

7. THE THEORY OF SOUL AND THE INITIATIVE OF THE AVESTA.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—With regard to Professor Mills' paper on the Avesta, and your own on the Upanishads, will you allow me to make the following observations.

Against M. Darmesteter's later views as to the age of the Avesta may be urged—firstly, the archaic nature of the language of the book, many of the Gāthās differing little from pure Sanskrit; and secondly, the fact that the parallelisms between Vēdic and Avestic thought are found precisely in those passages of the Avesta and the Rig-Veda which, alike by Iranian and Indian scholars, are admitted to be the oldest. I refer especially to such as deal with ethical concepts, with Rita and Asha, Riju and Ratu, Vrijinā and Vareza, and to those Gāthās and Sūktas which represent the moral aspects of the Ādityas and Amesha Speñtas.

As to the absorbing question of Zarathustra, despite all that has been said to the contrary, there seems little reason to doubt that he was born at Ragha, not far from Tihrān, and appeared as the prophet of Magism under King Vistāspa. Amongst future chroniclers there will doubtless be sceptics who will contend that the great English statesman who has lately left the sphere of his labours was but a pillar of Hercules or the Stone of the glory of Heaven (*Ἡρακλῆς* = Svargaśravas), and this by the same arguments as Prof. Kern seeks to show that the Iranian prophet was only a humanized Hesperus!

Turning now to your own article, may I venture to suggest that it would have been helpful had you in each case given us the Sanskrit term to which you referred. We find at least four equivalents of 'soul' in the Upanishads, namely, *jīva*, *sūkṣma-śarīra*, *puruṣa*, and *ātman*. All friends of folklore will be particularly grateful for the mode of dealing with the subject adopted by you. And though my own interest in these ancient treatises is for the most part a philosophical one, I should like, from your standpoint, to institute a comparison between the Upanishad doctrine and that of the Avesta.

The words used to express 'soul' in the Avesta are five: *Fravashi*, *ushtāna*, *aḡhva*, *baodhaḡh*, and *urvan*.

Of the first of these, namely, *Fravashi*, there is no exact counterpart in the Upanishads, though in some respects it may be compared with *sūksma-śarīra*. Phonetically it is equivalent to *pravriiddhi*, and would seem to indicate the expansion of the supreme spiritual principle. It is the spiritual archetype of every man, without beginning and without end, attaching itself to the body at birth, wholly independently of *urvan* and *baodhaḡh*, and leaving it at death. There is a mystical utterance about children in the New Testament which may well remind us of the *Fravashis*. The Master said: "Their *angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

The term *ushtāna* (= Skr. *utthāna*) is the vital principle which maintains the functional activities of the senses, and corresponds to *jīva*. It is an enlargement of *ushta*, 'health, well-being, salvation,' from \sqrt{sta} and *ud*, and implies full enjoyment of all the faculties. In close conceptual relationship to this is the word *aḡhva*, which is the Bactrian form of *asu*, and sometimes means self, but oftener the seat of life, as *prāna* is used in the Upanishads.

Baodhaḡh is partly *viññāna* and partly *manas*, but in either case it represents man's psychical force and nature.

Lastly, we have *urvan*, which expresses the characterizing individuality, the consciousness of responsibility in man. At death the *Urvan* has to give account of itself on the *Ciṁvaḍ* bridge, and, according to the verdict of the Judges, goes either to heaven or to hell. The word comes from \sqrt{var} , 'to wish, choose,' so that we should not be far wrong in describing it as the faculty of volition. In the Avesta there is a great deal about the *Geus Urvan* or *Animal Soul*. The song contained in the 29th *Hā* of the *Yasna* consists of a dialogue between *Geus Urvan* (*Goshurun*), the *Ox-Soul*, the personification of life, here appearing as the guardian of all things living, on the one side, and *Ahura* and *Asha* on the other. The soul of the ox complains to the Creator of the persecution suffered by all creatures here below at

the hands of demons; whereupon Ahura Mazda turns to Asha for advice on the subject. The latter then declares that he himself is supreme ruler and Lord of all, but there is no consolation until Ahura Mazda announces to Goshurun the coming of Zarathustra. Though not wholly satisfied with this, Goshurun nevertheless thenceforth submits to the will of Ahura.

In conclusion, it is worthy of note that, among other Vēdic and Avestic contrasts, whereas according to the Upanishad doctrine the soul when in deep sleep goes into *Svarga* or *Brahma-loka* (heaven), according to Zoroastrian lore it goes into *acisto aḡhus* (hell), because in the one case sleep is attributed to the Good Spirit and in the other to the Bad.—Yours faithfully,

HERBERT BAYNES.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

[Mr. Baynes raises a large question. Dissatisfaction with the ordinary soul theory led, no doubt, in widely separated countries, to its being supplemented by other theories. In India, also, there were such other theories, and about 1,500 years after the date of the books I was discussing these were worked up into an elaborate system by Śaṅkara. If in the Avesta similar theories had already been worked up into a similarly elaborate system, that would be very suggestive as to the date of the Avesta. Of the five Avesta words explained by Mr. Baynes, only *urvan* seems to belong to the soul theory proper. It would be very interesting, if documents are available, to have a history of all five; and also of the four Indian terms referred to. The *sūkṣma-śarīra* was not born till many centuries after the time I was dealing with. *Jīva* does occur at that time in the sense of 'alive, living'; or, as substantive, 'life.' Jacob gives five passages from the Chāndogya and one from the Kāṭhaka. In none of them does the word mean 'soul'; in three of them the reference is to a tree. *Puruṣa* occurs frequently in the sense of 'man, human.' The word whose meaning I discussed was *ātman*.—R.H. D.]