

Ancient Origins and Homelands

When I speak of Iran, I refer, not to the political boundaries of present day Iran, but to all the lands in which ancient Iranian languages and dialects were spoken.¹ According to Kent, these lands included the territories bounded in the south, by the Persian Gulf, in the West by Mesopotamia, Armenia, and the Caucasus Mountains, and lands to the east of the Caspian Sea, extending far north of the present boundaries of Iran and Afghanistan, into the Pamir plateau of Turkestan, and thence in the east, approximately along the course of the Indus River to the Indian ocean. These are the lands that spoke ancient Iranian languages, and even today, these lands approximate the area of Iranian speaking peoples ~ although at all times there have been pockets of non-Iranian speech within the area, and islands of Iranian speech outside it.²

According to linguists, many of the languages of Europe, Iran, and India derived, or evolved, from an ancient parent language the existence of which they have conjectured (based on linguistics and some archeological evidence) and called 'Proto-Indo-European' (which they abbreviate as 'PIE').³

How and when these proto-Indo-European people split into multiple tribes, and their migrations, have been the subject of much conjecture, based on sparse archeological and abundant but complicated linguistic evidence.⁴

We do know however, that from these Indo-European beginnings flowed a subgroup called the Indo-Iranians who migrated into Iranian territories and further south east into India. We know that this is so, because of various bits and pieces of evidence which establish that the ancient peoples of Iran and North India shared a common tribal ancestry. Here are a few of these pieces of evidence.

1. The people of the Vedic and Avestan texts, and Old Persian inscriptions, called themselves Aryas (Ved. *ārya-*, Av. *airya-*, Old Persian *ariya*) which has sometimes been translated as 'friend', and sometimes as 'noble',⁵ ~ in character, not as in an aristocracy,⁶ ~ representing perhaps the qualities they valued, their ideals. There is no direct evidence that the parent Indo-European tribe or any of its other branches also called themselves 'Arya',⁷ (although a close PIE root has been conjectured and traced to other PIE descendant languages) so it is unlikely that they did, but we do not know for certain.
2. The Avestan concept *aša-* is the Vedic *ṛta*, (Old Persian *arta*). Therefore, in some form, the concept of a 'true, (correct) order of existence' was an Indo-Iranian concept,⁸ which Zarathushtra adopted and re-thought, or re-visualized, in his system of thought.⁹
3. There is no dispute among linguists that the most archaic form of Sanskrit, called 'Old Indic' (Vedic) by linguists and Avestan are very close languages.

Beekes (1988) tells us that,

"... Gatha Avestan ... is the oldest form of Iranian; ... it is as archaic as Sanskrit, ... It is even more archaic than Sanskrit in that it preserves systematically the PIE laryngeals."¹⁰

Moulton (1912) states "the closeness of Vedic and Later Avestan is well seen in the identity ..." of certain Vedic and Younger Avestan words, indicating Darmesteter's concurrence.¹¹

Jackson 1892 sees Avestan and Vedic as two distinct, but very closely related languages, and says that "Almost any Sanskrit word may be changed at once into its Avestan equivalent, or vice versa, merely by applying certain phonetic laws..." and gives us examples of the similarities between so many Avestan and Vedic Skt. words.¹² Here are a few examples. There are many, many more.

	Avestan	Vedic (Old Indic)
'of wisdom'	<i>x ratəuš</i>	<i>krātōs</i>
'he becomes'	<i>bavaiti</i>	<i>bhāvati</i>
'whole'	<i>haurva-</i>	<i>sárva-</i>
'sun'	<i>hvarə-</i>	<i>svàr</i>
'plant, ritual drink, deity'	YAv. <i>haoma-</i>	<i>soma</i>

But a word of caution. Although as a general proposition, the meanings of Vedic and Avestan words are very close, sometimes such meanings can be quite different.¹³

4. The ancient peoples of Iran and India shared some common legendary heroes. For example,

The legendary hero Jamshid of the Persian Shahnamah, is Yima son of Vivanghvat, in Avestan texts,¹⁴ and Yama son of Vivasvat in Indic texts.¹⁵

The legendary hero Fareidun of the Persian Shahnamah, is Thraetaona of the Athwya family in Avestan texts,¹⁶ and Traitana in Indic texts.¹⁷

5. The ancient peoples of Iran and India shared certain common rituals and deities.¹⁸ Fire was a central symbol in the rituals of both these peoples. So too was the Av. *haoma*, Ved. *soma* which was both a ritual drink, and an Arya deity. Mills in his introduction to the Yasna 9 states,

"... H(a)oma = Soma, as a deity, flourished not only before the Gathas, but before the Riks of the Veda, in Aryan ages before Iranian and Indian became two peoples."¹⁹

Airyaman was an Indo-Iranian deity, characterizing friendship, joy, good health and healing.²⁰ We often find that certain 'deities' (for want of a better word) are also various aspects of the material existence. For example, fire (Av. *atar-* Ved. *agni*) was both the material fire, and also its spiritual essence, a 'deity'. The tribe, *arya* had its spiritual essence Airyaman personifying qualities which were valued by the Arya tribe ~ friendship, a joy in living, good health, healing et cetera.

One of the Indo-Iranian words for a 'god' was the Vedic *devá*,²¹ Old Avestan *daēva*- (whose worship Zarathushtra rejects in the Gathas). Various Indo-European names for 'god' were various forms of the Avestan *baga*- (masc.) / *bagā*- (fem.).²²

In short, there is ample evidence, and no dispute (among scholars and linguists), that the people of the Vedas and the people of ancient Iran shared a common ancestry which was the Arya tribe,²³ which in turn through many ancestral links originated from the Indo-European tribe.

Airyena Vaejah, the homeland of the Iranian Aryas.

The term 'homeland' is itself a relative term, depending on the time period and perspective of a given tribe (or person). We do not know what the original 'homeland' of the Indo-European tribes may have been (although there is much speculation about it), or what they called those lands. As for the Iranian Aryas, the YAv. texts (nostalgically) call their ancient homeland, Airyena Vaejah²⁴ (Pahl. Iran Vej), meaning (perhaps) the stem-land of the Aryas.²⁵

But this may not have been one local area. By the time of the YAv. texts, many persons and events which (for them) were shrouded in the mists of antiquity (including Zarathushtra!)²⁶ were said to have lived, or occurred, in Airyena Vaejah, including many legendary Indo-Iranian heroes.

No one knows for certain where this stem-land of the Aryas, Airyena Vaejah, was located. Probably in a mountainous region, with wide fertile valleys. Some Younger Avestan texts contain long lists of mountains.²⁷ The Younger Avestan *Zamyad Yasht* informs us that these mountains totalled 2,244.²⁸ The Yasht in honor of Mithra (a deity of the Indo-Iranian peoples) contains the following description of sunrise on the Hara mountain range,

"... the undying, swift-horsed sun, who foremost in a golden array, takes hold of the beautiful summits, and from thence looks over the abode of the Aryans with a beneficent eye. ... where the high mountains, rich in pastures and waters, yield plenty to the cattle; ...".²⁹

And one of the most common epithets of this same Indo-Iranian deity Mithra is 'one who has (or provides) wide cattle pastures'.³⁰ So here we have a homeland of the Aryas which had mountains that were rich in pastures and waters. These people may have been semi-nomadic, moving between valleys in winter and summer grasslands for grazing their herds of cattle and horses, in their 'wide pastures'. The Gathas frequently mention cattle and horses, and in one verse a camel. No sheep are mentioned in the Gathas. The Younger Avestan texts on the other hand frequently mention horses, cattle, and sheep, both as offerings to various deities,³¹ and as rewards for so worshipping ("Horses multiply a thousandfold, flocks multiply a thousandfold; ...").³²

Was Airyena Vaejah a real place from which the Aryas migrated? It probably was. In Avestan texts it is referred to as an existing place or locality, with the kind of small details that argue for authenticity in an age when bardic traditions required stories to be repeated and passed on from one generation to the next, and the listeners heard with satisfaction each detail (which they were used to). Naturally

one wonders: If Airyena Vaejah was such a great place, why did the Indo-Iranian tribe(s) migrate away from it to Iran and India?

Possibly because of the pressures of increased population. A very late YAv. text tells us that Airyena Vaejah, was the first of the good lands created by Ahura Mazda beside the good river Daitya.³³ The ancient homeland was ruled by Yima, and was a place with a temperate climate ~ "neither cold wind nor hot wind"³⁴ ~ and full of "flocks and herds". The story goes on to say that,

"Thus, under the sway of Yima, three hundred winters passed away, and the earth was replenished with flocks and herds, with men and dogs and birds, and with red blazing fires, and there was no more room for flocks, herds and men."³⁵

This (we are told) occurred three times, and each time Yima "stepped forward, towards the luminous space, southwards, to meet the sun," and magically enlarged the earth so that there was room for everything again.³⁶ If we look past the magic, this text was probably recording a number of migrations "southwards" due to population increases.

But the migration away from the original (or expanded) homeland was also necessitated by what may have been a glacial period. The story states that there came a time when Ahura Mazda warned Yima that the land would be plunged into "fatal winters". The YAv. texts had no hesitation at all in quoting Ahura Mazda, as though they had ready access to his actual words (usually to give authority to their own man-made religious practices and ideas). But here, this technique was just a way of narrating a story, as we see in the story-telling traditions of so many peoples in many places around the world.

"22. And Ahura Mazda spake unto Yima saying:

'O fair Yima, son of Vivanghat! Upon the material world the fatal winters are going to fall, that shall bring the fierce, foul frost; upon the material world the fatal winters are going to fall, that shall make the snow-flakes fall thick, even an *aredvi* deep on the highest tops of mountains.

23. And all the three sorts of beasts shall perish, those that live in the wilderness, and those that live on the tops of the mountains, and those that live in the bosom of the dale, under the shelter of stables.'³⁷

Then the cold swept down. And its grip was iron indeed.³⁸ We are told how this period of "fatal winters" changed Airyena Vaejah ~ even in summer.

"There are ten winter months there, two summer months; and those are cold for the waters, cold for the earth, cold for the trees. Winter falls there, with the worst of plagues."³⁹

Anthony 2007 says that such a glacial period ~ the coldest within the past 2,000 years ~ did in fact occur for a period of 140 yaers ,from around 3960 to 3821 BCE, based on archeological evidence.⁴⁰ Suffice it to say, the Aryas had to migrate to find a place warm enough to survive. They migrated to ancient Iran where they became so numerous that, over time, they settled in various far flung regions

of that area and came to be known as various peoples, such as the Medes, the Scythians, the Mittanis, the Soghdians, the Parthians, the Parsua, and many others. According to an essay in the Cambridge History of Iran, all the Indo-Iranian tribes from Scythia to India, "without exception" called themselves Aryas,⁴¹ their common origin being demonstrated through their various deities, legendary heroes, and languages ~ all of which were in the Indo-Iranian family of languages.

These various peoples in turn became further divided into different tribes, and clans within tribes. For example, according to Herodotus, the Medes (an Arya people), were divided into six tribes.⁴² In the same way, we are told (according to Herodotus) "Now the Persian nation is made of many tribes ... the principal ones on which all the others are dependent ... are the Pasargadae, the Maraphians, and the Maspian, of which the Pasargadae are the noblest," and the Achaemenids "from whom spring all the Perseid kings form one of their [the Pasargadae] clans."⁴³

So the Iranian Aryas (originally a tribe) divided into various nation tribes, which in turn divided into additional tribes and clans ~ not unlike the Celts, who originally came from a part of Europe, migrated to Ireland, Scotland and parts of England, where in turn their various families became clans.⁴⁴ In Scotland and Ireland, as these family clans grew, they in turn contained septs (smaller clans, within the family of a larger clan).

So in effect, what originally was one tribe ~ the Indo-Iranian Aryas ~ divided into the Indic and the Iranian tribes, and the latter subdivided further to form a multiplicity of tribes which came to be nations or peoples, each of which in turn became divided into a multiplicity of tribes within the framework of their individual nations ~ using the word 'nations' to mean peoples, rather than their political governments.

This one ancestral tribe ~ the Indo-Europeans ~ which generated (among others) the Indo-Iranian tribe, which in turn generated the Iranian Aryas and its subdivisions, was Zarathushtra's genesis and has some relevance in ascertaining Zarathushtra's date.

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¹ Kent identifies the "Old Iranian languages" as Old Persian, Avestan, and some others which are less known, including Median, Carduchi ("presumably the linguistic ancestor of modern Kurdish"), Parthian, Soghdian, and Scythian. Kent (1950) *ibid.* § 2, p. 6. In his book *Cylinder Seals*, H. Frankfort also identifies the Mittanis as Indo-Europeans who migrated to Assyrian lands and were "rapidly absorbed by the native population", pp. 275 - 276; and pp. 262 - 263.

² Kent 1950 *Old Persian*, § 2, p. 6.

Kent classifies the lands as follows ~ but at the point in time of the Behistan Inscriptions of Darius the Great: *Indo-Iranian provinces.*

Persia (Parsa), Media (including the famed Raga), Parthia, Arachosia (Harauvatish), Bactria (including Margiana), Akaufaka (including Chorasmia, Gandaritis, Sattagydia, Daha (Daae), Maka, Scythia (Saka), Soghdiana, Aria (Haraiva), and Sind (Hidush).

Semitic provinces.

Babylonia, Assyria and Syria, and Arabia.

Kent, (1950), pp. 55 - 56.

However, the Mittanis, an Arya tribe, settled in Assyria long before the time of the Achaemenians.

Kent classifies Elam and Armenia separately (p. 56). Although according to Anthony 2007, (p. 12) Armenian is a descendant of PIE.

Kent also classifies separately "Provinces of Asia Minor and Southeastern Europe (p. 56). I think at least some of these would have been descendants of PIE.

Afghanistan was an Indo-Iranian land. I think one of its ancient names was Ariana but I am not sure ~ possibly included in "Aria (Haraiva).

But Kent's list of Indo-Iranian lands reflects only what is mentioned in the Achaemenian Old Persian inscriptions ~ capturing a moment in time. Many other tribes over long periods of time, both before and after the Achaemenians, have been identified (mostly by their language) as Indo-Iranian. For example, the Mittanis have been called an Arya tribe. Their royal names, belief in cosmic order (*ṛta*), certain deities, and words related to horses and chariotry, were almost identical with Old Indic names and words, but with the passage of time, following their migrations over the Middle East, their everyday language became the language(s) of the indigenous peoples (D. W. Anthony 2007 pp. 49 - 50; H. Frankfort 1939, *Cylinder Seals*, (reprinted Gregg Press 1965).

³ Anthony 2007 pp. 3 - 20. To give you some idea of the scope of related languages that evolved from the conjectured Proto-Indo-European (PIE) language, the following may be of interest. Anthony has a wonderful diagram (p. 12), which shows (based on similarities in language, grammar, and the rules of linguistic development) that the conjectured PIE language engendered groups of "daughter languages" which in turn engendered additional branches of languages, roughly as follows,

- ~ Tocharian (in regions of western China),
- ~ Indo-Iranian which generated the Indic and Iranian languages, among the latter he shows Avestan, Persian, Soghdian, Kurdish, Baluchi and Pashto but in fact numerous other languages in India are of Indo-Iranian descent).
- ~ Anatolian
- ~ Armenian
- ~ Hellenic which generated Greek,
- ~ Phrygian,
- ~ Albanian
- ~ Italic which generated Latin which generated Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, French, Italian, Rumanian, and some others,
- ~ Celtic, which generated the languages of Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, Wales and others,
- ~ Germanic, which generated the languages of Germany, Holland, England, the Scandanavian countries and others,
- ~ Baltic, which generated Old Prussian, Lithuanian and Latvian,
- ~ Slavic, which generated
 - ~ West Slavic (Polish, Czech, and others)
 - ~ South Slavic (Old Church Slavonic, Slovene, Macedonian, Bulgarian and others) and
 - ~ East Slavic, (Russian, Byelorussian, Ukranian).

One can only wonder at the breadth of research and scholarship that went into determining the relationship between so many languages of today, their various ancestors (through inscriptions, texts) and PIE ~ their conjectured parent (which doubtless also had parent languages!).

To put it in human terms, a little girl in the slums of Mumbai India, had the same great, great (a million times + great) grandparents as Chancellor Angela Merkel.

⁴ Detailed with archeological and linguistic evidence, in support of various theories, in David Anthony 2007.

⁵ It is interesting that the ancient Sumerians called their country "place of the noble lords" ~ I cannot reproduce that name in Sumerian cuneiform, but if you are interested you can see it in the article "Sumer" in Wikipedia, (citing W. Hallo; W. Simpson 1971, *The Ancient Near East* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanich) p. 28).

⁶ Although I use the word 'Arya', technically the word is Ary-an ~ the '-an' indicating 'belonging to' ~ thus (the people) of the Aryas.

According to Moulton 1912 Ved. *ārya*, Av. *airya*, Old Persian *ariya*, means 'noble', p. 450.

Since this word applied to everyone in the tribe (from the wealthiest to the poorest) 'noble' could not have meant an 'aristocracy'. It could only have meant the quality of a person's character. One of the deities of the Indo-Iranians was Mithra, whose name means 'contract'. And among his qualities was the fact that he hated lies, stood for the truth, and keeping one's word ~ to the good guys and bad guys alike. Whereas Machiavelli advises that one need not keep one's word to an enemy, Mithra stands for the (noble) opposite. In the Yasht dedicated to Mitra (Mihir Yasht, Yt. 10) ~ right in the beginning (§ 2) ~ the author has Ahura Mazda saying,

"Break not the contract [*miθrəm*], O Spitama! neither the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the unfaithful [*drvataŋ* '(one) possessing falsehood'] nor the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the faithful [*ašaonaŋ* '(one) possessing truth'] ..." Yt. 10.2, Darmesteter translation, SBE Vol. 23, p. 120, Avestan words transliterated from Geldner *Avesta* 2Pt. p.

Another Indo-Iranian deity was Airyaman, who stood for friendship, joy, healing. So perhaps the tribe of the Aryas may have chosen to call themselves by this name because they valued these traits which comprise nobility of character. Or perhaps their emulation of these qualities resulted in neighboring tribes giving them this name (because they were true to their alliances, and traded honestly). Or perhaps 'Arya' was the name of an Indo-Iranian chieftan by whose name his clan was known ~ just as Achaemenes (Hakhamanish) was the founder of the Achaemenian clan. We have no way of knowing for certain.

⁷ Moulton 1912 notes the conjectures of certain scholars who believed that Arya was already the name of the Indo-European peoples, before some of them migrated to become the Indo-Iranian peoples. But Moulton does not find this conclusion persuasive. Moulton, *EZ*, p. 4, fn. 1.

David Anthony 2007, in *The Horse, The Wheel & Language*, rightly deplores the poor scholarship and "self-congratulatory" studies that used 'aryan' to concoct theories of a blond, blue-eyed, racially superior race. He states that the term 'aryan' was restricted to Indo-Iranians, for the simple reason that only in the language and texts of the Indo-Iranians do we find the term 'aryan' (pp. 6 - 11).

However, 'aryan' appears to have evolved from a (conjectured) PIE root. Although Kent 1950 in his *Old Persian*, also equates Indo-Iranian with Aryan, (§ 1, p. 6), in his *Lexicon* (of Old Persian words), he shows *ariya-*, adj. 'Aryan', deriving from the PIE root **er-*, and he associates it with Av. *airya-*, Skt. *ārya-* 'noble'; and compares it with New Persian *ērān* 'Iran, Persia', and Irish *Eire* 'Ireland' (p. 170). But Jackson 1892, Moulton 1912 and Taraporewala 1951 think it means 'friend'.

⁸ Moulton 1912 pp. 73 - 74.

⁹ The same is true of *ārmaiti-* (Ved. *aramati*, Old Iranian *arāmāti*), see *Part One: Embodied Truth, Aramaiti*, and *Part Four: Zarathushtra, Originator or Reformer?*

¹⁰ Beekes 1988 Preface, pg. xv. It is not easy to answer with certainty which is the older language Vedic Skt. or GAv. Many first class linguists consider them to be of the same age (discussed in a ft. in *Part One: Does the 'Devil' Exist?*). This question is relevant (for our purposes) only to the extent that it helps us to understand

the kind of society in which Zarathushtra lived. Both Vedic Skt. and GAv. evolved from a conjectured ancestral language Proto-Indo-European (PIE) ~ conjectured by linguists who are not always in agreement about the details of PIE. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see how GAv. words and Skt. words compare with (conjectured) PIE. For example, Kent's valuable lexicon (of Old Persian), shows,

(a) some words in which their Skt. and PIE forms are close, while the GAv. form is different. For example GAv. *ahura-*, Skt. *ásura-*, PIE **esuro-*. (Kent 1950, p. 164); but

(b) other words in which their GAv. and PIE forms are close, while the Skt. form is closer to the YAv. word. For example, he shows GAv. *mōi*, PIE *moi*, Skt. *me*, YAv *mē* (Kent 1950 p. 167, under OP *-mai*y).

¹¹ Moulton 1912 p. 74, ftn. 1.

¹² Jackson 1892, Introduction, § 55, pp. xxxi - xxxii.

¹³ The meanings of certain Av. and Skt. cognates can be quite different, such as Av. *mainyu-* and Skt. *manyu-* (see *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way of Being, Spenta Mainyu*).

¹⁴ Yima is mentioned in the Gathas Y32.8, and in many Younger Avestan texts. Darmesteter states in his Introduction to SBE Vol. 4, p. lxxv, that according to a [Younger] Avestan Fragment Yima lived in Airyana Vaejah. And he identifies Yima with Jamshid (of the Shahnamah), SBE Vol. 23, p. 59, ftn. 4.

Other Younger Avestan texts also speak of Yima, but without specifically mentioning Airyana Vaejah. For example Yy9.5 (called the Hom Yasht), SBE Vol. 31, p. 232;

The *Aban Yasht*, the *Gosh Yasht*, the *Farvardin Yasht*, the *Ram Yasht*, the *Ashi Yasht*, SBE Vol. 23, pp. 59, 112, 221, 252 - 253, 276, 293 - 295, 297 and ftn. 5.

¹⁵ Moulton 1912 pp. 148 - 149; Mills' comment in SBE Vol. 31, ftn. 2, p. 232. And Darmesteter gives an interesting comparison between the (somewhat different) roles played by the Indic Yama and the Avestan Yima in his Introduction to SBE Vol. 4, p. lxxv.

¹⁶ For example, he is so mentioned in the *Aban Yasht*, the *Gosh Yasht*, the *Farvardin Yasht*, the *Ram Yasht*, the *Zamyad Yasht*, Darmesteter translation in SBE Vol. 23, p. 61 and ftn. 1, and pp. 113, 221, 254, 294.

¹⁷ Darmesteter Introduction to SBE Vol. 4, p. xxiv.

¹⁸ Some of the deities of the Aryas, which appear in both the Vedas and the Avesta, are identified and discussed in *Part Four: The Syncretization*. They include Mithra, Airyaman, Apam Napat, Vayu, Hvar, and others.

¹⁹ SBE Vol. 31, p. 230.

²⁰ Dhalla, *History*, p. 203.

²¹ Humbach (1991) Vol. 1, § 1.2, p. 2, and § 5.3, pp. 21 et seq.,

²² Dhalla 1938 *History* for example, shows the following words for 'god' in various Indo-European languages ~ the Kassites used *bugash*, Av. *baga*, Skt. *bhaga*, Slav. *bogu*, Phrygian *bagaios*. The Mittanis have left behind a record of their own names such as Artatama [*arta* being the Old Persian form of Av. *aša-*, Skt. *ṛta*], as well

as the names of Aryan deities such as Mitra, Indra, Varuna, and Nasatya in an inscription dating to the 14th century B.C.E. at Boghaz-Keui (Dhalla 1938, *History*, p. 9), which is in or near modern Turkey. The last three deities were (and are) worshipped by the Aryas who migrated to India.

²³ I point this out, because many Zoroastrians seem to be unaware of the fact that they, and the Hindus who offered them hospitality and a chance to survive, share the same racial ancestry, as indeed do most of the races of present day 'Europeans' ~ all indicating how ignorant of the facts is the argument of racial exclusivity as a so-called tradition of the Zoroastrian religion. There is no trace of it in the ancient texts, customs, and traditions. And as a practice it did not exist before the Arab invasion of Iran. See *Part One: A Teaching for All Mankind*.

²⁴ An inflected form in the YAv. text Y9.14 is *airyene vaējahe* transliterated from Geldner 1P p. 42.

²⁵ According to Dhalla 1938 *History*, p. 8, the meaning of Airyana Vaejah is 'stem-land of the Aryans'. But Humbach (1991) is uncertain of its meaning, Vol. 1, § 7.2.1, p. 33; and Skjaervo 2003 does not show its meaning.

²⁶ Detailed in *Part Four: Zarathushtra's Date and Place*.

²⁷ That the Airyana Vaejah was mountainous, does not tell us much. The excellent map at the beginning of CHI Vol. 1, *The Land of Iran*, demonstrates that Iran comprises only a portion of a more extensive zone of mountains and valleys that extends from the mountainous regions (and plains) of the Caucasus in the north west, and the area around the Black Sea to the south, and all the way to the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan in the east. See also W. B. Fisher's essay *Physical Geography*, in CHI Vol. 1, pp. 4 - 5.

Therefore, the places to which the Arya tribes migrated would likely also have been mountainous.

The Younger Avestan texts contain long lists of named mountains and mountain ranges. Whether these mountains existed in Airyana Vaejah, or in the lands to which the Aryas migrated, or both, we have no way of knowing for sure. Scholars (who love knowledge for its own sake) have had a lot of fun trying to locate these named mountains geographically, tracing their names through a series of texts in more than one language, spanning several centuries.

²⁸ *Zamyad Yasht*, Darmesteter translation Yt. 19.1 - 7, SBE Vol. 23, pp. 187 - 289.

²⁹ *Mihir Yasht*, Yt. 10 §§ 13 - 14, Darmesteter translation, SBE Vol. 23, pp. 122 - 123.

³⁰ Gershevitch 1967 in his *Avestan Hymn To Mithra* shows the (conjectured) stem for this epithet as a compound word *vouru.gaoyaoiti-* which he says means "having, or providing, wide cattle-pastures" (p. 151), but in this translation of the Yasht, he uses the (more picturesque) "grass-land magnate".

Hintze 1994 in her glossary to the *Zamyad Yasht*, translates the term "having wide cattle-pastures".

Darmesteter translates the epithet "lord of wise pastures" (although no part of the epithet means includes any word meaning 'lord').

Sirozah II, § 7 "... We sacrifice unto Mithra, the lord of wide pastures;..." Darmesteter translation, SBE 23, p. 15;

Mihir Yasht, numerous times. In Ch. I, alone, he is so described in all but one of its sections. SBE 23, pp. 119 - 158;

³¹ As detailed in the YAv. Mihir and Aban Yashts..

³² *Ashtad Yasht*, Yt. 8.5, Darmesteter translation, SBE Vol. 23, p. 284.

³³ *Vendidad*, Ch. 1, § 4, Darmesteter translation, SBE 4, pp. 4 - 5.

³⁴ *Vendidad*, Ch. 2, § 5, Darmesteter translation, SBE 4, p. 12.

³⁵ *Vendidad*, Ch. 2, § 5, Darmesteter translation, SBE 4, pp. 12 - 13.

³⁶ The *Vendidad*, Ch. 2, §§ 8 - 19, Darmesteter translation, SBE Vol. 4, pp. 12 - 15.

³⁷ *Vendidad* Ch. 2, §§ 22 - 23, Darmesteter translation, SBE 4, pp. 15 - 16.

³⁸ Anthony 2007 states that around 4200 - 4100 BCE the climate began to change (across a broad region of Europe, including in an area of Europe thought to have been inhabited by Indo-Europeans), and that according to tree rings in oaks preserved in bogs in Germany, and in annual ice layers in a glacial ice core in Greenland, extremely cold years happened, first in 4120 and 4040 BCE, followed by "a 140 years long, bitterly cold period lasting from 3960 - 3821 BCE, with temperatures colder than at any time in the previous two thousand years" during which glacial period many people and domesticated animals died. pp. 227 - 228. Although we cannot say for sure whether this glacial period could have been the 'fatal winters' described in the story of Yima, it is perhaps more than a possibility (discussed in *Part Four: Zarathushtra's Date & Place*).

³⁹ *Vendidad*, Ch. 1, § 4, translated by Darmesteter, SBE Vol. 4, p. 5. By the time of the *Vendidad*, the prevailing mind-set was that all 'good' things ~ material and abstract ~ came from the all-good Lord Wisdom (Ahura Mazda), whereas all 'bad' things ~ material and abstract ~ came from the Evil One (Angra Mainyu), which in the Gathas simply means a harmful or inimical way of being, but which by the time of the later Avestan texts, had come to be regarded as a living all-bad uncreated entity ~ the Evil One (discussed in *Part One: Does The Devil Exist?*).

And all the harmful things that afflicted man, including such natural phenomena as death, drought, cold, illness, et cetera, were deemed to be the work of the Evil One, Angra Mainyu. Therefore it is not surprising that the encroaching cold in Airyana Vaejah, which made it difficult to grow things even in the two short summer months, was interpreted through the spectacles of the beliefs that existed at the time of the *Vendidad* ~ as the work of Angra Mainyu.

But if you look past these perceptions of the much later Younger Avestan belief system, you get a picture which is striking in its small details such as the two summer months being "cold for the waters, cold for the earth, cold for the trees". This to me has a ring of authenticity indicating the origins of a much older story. In ancient cultures where information of times past (history) was transmitted orally in the form of stories and sagas, the bardic tradition required the accurate repetition of details (so also with the bards of the ancient Celts). And these details describing the short summer months as cold for the waters, cold for the earth, cold for the trees, in Airyana Vaejah sound like the kinds of details that would have been repeated and transmitted verbatim from generation to generation in a story that came down from antiquity, although the explanations reveal the mind set of much later times. Admittedly, this is just an opinion.

⁴⁰ Anthony 2007 p. 227.

⁴¹ I. M. Diakonoff's essay on *Media*, Part 1, *The Medes and the Neighbouring Countries*, in CHI Vol. 2, p. 57.

⁴² CHI Vol. 2, p. 74.

⁴³ CHI Vol. 2, p. 419.

⁴⁴ The prefix 'Mac' (and its abbreviation 'Mc') and 'Fitz' originally meant 'son of'. Thus, MacDougal 'son of Dougal'; Fitzwilliam 'son of William'. And when the Celts and English abandoned that way of identifying themselves, they sometimes took for their surname, the last 'son of' designation, or the occupation in which they were engaged (e.g. Smith, Baker, Fletcher), or the locality in which they lived.

It is interesting (is it not?) that when the British came to rule over India, the Parsis (who fled from Iran to India, some centuries after the Arab invasion of Iran) identified themselves in the same way as the ancient Celts and English did ~ as 'son of'. Thus a man 'Farhad' would have been called 'Farhad, son of Ardeshir, son of Fareidun (his grandfather), son of...' et cetera. The English civil service (having long abandoned this way of identifying themselves) found these ancestral designations too cumbersome to record the vital statistics of a given person, and required the Parsis to take one family surname. So (like the ancient Celts and English) many of them took the surnames of the localities in which they lived, or the trades or professions they followed. Thus we came to have such surnames as Batliwala 'one who deals in bottles'; Daruwala 'one who deals in liquor'; Vakil 'advocate'; Contractor, et cetera.