



AĠRĒRAṬ

AĠRĒRAṬ (Av. Ayrāeraθa), Turanian warrior and brother of Afrāsīāb (in the older and more reliable copies of the *Šāh-nāma*, including the Florence ms. of 614/1217, the final letter is correctly *t*; in later mss. it has changed to *ṭ*, as in the case of Kayōmarṭ and Ṭahmōraṭ). In the Avesta Aġrēraṭ is mentioned in several passages. In *Yašt* 9.18 it is said that Haoma, the *yazad* or genius of the plant *haoma*, offered sacrifice to the goddess Drvāspā so that he might chain Afrāsīāb and deliver him to Kavi Haosravah (Pers. Kay Kōsrow), who would slay him to avenge the blood of Syāvaršan (Pers. Sīāvoš) and the valiant Ayrāeraθa (cf. *Šāh-nāma*, ed. Mohl, I, pp. 430-31). In *Yašt* 17.42 Kavi Haosravah asks the same boon from the goddess Aši, and in *Yašt* 19.77 we read that he carried out his wish. In *Yašt* 13.127, sacrifice is offered to Ayrāeraθa's *fravaši* and to those of other Zoroastrian saints. His name (*ayraē + raθa*) means "[one whose] chariot [goes] ahead" (but see Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta*, Paris, 1892-93, II, p. 436, n. 23 for other possibilities). His recurrent epithet in the Avesta is *narava*, possibly "manly, brave" (but see Darmesteter, loc. at.; Ch. Bartholomae, *AirWb.*, col. 1053; and A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, Paris, 1928, p. 30, who take the word as the designation of his clan). No mention is made in the Avesta of his blood relation to Afrāsīāb. Although the Avesta does not elaborate on his legend, it is obvious that he was considered a victim of Afrāsīāb, and probably belonged to the cycle of Sīāvoš's legends. Later sources, however, which amplify the Avestan data, place the episode of his death prior to the appearance of Sīāvoš.

According to the *Šāh-nāma* (I, pp. 389ff.), Ṭa'ālebī's *Gōrar* (pp. 111ff.), and the



Bundahišn (tr., 35.17; tr. E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts I*, SBE, Oxford, 1880, p. 117), AġrĒraṭ was a son of Pařang and a brother of Afrāsiāb and Garsĕvaz (q.v.). Although a Turanian, he is treated in the Avestan and Pahlavi texts as a Zoroastrian saint. In the *Šāh-nāma* he is fairly prominent in the early stages of the struggle between Afrāsiāb and Iran; his first appearance occurs when Pařang, sensing the weakness in the Iranian kingdom, appoints his son Afrāsiāb to attack Iran at the head of a powerful army. AġrĒraṭ as a man of peace and reconciliation, cautions against the war but is ignored (I, p. 390). In his second appearance he is able to save the lives of 1,200 Iranian soldiers captured by Afrāsiāb by persuading the latter to allow him to take them into his own custody (I, p. 424). According to the *Bundahišn* (35.23), when Afrāsiāb captured Manōčehr and the Iranian warriors in the Padařxwār mountains (in Ṭabarestān) and let loose pestilence and want upon them; AġrĒraṭ prayed for and received a boon from God (*yazdān*) to save the Iranian captives from hardship, and for that reason Afrāsiāb slew him. But the *Šāh-nāma* places the episode after the reign of Manōčehr; Nōdar, Manōčehr's successor, is defeated, seized, and killed by Afrāsiāb, and 1,200 of his warriors are taken captive (I, p. 410; on the discrepancies here between the *Šāh-nāma* and the majority of the sources, see supra, p. 572). Later some of Afrāsiāb's generals suffer defeat and the Iranian captives fear for their lives because of his wrath; they appeal to AġrĒraṭ their constant friend and a supporter of peace. He is reluctant to gainsay Afrāsiāb openly, but he agrees to retreat and leave the prisoners behind so that they can be saved if an Iranian army attacks. This plan is followed and Kařvād, the Iranian general, takes the prisoners with him from Sārī to Ray (I, pp. 426-30). Learning of this, Afrāsiāb flies into a rage and cuts his brother in two with his sword. Though the Avesta agrees with later sources on the general lines of AġrĒraṭ's legend, it makes no reference to the Iranian prisoners. According to the *Bundahišn* (tr., 35.23), in recompense for AġrĒraṭ's good deed, God gave him a son called Gōbad-šāh, who, in Pahlavi books, is counted among the Zoroastrian immortals (for sources, see Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, pp. 153ff.). There is some confusion about Gōbad-šāh, since according to another passage in the *Bundahišn* (tr., 29.5; West, p. 117), this title belongs to AġrĒraṭ himself, and according to *Mĕnōg ī xrad* (62.31-36), Gōbad-šāh is a man-bull. See [Gōbad-šāh](#).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Justi, *Namenbuch*, s.v. AghraeÂ;ratha. Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, pp. 56-57.