3) has been that this means assigning Vištāspa's ancestors to a more fully stone age. But there is no fundamental problem in this, even though in the surviving tradition, from the *Younger Avesta* onwards, they are presented first as chariot-riding, i.e. Bronze Age, warriors, then, as horse-riding nobles of Arsacid and Sasanian times, clad in mail and fighting in huge imperial armies, sometimes with a contingent of Indian elephants (cf., e.g., *Ayādgar ī Zarērān*, 27). Oral traditions regularly alter the accidents of a story to fit social changes; cf. the immense alterations undergone, during a much shorter period of transmission, by the stories of the Romano-British King Arthur before these were set down by Mallory.

<sup>39</sup> Text, IV, p. 1271, l. 2526; transl., IV, 134.

<sup>40</sup> *Yt.* V.54; see Bartholomae, *Air. Wb.*, 437. Lommel's tentative suggestion (*Die Yāšt's des Avesta*, Göttingen and Leipzig, 1927, p. 36, n. 6) that *dvara-* might here mean not 'pass' but 'gate' in the sense of 'royal palace', seems unlikely in so ancient a text. On the hilly nature of Kaṇha/Kang (thoroughly confused in the Pahlavi texts with Kangdiz), cf. *Yt.* 19.4 (the mountain Antarə-kaṇha); *GBd.* IX.3; *Indian Bd.* XII.3 (West, *SBE*, v, 34); *Šāhnāme*, text, IV, p. 1294, l. 438 (*kūh-ī Gang*), transl., IV, 162.

<sup>41</sup> Text, IV, p. 1318, l. 894; transl., IV, 187.

<sup>42</sup> Text, IV, p. 1351, l. 1545; transl., IV, 221.

<sup>43</sup> Text, IV, 1337-41; transl., IV, 207-11.

<sup>44</sup> In *MX XXVII.62* one of the achievements of Kay Xosrow is the 'ordering of Kangdiz' (*winārdan ī K.*). Cf. *GBd.* XXXII.12; *AJ VII.2* (end). In late texts of the Islamic period one also finds, by confusion, the building of Kangdiz ascribed to Siyāvuš' father, Kay Kaus, see J. Markwart, *A catalogue of the provincial capitals of Eranshahr*, ed. G. Messina, Rome, 1931, 27.

<sup>45</sup> *AJ XVI.51*.

<sup>46</sup> See B. Lincoln, 'On the imagery of Paradise', *IF*, 85, 1980, 151-64.

<sup>47</sup> See *ibid.*, 159 ff., with references to earlier studies.

<sup>48</sup> Cited, with text and transl., by Lincoln, *art. cit.*, 163.

nor excessively hot, but gladdening in spirit. There is no pain nor old age there, no hunger, thirst nor anything disagreeable. There is no misery or fatigue, nor any perversity. All desires are fulfilled there, those which are divine and those which are human. The food and drink are full of flavour and abundant . . .'. Similar features occur in the Avestan accounts of the realm ruled over by Yima.<sup>49</sup>

In the story of the immortal Pišyōtan, as we meet it in the apocalyptic tradition, his home, Kangdiz, became transformed into just such a place; indeed the parallelism is so close that in one late tradition the building of Kangdiz is actually ascribed to Yima.<sup>50</sup> In the *Šahnāme* the fortress of Siyāvuš is repeatedly referred to as 'Behišt-Gang', i.e. 'Paradise-Gang'; and miraculous descriptions of it occur in the Pahlavi books, four of which attribute to it the same curious feature possessed by Yama's divine hall, namely that it could move. The description already cited from the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*<sup>51</sup> ends with the statement: 'Kang is mobile; and he (Syāvaxš) established it spiritually and through powerful wonder-working' (*kang raftār; u-š pad mēnōg ud nērōgīg warz winārd*). There is a longer account in the *Greater Bundahišn*, introduced by a formula which suggests that it is a direct Middle Persian translation of a lost Avestan text: <sup>52</sup> 'Of Kangdiz He says: Possessing hands, possessing feet, seeing and moving, for ever spring-time, it was (borne up) on the heads of demons. Kay Xosrow set it down upon the ground. It has 7 walls of gold, silver, steel, bronze, iron, crystal and lapis lazuli. Within it are 700 leagues of roads; and there are 15 gates into it. In days of spring one can travel from one gate to another in 15 days with a chariot-horse' (*kangdiz rāy gōwēd ku dastōmand ud pāyōmand ud wēnāg ud rawāg, hamēšag wahār, pad kamāl ī dēwān būd. kay xosrow be ō zamīg nišāst. u-š 7 parisp ast, zarrēn, asēmēn, pōlawadēn, brinjēn, āhanēn, ābgēnagēn ud kāskēnēn. u-š 700 frasang ī rāstaqān mayān. u-š 15 dar padiš, kē az dar ō dar pad asp ī rah-ē rōz ī wahār-ē pad 15 rōz šāyēd šudan*).

There is a similar account, with further details, in the *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg*; <sup>53</sup> 'Kangdiz was made by the illustrious Syāvaxš upon the heads of demons. The road around it is 700 leagues, and it has 7 walls . . .; <sup>54</sup> its palaces are of silver, and those who are therein wear garments of gold. There are 7 pasture-grounds in it, protected by a rampart, 7 deep (?) rivers flow out of it. In that place it is always spring, yet also productivity and trees in fruit; and it knows neither cold nor heat, and few (other) evils abide therein. Its inhabitants are of goodly life, kindly, upholding the Good Religion. Their law is virtue and their faith the primal doctrine. Their lives are long, and when they die they are blessed. And their spiritual chief is the illustrious Pišyōtan . . ., and their king and leader is Xosrow' (*kangdiz syāvaxš ī bāmīg kird abar kamāl ī dēwān. u-š rāh ī pērāmōn haft sad frasang. u-š haft parisp ast . . .; u-š kōškīhā asēmēn u-š kē [andar] zarrēn brahm hēnd. u-š haft margzār andar, u-š pānaqīh parwār. u-š haft rōd ī \*bālīg az andarōn bē āyēd. ān gyāg hamēšag wahār, ābādīh-iz ud draxt pad bār. u-š sarmāg ud garmāg nē bawēd. u-š [abārīg] petyārag kam*).

<sup>49</sup> On these see *ibid.*, 159–62.

<sup>50</sup> See E. C. Sachau (transl.), *Alberuni's India*, London, 1888, I, 304; Markwart, *Provincial capitals*, 27, 34. Syāvaxš' Kangdiz and Yima's var are juxtaposed in *AJ* VII.1–11.

<sup>51</sup> Above, p. 61 with n. 37.

<sup>52</sup> *GBd.*, ed. T. D. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1908, 210.6–12; ed. B. T. Anklesaria, XXXII.12. On the opening formula see W. B. Henning, 'An astronomical chapter of the Bundahishn', *JRAS*, 1942, p. 231, n. 8.

<sup>53</sup> VII.2–8, Messina, p. 49.

<sup>54</sup> The list is the same as in the *GBd.* passage, except that copper (*rōyēn*) replaces lapis lazuli, and the order differs a little.

*mānend[ān] xūbzīšn ud hayyār ud behdīn hēnd. u-šān dād wehīh ud dēn pōryōtkēšīh. u-šān zīndagīh was. ka mīrēnd ahlaw hēnd. u-šān rad pišyōtan ī bāmīg . . . ud xwadāy ud sālār xosrow).*

Yet another account, with further variants, occurs in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat accompanying the Dādestān ī dēnīg*: ‘The world was managed according to the command of Syāwaš, until that (time) when Kay Xosrow came. After (his disappearance) Kay Xosrow said to the Spirit of Kang: “You are my sister and I am your brother, for Syāwaš made you as an estate, and he made me as a warrior. Return to me!”’. And Kang did so. It came to earth in Tūrān, towards the eastern region, the place where Syāwašgird was situated. He made a thousand holes in it and inserted a thousand stakes. Thereafter it did not move. It includes all Tūrān with its fodder and cattle. And Kay Xosrow settled Iranian people there. And its first wall is of stone, the second of steel, the third of crystal, the fourth of silver, the fifth of gold, the sixth of chalcedony and the seventh of ruby. And its palaces are of silver and (their) pinnacles of gold; and there are 14 mountains in it and 7 navigable (?) rivers and 7 pasture-grounds, whose protection should be through his lordship. And its soil is so good that if a donkey stales (there), in one night the grass will grow to the height of a man. And it has 15 gates, each the height of 50 men. Kang itself is so high, when a warrior shoots an arrow, sometimes it reaches the top, sometimes not. From gate to gate is 700 leagues; and ruby, gold, silver and other jewels and fine riches are within, and it is great and prosperous. . . . Pišyōtan, immortal, deathless, not aging, without hunger or thirst, is there lord and leader of Kang. People and other (creatures) who are there all have every good thing they need; there is little evil there. And their life is very long, there are those who live 150 years’ (*gēhān az framān ī syāwaš hamē rāyēnīd tā ān ka kayxosrow \*āmad. pas kayxosrōw be ō mēnōg ī kang guft ku xwahar ī man hē, ud man brād ī tō hom, čē tō syāwaš pad dastgird kard hē, u-š man pad nēw kard hēm; ō man abāz ward! ud Kang hamgōnag kird. be zamīg āmad andar tūrān, ō kust ī xwarāsān rōn, gyāg ku syāwašgird be estād; u-š hazār darm andar abgand, u-š mēx hazār andar hišt, ud pas az ān nē raft. hamāg Tūrān abāg kāh ud stōr dārēd. ud kayxosrow mardōm ī ēr andar be nišāst hēnd. u-š parisip ī fradom sagēn, ān ī dudīgar pōlāwadēn, ān ī sidīgar ābgēnagēn, ān ī čāhārom asēmēn, ān ī panjom zarrēn, [ān ī] šāšom karkēhanēn, ud ān ī haftom yākandēn. u-š kōšk asēmēn ud dandānag zarrēn, u-š 14 kōf andar, u-š 7 rōd ī nāydgāg andar, u-š 7 murw kē-š pānagīh pad xwadāyīh šāyēd kirdan andar. u-š zamīg ēdōn nēk, ka xār-ē be mēzēd, pad šab-ē wāstar mard-bālāy be rōyēd. u-š 15 dar, harw ēwag 50-mard bālāy ast. kang xwad bālāy and ast, mard-ē kāriḡ ka tigr be wihēd, bawēd ka-š be ō sar rasēd, bawēd ka nē rasēd. az dar ō dar 700 frasang, ud yākand, zarr, asēm, ud abārīḡ gōhr ud xwāstag ī nēk andar ast, ud was ud frāx ast. . . . pišyōtan ī ahōš ud amarg ud azarmān ud asuyīšn ud apuyīšn ānōh xwadāy ud rāyēnīdār ī kang ast. mardōm ud abārīḡ ī ānōh hēnd harw nēkīh ī-šān abāyēd, a-šān ast. petyārag ōzārak ast. u-šān zīndagīh frahist, [ast] ān kē 150 sāl zīwēd).*<sup>55</sup>

Other Indo-European peoples set their blessed realm in an island beyond the seas;<sup>56</sup> and the *Bundahišn* tells us that ‘Kangdiz is in the direction of the east, above the Frāxvkard Sea, at many leagues in that direction’ (*kangdiz*

<sup>55</sup> XLIX.2–11, 13–15, ed. Dhabhar, pp. 159–61; following the transcription and translation of A. V. Williams, who is preparing a new edition of the text. For the reference to the staling ass he compares Y. 41.28, *GBd.* XXIV.d. Syāwašgird is another name for Kangdiz.

<sup>56</sup> cf. B. Lincoln, art. cit. in n. 46, pp. 151–2, 155, 157.



*pad kustag ī xwarāsān, azabar ī zrayah ī fraxv kard, ō ān kustag pad was frasang*).<sup>57</sup> In the *Šāhnāme*, accounts of the historical stronghold in 'Tūrān' and the mythical Behišt-Gang far beyond the seas are inextricably confused, the result evidently of an immensely long oral tradition, with the mingling of different minstrel cycles. At the beginning of the stories about 'Gang' we are told that Afrāsiyāb bestows broad lands on Siyāvuš, and that, after travelling through them, the prince chooses a place to build a new and spacious city; <sup>58</sup> but then with dream-like suddenness we have crossed the sea to a strange land, in which is a lofty mountain. On this mountain, whose sheer cliffs make it inaccessible to man, there is already a stately city, with gardens, halls, rivers, music, fragrance and flowers.<sup>59</sup> In this marvellous place there is neither heat nor cold. All is peace, joy and abundance, and no sick person is to be seen. It is a garden of Paradise.<sup>60</sup> Siyāvuš, mysteriously translated there, is delighted by all he sees, surrounds the city with a wall, and thus makes it his own; <sup>61</sup> and so it turns into Turanian Gang again. Later when this stronghold has passed into the possession of Afrāsiyāb, and the latter retreats to it in his war against the Iranians, it becomes Behišt-Gang once more: it is so high that no eagles soar above it, a place of perfect joy and peace, with springs and pools of water, and fertility everywhere.<sup>62</sup> It changes again into an ordinary fortress when Kay Xosrow storms it, and Afrāsiyāb flees with a hundred chosen followers. The refuge which he seeks is still, however, 'Gangdiz'; and from the accounts of his journey there, and of Xosrow's pursuit,<sup>63</sup> we learn that to reach it calls for a seven-month journey across perilous, unknown seas, and then a march of a hundred leagues inland from the coast. Then again there rises the lofty mountain, crowned by the city built by Siyāvuš, with meadows, streams, nightingales and flowers, a place which resembles 'heart-enthraling Paradise'.<sup>64</sup> Xosrow, following, once again attacks successfully, and Afrāsiyāb again flees, as the Iranians fear back to Iran; and so Xosrow makes the long return sea voyage and the long march back to 'Gang-behišt' in Tūrān, to secure this fortress against him.<sup>65</sup>

The Persian epic thus presents a dream-like blending of Kangdiz of the heroic song-cycles and Kangdiz of the apocalyptic tradition; and this blending is found also in the Pahlavi books, in so far as they continue to link the home of the immortal Pišyōtan with Siyāvaxš and Kay Xosrow. Their focus, however, as religious works, is very much on Pišyōtan himself. As a warrior-prince, who will one day play a foremost part in the last battles against evil, he is seen as surrounded by a valiant retinue. So it is said in a Pahlavi passage derived from the lost Avestan *Sūdgar Nask*: 'Pišyōtan, son of Vištāsp, is in Kangdiz, the hundred-moated, in which are ten thousand banners, those of the exalted ones who wear black sables, who hearken to the religion and are righteous, being of the following of Pišyōtan son of Vištāsp' (*pišyōtan ī wištāspān pad kangdiz ī sad-gandag, ud drafš kē andar ān bēwar, ān ī \*bulandān kē siyā samūr dārēnd, ī dēn-niyōšīdar ud ahlaw, az pasīh ī pišyōtan ī wištāspān*).<sup>66</sup> It is even

<sup>57</sup> *GBd.* XXIX. 10.

<sup>58</sup> Text, III, 615-17; transl., II, 277-9.

<sup>59</sup> Text, *ibid.*, p. 618, ll. 1720 ff.; transl., *ibid.*, 280 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Text, *ibid.*, p. 619, ll. 1733-4; transl., *ibid.*, 290.

<sup>61</sup> Text, *ibid.*, p. 619, ll. 1739 ff.; transl., *ibid.*, 290.

<sup>62</sup> Text, v, p. 1326, ll. 1053 ff.; transl., iv, 195-6.

<sup>63</sup> Text, *ibid.*, p. 1359, ll. 1708 ff.; pp. 1373 ff.; transl., *ibid.*, 230 ff., 245 ff.

<sup>64</sup> Text, *ibid.*, p. 1377, l. 2047; transl., *ibid.*, 249.

<sup>65</sup> Text, *ibid.*, 1378 ff.; transl., *ibid.*, 250 ff.

<sup>66</sup> *Dk.* IX.15.11; Sanjana, xvii, 38-39/31; Madan, p. 805, ll. 8-11; West, *SBE*, xxxvii, 203. S. Wikander, *Der arische Männerbund*, Lund, 1938, 66, 96 ff., has written much on the banner, *Av. drafša*, as a symbol of military power.

said of Zoroaster's own son, Xwaršēd-ēihr (Av. Hvarēiθra), who in the developed tradition is regarded as representing the warrior-estate, that he 'is commander of the army of Pišyōtan son of Vištāsp, and dwells in Kangdiz' (*spāh-sālār ī pišyōtan ī wištāspān, ud pad kangdiz mānēd*).<sup>67</sup>

In yet another Pahlavi text consisting of translation from lost Avestan sources the 'spiritual chieftains' (*rad*) of the world are listed, Pišyōtan among them: 'As He says: Pišyōtan son of Vištāsp, whom they call also Čihr-mayān,<sup>68</sup> is in illustrious Kangdiz' (*čiyōn gōwēd pišyōtan ī wištāspān kē-š čihr-mayān-iz xwānēnd pad kangdiz ī bāmīg*).<sup>69</sup> Concerning the whole group of 'chieftains' the citation continues: 'Concerning them He says that they are indeed immortal . . . and at the making of Frašegird they will all come to the help of the Sōšyans' (*awēšān-iz-rā gōwēd ku ahōš hēnd . . . ud awēšān hamag pad frašegird kirdārīh bē ō hayyārīh ī sōšyans bē rasēnd*).<sup>70</sup> These Immortals, that is, are to be among the comrades of Astvaṭ.ərəta who figure in *Yašt* 19.95; and through them the eschatological apocalypse is filled out with dramatic details derived from ancient heroic tradition.

The spiritual force of the apocalyptic texts continues to derive, however, from the *Gāthās* themselves, with their sense of the strength of the evil that is to be overcome; and the corruptions which it brings were dwelt on powerfully in verse-prophecies concerning the end of time. One of these prophecies, preserved in the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt* IV, is put in the mouth of Ohrmazd himself, as he speaks to Zoroaster: '(13) In that time, Spitaman Zardušt, all men will become deceivers . . . and great covenants will be altered. (14) Honour and affection and love for the soul will depart from the world. . . . (16) The sun's rays will be very level and low-slanting, and year and month and day will be shorter. (17) And the earth . . . will contract. . . . (18) Crops will not yield seed, . . . (19) and plants and bushes and trees will be small. . . . (20) And people will be born very stunted, and will have little skill or energy. . . . (42) It will not be possible for an auspicious cloud and a just wind to bring rain at its due time and season. (43) Cloud and fog will darken the whole sky. (44) A hot wind and a cold wind will come and carry off all the fruits and grains of corn. (45) The rain too will not fall at its due time, and it will rain noxious creatures rather than water. (46) And the water of the rivers and springs will shrink and have no increase. (47) Camel and ox and sheep will be born much smaller and less sturdy. . . . (48) The plough-ox will have small strength, and the swift horse will have little power and be able to carry little at a gallop. . . . (66) That wicked Evil Spirit will be very oppressive and tyrannical, then when it becomes needful to destroy him' ((13) *andar ān āwām, Spītamān Zarduxšt, hamāg mardōm frēftar be bawēnd . . . ud mihr ī wuzurg jud-gōnag be bawēd. (14) āzarm ud dōšāram ud ruwān-dōstīh az gēhān be šawēd. . . . (16) xwaršēd rāsttar ud nihangtar, ud sāl ud māh ud rōz kamtar. (17) ud . . . zamīg tangtar. (18) ud bar tōhm nē dahēd . . . (19) ud urwar ud dār ud draçt be kāhēd. . . . (20) ud mardōm kōdaktar zāyēd, u-šān hunar ud nērōg kam. . . . (42) ud abr-ēw kāmgar ud wād ī ardāy pad hangām ud zamān ī xwēš wārān kardan nē šāyēd. (43) hamāg asmān abr ud nizm šabēnēd. (44) ān ī garm wād ud ān ī sard wād rasēd ud bar ud tōhm ī jōrdān be barēd. (45) wārān-iz pad hangām ī xwēš nē wārēd ud xrafstar wīš*

<sup>67</sup> *GBd.* XXXV.56; *Indian Bd.* XXXII.5 (West, *SBE*, v, 142). For another explanation of his presence there see Herzfeld, *AMI*, II, 57.

<sup>68</sup> This recurrent by-name still lacks a convincing explanation. On it see West, *SBE*, v, p. 117, n. 2; Herzfeld, *AMI*, II, 57.

<sup>69</sup> *GBd.* XXIX.6.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, 7. On the names of the first six 'spiritual chiefs' in this list see J. Darmesteter, *Études iraniennes*, Paris, 1883, II, 206-8; Boyce, *Hist. Zoroastrianism*, I, 284.

*wārēd ku āb. (46) ud āb ī rōdān ud xānīgān be kāhēd ud abzāyīšn be nē bawēd. (47) ud stōr ud gāw ud gōspand kōdaktar zāyēnd ud wad-hunartar zāyēnd. . . . (48) gāw ī warzāg nērōg kam, ud asp ī arwand hunar kam ud pad tag kam barēd. . . . (66) ōy druvand ganāg mēnōg ka be abāyēd abesihēnīdan, stambagtar ud dušpādixšātar bawēd).*<sup>71</sup>

The last words show that this prophecy belongs properly to the ancient period of Zoroastrian apocalyptic as represented in *Yašt* 19, which knew of only one World Saviour, Astvaṭ.ərəta, who will in the end drive out or destroy the Evil Spirit, Aəra Mainyu.<sup>72</sup> The whole prophecy is presented as part of Ahura Mazda's revelation to Zoroaster, so all that has taken place since Zoroaster himself lived is necessarily set out as a foretelling of the future; and the same is true of other apocalyptic texts presented as being prophecy by the all-foreseeing Jāmāsp, Zoroaster's contemporary.<sup>73</sup> There was presumably nothing innovative about this manner of exposition, since 'prophecy' applying to the past or present as well as the future is a widespread phenomenon of ancient oral literatures,<sup>74</sup> though, as has been pointed out, 'instead of "prophecy" it would . . . be more correct to speak of "vision (or sometimes 'declaration') of things not ascertainable by ordinary means".'<sup>75</sup> 'In other words, . . . ancient literatures draw no clear distinction between prophecy (in the modern sense) and declarations of mantic knowledge relating to the present or past.'<sup>76</sup>

The linear clarity of this ancient Zoroastrian apocalyptic, making known the course of events from the prophet's revelation to its fulfilment through his son, the Saošyant, became blurred after scholar-priests in western Iran had adopted a millennial scheme. This could hardly have happened before the end of the fifth century B.C. By this scheme time was held to be divided into a 'world year' of twelve millennia, with the last three millennia beginning with Zoroaster and ending with the Saošyant. During each of these three millennia, it came to be thought, broadly similar events would occur;<sup>77</sup> and so, it seems, a belief evolved that there would accordingly be not one but three Saošyants, brothers, all alike born in the same miraculous way, from Zoroaster's seed. This development accords with the general tendency in Zoroastrianism to triplication, but led inevitably to elaborations and confusions. Names were given to the two new Saviours which were harmonious with that of the original Saošyant: Uxšyaṭ.ərəta, 'He who makes truth grow', and Uxšyaṭ.nəmah,

<sup>71</sup> From the *ZV Yt.*, ed. B. T. Anklesaria, as *Zand-i Vohūman Yasn*, Bombay, 1957.

<sup>72</sup> cf. above, p. 58 (*Yt.* 19.96).

<sup>73</sup> Represented by the extant *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg*, XVI–XVII.

<sup>74</sup> See Chadwick, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 451–3, n. 2; p. 473, n. 33; III, 844–6.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, I, 453.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, III, 844. Since this latter type of composition, i.e. *vaticinatio ex eventu*, is both ancient and widespread, it is impossible to accept the hypothesis advanced by J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'Apocalypse juive et apocalypse iranienne', *La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell'Impero Romano*, ed. U. Bianchi and M. J. Vermaseren, Leiden, 1982, 753–61, that this literary genre was an invention of the Greeks, developed by the Jews in the Hellenistic period, and transmitted thereafter by them to Iran.

<sup>77</sup> The existence of the Zoroastrian millennial scheme, in connexion, it seems, with the Zurvanite heresy, is first attested through a quotation by Plutarch (*Isis and Osiris*, 47) from Theopompos, born 376 B.C. No trace, however, of a theory of recurrent cycles of events has been found in Babylonian cuneiform texts, see W. G. Lambert, 'Berossus and Babylonian eschatology', *Iraq*, 38, 1976, 171–3 (a reference I owe to the kindness of Dr. Amélie Kuhrt); so that this was possibly a development of Hellenistic times. On the dating of the preceding lines in Plutarch, which present a condensed summary of Iranian eschatological apocalyptic, see B. Lincoln, 'The Earth becomes Flat'—a study of apocalyptic imagery', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 25, 1983, 139–40 with n. 12.

'He who makes reverence grow'. Since Astvaṭ.ərəta himself represents 'the high point of the human race',<sup>78</sup> each section of the long lists of *fravašis* of righteous men in the *Farvardīn Yašt* ends with an invocation of his *fravaši*, i.e. *Yt.* 13.110, 117, 128; and in the last of these sections, at v. 128, the names of his two brothers are introduced just before his, after six names of 'spiritual chiefs' who also belong to the later scholastic rather than to the ancient prophetic tradition.<sup>79</sup> Iranian apocalyptic was then modified as follows: the present millennium belongs to Zoroaster; but after the golden time which attended his revelation evil has gained ground again, and is growing always stronger. At the millennium's end the first Saviour, Uxšyaṭ.ərəta (Pahl. Ušēdar), will appear, renew the prophet's message, and inflict a great defeat on the forces of evil. There will be another golden time, another recrudescence of evil, the coming of the Second Saviour, Uxšyaṭ.nəmah (Pahl. Ušēdarmāh), another defeat of evil; and then a third repetition of golden time and decline, and at last the coming of Asvaṭ.ərəta, the final overthrow of evil, and all the events of the Last Day (resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgement, the coming of the kingdom of God on earth). This prophetic scheme appears to have been developed most probably in the early part of the third century B.C.<sup>80</sup>

The Macedonian conquest, it has been cogently argued,<sup>81</sup> must have given a powerful new impulse to the cultivation of Zoroastrian apocalyptic, with the Iranians, suffering invasion and alien misrule, looking with longing for the coming of a Saviour who would re-establish the faith in purity and power, and with it Iranian sovereignty; and very probably one of the products of this epoch was a late Avestan text, the *Vahman Yašt*. Vahman (Vohu Manah) is linked in Zoroastrian tradition, from the *Gāthās* onward, with prophetic enlightenment, so that it was fitting to devote an apocalyptic text to this divinity. All that survives of this compilation is an epitome of its Middle Persian Zand, i.e. of the Pahlavi translation with glosses, commentaries and additions to bring the 'prophecies' in it up to date.<sup>82</sup> Through the translation-element in this epitome it can be seen that the *Vahman Yašt* itself incorporated ancient materials which were only partly reconciled with later ideas, in a manner characteristic of an oral literature. Thus the passage already cited from the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt*<sup>83</sup> was evidently once part of a prophecy foretelling events before the coming of Astvaṭ.ərəta; but this has been modified to refer to those before the coming of the first of the three brothers, and its introductory sentence now runs: 'Ohrmazd said to him: "O Spitamān Zardušt! I shall reveal the signs that will be at the end of your millennium".'<sup>84</sup>

<sup>78</sup> H. S. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des Alten Iran*, German transl. by H. H. Schaeder, Leipzig 1938, repr. 1966, 306.

<sup>79</sup> These are the names which are given, before Pišyōtan's, in *GBd.* XXIX. 2, cf. above, n. 70.

<sup>80</sup> It has been proposed to see the name of the first Saviour, Uxšyaṭ.ərəta, in 'Oxyartes', the Greek rendering of an Iranian name borne by a noble at the time of Alexander's conquest, see C. Bartholomae, *IF*, IX, 1899, p. 266, n. 1; G. Messina, 'Il Saušyant- nella tradizione iranica e la sua attesa', *Orientalia*, I, 1932, 170-1. It seems unlikely, however, that the doctrine of the three Saviours was established and already widely known in his parents' generation, i.e. in the first half of the fourth century. For other interpretations of the name see Justi, *Namenbuch*, 233 (followed by W. Hinz) and M. Mayrhofer, see the latter's *Iranisches Personennamenbuch*, Bd. I.1, *Die avestischen Namen* (Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften), Vienna, 1977, no. 335; and F. Grenet, 'L'ononastique iranienne à Āi Khanoum', *BCH*, CVII, 1983, 378.

<sup>81</sup> See S. K. Eddy, *The King is dead*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1961, 10 ff.

<sup>82</sup> For a characteristically judicious analysis of this text see E. W. West, *SBE*, v, lii-iv.

<sup>83</sup> Above, p. 66.

<sup>84</sup> *ZV Yt.* IV.2.

The priestly poets then had the problem of how to fill out prophecies concerning the coming of Uxšyaṭ.ərəta, who himself naturally lacked the enrichment of any ancient traditions; and, being epigonical, they inevitably adapted old materials, one of their chief measures being to detach Pišyōtan from among the comrades of Astvaṭ.ərəta, and from the other Immortals, and to make him the chief comrade and helper of the first Saošyant. It is accordingly in this role that we hear most of him, in the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt* and the other apocalyptic Pahlavi texts. In the former the prophecy runs that when Ušedar is thirty years old, then: 'I, the Creator Ohrmazd, shall send Neryōsang Yazd and the just Srōš to Kangdiz, built by the illustrious Siyāvaxš, to Čihr-mayān son of Vištāsp, restorer of the royal glory and of the true religion, to say: "O illustrious Pišyōtan! Go forth to these Iranian lands which I, Ohrmazd, created. . . . Restore to their places faith and sovereignty!" And forth will go illustrious Pišyōtan with 150 just men, who are the disciples of Pišyōtan. . . . They will advance with good thoughts, good words, good acts. They will reverence the fire and waters (with) the Hādōxt and Bayān services. And they will laud me, Ohrmazd, with the Amešaspands. Then one-third of the opposition will be shattered' (*man Dādār Ohrmazd frēstēm Neryōsang Yazd ud Srōš ahraw be kangdiz, ī siyāvaxš ī bāmīg kird, be ō čihr-mayān ī vištāspān, kayān xwarrah ud dēn ī rāst wirāstār, ku ay pešyōtan ī bāmīg frāz raw ō ēn ērān dehān ī man ohrmazd dād . . . (20) . . . abāz wirāy gāh ī dēn ud xwadāyih. . . . (22) ud frāz rawēd pišyōtan ī bāmīg abāg 150 mard ī ahlaw, kē hāwišt ī pišyōtan hēnd. . . . abāz rawēnd pad humat hūxt huwaršt. ātaxš ud abān frāz yazēnd hādōxt ud bayān yašt. frāz stāyēnd man Ohrmazd abāg amahraspandān. (23) pas az ān be škennēd petyārag se-ēvag-ē*).<sup>85</sup> The echoes here of *Yašt* 19 are striking, and there is no reason to doubt that these prophecies referred originally to the coming of Astvaṭ.ərəta rather than to that of Uxšyaṭ.ərəta, to whose time they have been transferred; indeed there is positive proof of this when Ohrmazd declares that he will summon to Pišyōtan's aid all the divine beings, who will grapple each with his predestined foe<sup>86</sup>—for this encounter, the last great battle between good and evil, belongs properly to Frašegird, i.e. to the end of the twelfth, not the tenth, millennium.<sup>87</sup> In this rather awkwardly revised version, however, we have perforce the coming of the second Saošyant to follow,<sup>88</sup> and Pišyōtan is again present in his support, this time rather vaguely, as 'high priest and spiritual chieftain of the world' (*daštwar ud rad ī gēhān*);<sup>89</sup> and only then is the coming of Astvaṭ.ərəta himself foretold, as that of the Saošyant, huddled in the surviving Pahlavi epitome into a few brief words.<sup>90</sup>

The confusions here are evidently not simply involuntary blurrings and blendings, as in the *Šāhnāme* story of Kangdiz, but rather the result of deliberate scholastic developments, and the need accordingly to rehandle and extend ancient materials. Unfortunately the huge losses of Avestan literature have brought it about that no Avestan apocalyptic texts survive from this later period. Indeed, the whole literary genre, apart from passages from the *Gāthās*

<sup>85</sup> *ZVYt.* VII.19.

<sup>86</sup> *ZVYt.* VII.27 ff.

<sup>87</sup> cf. *Yt.* 19, 95–6; *GBd.* XXXIV.27, in contrast to XXXIII.29; and *Pahl. Riv. Dd.* XLIX.18, where after his achievements at the end of the tenth millennium Pišyōtan 'will go back to Kang, until the time of Frašegird, the victory of Ohrmazd and the Amhraspands, and the smiting and conquering and destroying of Ahriman and the miscreations of the *dēvs*'.

<sup>88</sup> *ZVYt.* IX.1 ff.

<sup>89</sup> *ZVYt.* IX.11.

<sup>90</sup> *ZVYt.* IX.24.

themselves and the *Yašt* 19 verses, is represented only by a handful of Middle Persian writings which derive, directly or indirectly, from lost Avestan works. To the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt*, the *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg*, XVI–XVII, and the relevant portions of the *Zarātušt Nāme*, there can be added only a brief epitome in *Dēnkard* IX.8, together with *Greater Bundahišn* XXXIII.23–35, XXXIV, 6–33, *Wizīdagihā ī Zādspram* XXXIV, the *Pahlavi Rivāyat accompanying the Dādestān ī dēnīg* XLVIII, XLIX, and the latter part (§27 ff.) of the short text *Māh Fravardīn rōz Hordād*. In all but two of these texts (the *Dēnkard* epitome does not reach so far in time, while *Zādspram* is concerned wholly with Frašegird) Pišyōtan plays the same part at the end of the tenth millennium: that is, he comes to the aid of Ušēdar.<sup>91</sup> This development can therefore be regarded as a fixed feature of later western Iranian apocalyptic. (Very little of the small surviving body of Zoroastrian literature comes from outside Pārs, or Persia proper, and all the above texts can reasonably be supposed to have been transmitted by Persian priests.) It was accordingly hope of the coming of Ušēdar and Pešōtan together which was ardently expressed by Persian Zoroastrian priests when they wrote to their Parsi brethren during the centuries of Muslim oppression.<sup>92</sup>

Another element which apparently belongs only to the later stage of Zoroastrian apocalyptic (for there is no trace of it in the oldest literature) is the dividing up of the millennium of Zoroaster (i.e. 9,000–10,000 of the world year) into four or seven metallic ages. This theme is to be found in three of the above texts: four ages are listed in the *Dēnkard* epitome; both four and seven (through a duplication) in the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt*; <sup>93</sup> and seven in the *Zarātušt Nāme*.<sup>94</sup> In all versions it is Zoroaster himself who sees a vision of a tree with metal branches, and Ohrmazd who reveals its meaning to him. This presumably accounts for this theme being lacking in the *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg*, where the seer is Jāmāsp, and in the *Bundahišn*, and the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, which are plain narrative. The earlier version of the concept, it is generally accepted, was that of four ages, gold, silver, steel and ‘intermixed iron’. In the later version three other metals are inserted between silver and steel. It is widely held that the idea of metallic ages was adopted by western Iranians from the Greeks, since its oldest attestation is in Hesiod (with gold, silver, bronze and iron ages); and this theory of a late, foreign origin undoubtedly accords with the marked variations in applying the concept to the actual epochs of Zoroastrian and Iranian history, and with the prominence given in all versions to differing Persian notables of the Sasanian period. The story of the metallic ages lacks, that is, the consistency of the story of the future coming of Pišyōtan from Kangdiz. The latter was evidently fixed in its details through long tradition and constant re-telling, and was adapted merely by

<sup>91</sup> See, in addition to *ZVYt.*, *AJ* XVI.51; *Zarātušt Nāme*, Persian text, 77; transl., 78; *GBd.* XXXIII.28; *Pahl. Riv. Dd.* XLIX.18. In the condensed version given in *Māh Fravardīn, rōz Hordād*, 29, it is said simply that Pišyōtan ‘will come from Kangdiz to Ērānšahr and make the Mazda-worshipping faith current’ (*az Kangdiz ō Ērānšahr āyēd ud dēn ī mazdēsān rawāg kunēd*), see J. M. Jamasp-Asana (ed.), *The Pahlavi texts*, II, Bombay, 1913, 105; translit. and German transl. by J. Markwart, ‘*Das Naurōz*’, *Dr. J. J. Modi Memorial Volume*, Bombay, 1930, 750/1; but the next paragraph of this text is devoted to the appearance of Ušēdar. Cf. also the reference in *Dk.* IX.41.6 to ‘the approach of Ušēdar ī Zardušt, when the just Čīhr-mayān will arrive’.

<sup>92</sup> See M. R. Unvala, *Dārāb Hormazyār’s Rivāyat*, II, Bombay, 1922, 379.15–16; B. N. Dhabhar, *The Persian rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and others*, Bombay, 1932, 599.

<sup>93</sup> I.6–11, III.19 ff.

<sup>94</sup> Persian text, 68 ff.; transl., 66 ff.

being brought forward from the end of time to the tenth millennium, whereas the former, as an innovation, could be more freely rehandled.

The basic purpose of the Zoroastrian version of the metal ages is to illustrate the vastness of the decline from the time of the prophet (the age of gold) to a wretched present, when his followers are ruled over by infidel foreigners who harass and cruelly oppress them; and it seems very possible that the concept was adopted in western Iranian apocalyptic towards the end of the fourth century B.C., i.e. during the harsh period of the Successors' Wars. Recently, however, an attempt has been made to set its adoption later, on the assumption that the Iranians learnt of the Greek concept from a Jewish source, namely a passage in the *Book of Daniel*.<sup>95</sup> The argument runs as follows: In *Daniel* Nebuchadnezzar sees in a dream an image made in five descending stages of gold, silver, bronze, iron and 'part iron, part clay', i.e. 'the feet and toes were part potter's clay and part iron'.<sup>96</sup> This last feature, it has been said, is not to be regarded as an arbitrary invention. 'To cast a metal statue a clay core was needed. The clay was then removed. But in order to stabilize very massive hollow metal pieces or their appurtenances, such as the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's colossus, on completion the clay cores were sometimes retained.'<sup>97</sup> This realistic detail, it is suggested, was then taken over unthinkingly by the Iranian apocalypsts, and applied by them to the lowest branch of their symbolic tree, 'où il est hors de place, trahissant ainsi que Daniel était leur modèle, non l'inverse'.<sup>98</sup> Such a relationship here between the two traditions is by no means as clear or certain, however, as this statement suggests. On the one hand, learned and ingenious though the explanation of the *Daniel* passage is, it does not appear to fit the interpretation which is offered of the king's dream. 'As in your vision, the feet and toes were part potter's clay and part iron, it shall be a divided kingdom. Its core shall be partly of iron, just as you saw iron mixed with the common clay; as the toes were part iron and part clay, the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle.' A core of clay within hollow iron feet would if anything have added to their strength and resistance; it was because the two substances were actually mixed that the feet were the weak part of the great image, so that when the stone struck them they shattered, and the whole statue fell and was broken.

If then we turn, on the other hand, to the Pahlavi texts, it is to find that they in contrast specify no substance but iron, with the qualification 'intermixed'. They speak of 'the time of intermixed iron' (*āhan-abar-gumēxt āwām*),<sup>99</sup> or 'the branch . . . of intermixed iron' (*azg . . . ī āhan-abar-gumēxt*).<sup>100</sup> The latter expression is closely reproduced in the *Zarātūšt Nāme* by *šāx-i āhan-kumīxt*,<sup>101</sup> which the translator rendered as 'la branche en alliage de fer'.<sup>102</sup> This is clearly more acceptable for the attribute than 'mêlé de fer';<sup>103</sup> yet no iron alloys are known, it seems, from ancient Iran,<sup>104</sup> and would apparently be unusual anywhere. The more likely interpretation seems,

<sup>95</sup> See J. Duchesne-Guillemin, art. cit. in n. 76.

<sup>96</sup> *Daniel* 2.31 ff. (quoted here from the New English Bible).

<sup>97</sup> E. J. Bickerman, *Four strange books of the Bible*, New York, 1967, 68; cited by Duchesne-Guillemin, art. cit., pp. 758-9.

<sup>98</sup> Duchesne-Guillemin, loc. cit.

<sup>99</sup> *Dk.* IX.8.(7).1; text, Sanjana, xvii, 12; K43b, fol. 23v, l. 4.

<sup>100</sup> *ZVYt.* I.3, cf. III.19, 29 (so translated by B. T. Anklesaria).

<sup>101</sup> L. 1344 (with *kumīxt* rhyming with *gurīxt*); cf. l. 1312 (when *kumāxt* rhymes with *saxt*).

<sup>102</sup> Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>103</sup> So Duchesne-Guillemin, loc. cit.

<sup>104</sup> cf. J. W. Allan, *Persian metal technology, 700-1300 A.D.*, Oxford Oriental Monograph No. 2, London, 1979 (a reference I owe to the kindness of my colleague Dr. A. D. H. Bivar).

therefore, that *āhan-abar-gumēxt* was the Pahlavi term for iron ore or ironstone, in which the metal was still mixed naturally with dross. An ironstone age would be a vivid metaphor for a time (such as that following Alexander's conquest) when for Iranians hostile powers seemed to clog every aspect of national and religious life. Moreover, for dualist Zoroastrians the concept of a mixture of good and evil is an ever-present one, indeed the whole of this existence is characterized in their holy texts as the time of 'mixture' (*gumēzišn*), so that for them this metaphor would have had peculiar force. The concept of an ironstone age can therefore be reasonably regarded as a characteristic Zoroastrian development, under stress from real evils, of a Greek one of a fourth age of simple iron, which was in fact a prized and handsome metal; and it seems very possible (in the light of other indications of Persian influence on the Aramaic part of *Daniel*) that this Persian development was then further adapted by the unknown Jewish author when he transformed the visionary tree into a statue. The stories in *Daniel* have been assigned to c. 250 B.C., a date which accords admirably with the hypothesis that Zoroastrians themselves adopted the concept of metallic ages earlier in the Hellenistic period.

Nearly a thousand years separate the Macedonian and Arab conquests of Iran; and during this long period Avestan apocalyptic texts, reworked, it seems, after the former event, were evidently transmitted orally, and were presumably also orally translated into and commented upon in various Iranian vernaculars. The vernacular versions clearly incorporated new materials into the 'prophecies'; and in the Middle Persian texts which alone survive there is one reference to the Parthian period, or, more precisely, to the reign of the Parthian Valaxš, who was honoured even under the Sasanians for his services to the faith. To him is assigned the age of bronze (*brinj*), out of seven ages.<sup>105</sup> Naturally, however, since it is the Persian line of transmission which alone is represented in these texts,<sup>106</sup> Persian interests predominate in them, as is shown in further developments of this relatively 'new' theme of the metallic ages, with various ages being assigned, in different texts, to this or that Sasanian king or high priest. This was done, it seems, largely in the service of Persian religio-political propaganda, notably with the assigning of the copper (*rōyēn*) age to the lordship of 'Ardašīr, who will array and order the world, and that of King Šābuhr . . . , who will make salvation current within the bounds of the world, and Ādurbād of triumphant fortune, establisher of the true faith' (*Ardašīr ī gēhān ārāstār ud wirāstār, ud ān ī Šābuhr šāh . . . ī bōxtagīh pad sāmān ī gēhān rawāg kunēd, ud Ādurbād ī pērōz-baxt, ī dēn ī rāst wirāstār*).<sup>107</sup> Copper, it has been pointed out, is after gold 'le métal inaltérable par excellence',<sup>108</sup> which presumably accounts for this age being thus allotted in Sasanian tradition. In the *Dēnkard* epitome, where only four ages are given, the third is assigned to the high priest Ādurbād alone.<sup>109</sup> A detailed study still

<sup>105</sup> *ZVYt.* III.26.

<sup>106</sup> For reasons why this was so see Boyce, *Zoroastrians, their religious beliefs and practices*, London, 1979, 116–17, 161–5.

<sup>107</sup> *ZVYt.* III.25. On the deliberate interweaving of political with religious propaganda in the Sasanian period see, e.g., Boyce, *op. cit.*, 126–8, 142.

<sup>108</sup> Annette Destrée, 'Quelques réflexions sur le héros des récits apocalyptiques persans et sur le mythe de la ville de cuivre', in *La Persia nel Medioevo, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Rome, 1971, p. 649, n. 23.

<sup>109</sup> *Dk.* IX.8.4. The attempt made by Duchesne-Guillemin, *art. cit.* in n. 76, pp. 755, 757, to use this *Dk.* reference to Ādurbād to date the *Sūdgar Nask* itself to the fourth century A.D. is plainly ill-advised. The *Dk.* epitome derives from the MP Zand of the lost Avestan *nask*, and not from the Avestan original.



needs to be made of the reasons for this prelate's prominence and lasting fame ; but there is some evidence to suggest that his descendants held the highest priestly office in Persia for many generations, being thus able no doubt to uphold his reputation ; and it may also be that the Zurvanites, dominant, it seems, in Sasanian times, exalted him thus as their most effective champion.

Another instance of the use of an apocalyptic theme in the interests of contemporary propaganda is the prophecy that Pišyōtan, when he returns, will champion the temple cult of fire against that of image worship,<sup>110</sup> i.e. this ancient hero is represented as a supporter of the Sasanian iconoclastic movement.<sup>111</sup> Attributing this role to him is yet another testimony to the prominence which he had attained, as companion to Ušēdar, in the post-Achaemenian apocalyptic tradition.

Other developments of this period seem to partake of both political and religious prophecy, in that they apparently reflect secular events at a late and troubled period of Sasanian history, when ' the terrible threats of war from all directions induced the feeling in the Iranian population that the last days foretold in the sacred books had arrived '.<sup>112</sup> So the historical figure of the sixth-century rebel, the heroic Bahrām Čōbēn, merges, it seems, both with the greater figure of Bahrām (Vərəθraγna), *gazata* of Victory, who will one day come to the aid of Ušēdar, and also with the concept of the immortal hero, so that even at this late date he, like Pišyōtan himself, becomes thought of as one of Ušēdar's comrades.<sup>113</sup> The ancient apocalyptic themes thus continued evidently living and effective after so many centuries.

By this time some at least of the apocalyptic texts had been written down, probably losing then much of their poetic quality through being recited from memory at slow dictation speed, without accompanying music.<sup>114</sup> The Pahlavi Zand still remained capable, however, of undergoing development, after the Arab conquest brought new sufferings and oppression, and so furnished fresh details for lamentations over the ironstone age ; and it was not, it seems, until the ninth century A.D. that the *Zand ī Vahman Yašt* and the *Ayādgar ī Jāmāspīg* were set down in their final, fixed forms. They and the other surviving Pahlavi and Persian texts can represent only a tiny proportion of what had once existed of Zoroastrian apocalyptic literature ; but their basic accord among themselves, and with the older Avestan material, suggests that they are broadly representative of the genre. Their witness may therefore be accepted to the fact that all Zoroastrian apocalyptic takes its essential inspiration from Zoroaster's own vision of the course and purposes of human life, and the events of the Last Day ; and this was one of the factors which helped to convince that great historian of religion, W. Bousset, of the priority of Zoroastrian to Jewish apocalyptic, and its influence on the latter. He wrote : ' Für den Messiasglauben des späthellenistischen Judentums . . . liegt das Problem klar :

<sup>110</sup> *ZVYt.* VII.26, 36-7; *Gbd.* XXXIII.28.

<sup>111</sup> On which see M. Boyce, ' Iconoclasm among the Zoroastrians ', in *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman cults, Studies for Morton Smith at sixty*, ed. J. Neusner, Leiden, 1975, IV, 93-111. The same iconoclastic role is assigned in the *ZVYt.* to Pišyōtan's kinsman and fellow Immortal, Kai Xosrow.

<sup>112</sup> K. Czeglédý, ' Bahrām Čōbēn and the Persian apocalyptic literature ', *Acta Orient. Hung.*, VIII, 1958, 36.

<sup>113</sup> In the Persian *Rivāyats* (op. cit. in n. 92) the Persian priests look for the coming of Pešōtan and ' Bahrām the Strong (Hamāvand) ' together at the end of the present millennium, see Unvala, II, 390.8-9, Dhabhar, 606. On Bahrām Čōbēn and Sasanian apocalyptic see further Czeglédý, art. cit., and Destrée, art. cit. in n. 108.

<sup>114</sup> The lost *Vahman Yašt* may be presumed to have been a verse-text, like *Yašt* 19. That the *Jāmāsp Nāmag* was in verse was first established by E. Benveniste, ' Une apocalypse pehlevie : le *Jāmāsp-Nāmak* ', *RHR*, 106, 1932, 340 ff.

Wie kommt es, dass der Messias ebenso wie die Gottheit im Gegensatz zur vorexilischen Zeit eine überweltliche Grösse geworden ist und im Zusammenhang mit einer transzendentalen Eschatologie und einem sittlich-religiösen Dualismus steht? Aus einer rein innerisraelitischen Entwicklung ist das deshalb nur sehr schwer zu erklären, weil die grossen religiösen Persönlichkeiten fehlen, denen man einen solchen Fortschritt der Weltanschauung zutrauen könnte. So gewiss das Judentum einer solchen Entwicklung aus eigenen Kräften zustrebte und die Vorbedingungen dafür aufwies, so wahrscheinlich ist doch von vornherein ein fremder Einschlag. Nun haben wir andererseits in der iranischen Religion eine transzendente Eschatologie und einen sittlich-religiösen Dualismus schon in den ältesten Schichten der Gathas, einen hochstehenden Glauben, den wir auf die Persönlichkeit eines Zarathustra zurückführen können.<sup>115</sup>

Zoroaster is not only the fountain-head of Iranian apocalyptic, but also the first known millenarian in the wider sense of that term;<sup>116</sup> and this fact contributes to making the date of c. 1000 B.C. (which is currently that most frequently postulated for him) appear too late. This date would set him at a time when the great Iranian migrations were well in progress, and when his people would have been taking part in the successful adventure of entering into and dominating new territories; and revolutionary millenarianism, as has been shown, is a type of salvation-belief which has arisen characteristically 'against a background of disaster', when rapidly changing social conditions have caused suffering and disorientation for a minority, and have brought forth a prophet who assures them of the compensation of triumphant happiness in a time to come.<sup>117</sup> Zoroastrianism is in fact the archetypal millenarian faith, to which most subsequent millenarian movements may well owe a historical debt;<sup>118</sup> and it is wholly unlikely that it arose in circumstances utterly different from those which are common to all the rest. When therefore the other pieces of evidence are also taken into consideration—the social and linguistic evidence furnished by the *Gāthās* themselves,<sup>119</sup> the details of Zoroaster's dogmatic theology,<sup>120</sup> the great apparent gap in time between the *Gāthās* and the oldest Younger Avestan texts in their surviving form—the

<sup>115</sup> W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*, 3rd ed., ed. H. Gressmann, Tübingen, 1926, 480.

<sup>116</sup> For an admirably terse and lucid analysis of this wider usage see Norman Cohn, 'Medieval millenarism: its bearing on the comparative study of millenarian movements', in *Millennial dreams in action: essays in comparative study*, ed. S. L. Thrupp, The Hague, 1962, 31.

<sup>117</sup> For a learned summary see *ibid.*, 32–9; and cf. the fuller treatment in the introduction and conclusion to the 2nd ed. of his *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, Oxford, 1970.

<sup>118</sup> This thought I owe to Professor Cohn himself, to whom I am indebted for illuminating discussions of this aspect of Zoroastrianism.

<sup>119</sup> To earlier studies of the linguistic evidence can be added that of P. Friedrich, *Proto-Indo-European syntax*, Butte, Montana, 1975, 44–6 (cited by B. Lincoln, *Priests, warriors and cattle*, University of California Press, [1983], p. 49, n. 1). For the social evidence see recently Boyce, 'The bipartite society of the ancient Iranians', in *Societies and languages of the ancient Near East: studies in honour of I. M. Diakonoff*, ed. M. A. Dandamayev *et al.*, London, 1982, 33–7. Against the views set out in this article it has been argued that the evidence for a tripartite division of proto-I.E. society is too strong to be set aside; and that, since various Indo-European peoples had attested tripartite social divisions from the Bronze Age onwards, a continuity can be assumed. But this is not necessarily the case. When the proto-Indo-Iranians moved out, it seems, on to the Inner Asian steppes they left apparently a farming for a semi-nomadic life; and nomads do not usually have rigid social divisions. Later steppe societies, in which everyone rode on horseback, were strikingly egalitarian; and even if the evidence of the *Gāthās* were lacking, it would be reasonable to suppose that earlier ones, in which everyone walked on foot, were equally so. The probability of a development from tripartite proto-I.E. farming society > bipartite proto-Indo-Iranian pastoral society > tripartite Indo-Aryan and Iranian Bronze Age societies is strengthened by the lack of a common social terminology in the two latter groups.

<sup>120</sup> See most recently Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism*, II, 3–4.

strong likelihood appears that Zoroaster conceived his vision of God's purposes during what was evidently a violent and revolutionary period in ancient Iranian history, namely the coming of the age of bronze, when radical social change brought pillage and slaughter to the weakest and least progressive of the Iranian tribes. The most likely date would therefore seem to be between 1400 and 1200 B.C.,<sup>121</sup> both for the prophet himself and hence for the birth of Iranian apocalyptic, which would thus be at least a thousand years older than Jewish apocalyptic.

As a means of summing up, the history of Zoroastrian apocalyptic is set out in the following table, with necessarily approximate dates :

c. 1400 B.C.	Zoroaster's own apocalyptic vision.
c. 1200 B.C.	Belief established in a World Saviour, the Saošyant, Zoroaster's son, to be born miraculously of a virgin towards the end of time.
c. 1000 B.C.	Development of the legend of the immortal Piši.šyaoθna, as one of the Saošyant's comrades.
c. 400 B.C.	Concept evolved of a world-year of 12 millennia. Belief fostered thereafter in three successive Saviours, all sons of Zoroaster by virgin mothers. Pišyōtan now seen as comrade of the first of these Saviours.
c. 300 B.C.	Concept of metallic ages adopted, probably from the Greeks. Oral compilation of the Avestan <i>Vahman Yašt</i> .
c. 200 B.C. onwards	Oral translation of Avestan apocalyptic works into Middle Iranian vernaculars.
c. A.D. 600	New developments in oral apocalyptic through Middle Persian (Pahlavi) translations with glosses and commentaries, during troubled late Sasanian period.
A.D. 700-900	Further development of oral apocalyptic during aftermath of Arab conquest.
A.D. 850-900	Final writing down of Middle Persian Zand of some apocalyptic texts. Hope in the coming Saviour continuing thereafter to sustain the oppressed adherents of the faith.

<sup>121</sup> Professor I. M. Diakonoff has stressed to me by letter that the Bronze Age war-chariot, with which the prophet seems to have been familiar, was not apparently known at least in Central Asia before c. 1400. The concept of weapons as being generically of stone could of course have persisted long after the first use of bronze weaponry. Indeed the relative scarcity and costliness of metal brought it about that even the Mongols used bone or horn arrowheads as well as ones of iron, see D. Sinor, 'The Inner Asian Warrior', *JAOS*, 101, 1981, 140. Nevertheless the other considerations already discussed make it seem unlikely that the prophet should be dated to later than c. 1400-1200 B.C.