

The reader will note the reappearance of the Black Dív in this reign after his apparently complete destruction by Húshang. The explanation of course is that the aim of the poet is to follow his authorities, not to make consistent stories. He is here dealing with another legend, so the Black Dív reappears.¹

§ 1

Tahmúras ascends the Throne, invents new Arts, subdues the Dívs, and dies

Húshang possessed a wise and noble son
Hight Tahmúras—the Binder of the Dív—
Who took the throne and girt his loins to rule,
Then called the archmages and in gracious words
Said: "Throne and palace, crown and mace and cap
Are mine to-day, and when my rede hath purged
The world a mountain-top shall be my footstool.
I will restrain the Dív, will reign supreme,
And use the useful for the common ~~gold~~." *good*

V. 21

He sheared the flocks, and men began to spin;
He thus invented clothes and draperies.
He chose the swiftest quadrupeds and made them
To feed on barley, grass, and hay; he noted
The shyest of the beasts of prey, and chose
The jackal and the cheetah, luring them
From hill and plain, and taught them to obey him.
Among the well-armed birds he chose the hawk
And noble falcon, and began to tame them
While men looked on amazed. His orders were
To rear the birds and speak to them with kindness.
(He brought the cocks and hens to crow at drumbeat,²
And turned all hidden properties to use.
He said: "Address your prayers and praise to Him
Who made the world, and us to rule the beasts:
Praise be to Him, for He directed us."

¹ See Introd. p. 48.

² The drum beaten outside palaces in the East at dawn.

He had a famed and honest minister
 By name Shídásp, an upright man who took
 No step unless toward justice. Through the day
 He fasted, through the night he prayed, and lived
 In charity with all. The Sháh's good fortune
 Was his sole wealth, ill doers he restrained
 And taught the Sháh all good, acknowledging
 No rank but excellence till Tahmúras,
 Purged of his faults and glorious with the Grace,
 ✓ Bound Áhriman with spells and rode him horsewise
 At whiles around the world. Thereat the dívs
 Rebelled and held a conclave, for their throne
 Of gold was void. When Tahmúras was ware
 He was enraged and spoiled their trafficking,
 Girt him with Grace and took his massive mace.
 Then all the dívs and warlocks sallied forth—
 A huge magician host. The Black Dív led them
 And vapoured, while their shouts affronted heaven.
 It darkened, earth turned sable and all eyes
 Grew dim. The illustrious worldlord Tahmúras
 Advanced girt up for battle and revenge,
 There were the roar of flame and reek of dívs,
 Here were the warriors of the lord of earth,
 Who ranked his troops and speedily prevailed,
 For of the foe he bound the most by spells
 And quelled the others with his massive mace.
 The captives bound and stricken begged their lives.
 ✓ "Destroy us not," they said, "and we will teach thee
 A new and fruitful art."

He gave them quarter
 To learn their secret. When they were released
 They had to serve him, lit his mind with knowledge
 And taught him how to write some thirty scripts
 Such as the Rúman, Persian, Arabic,
 Sughdí, Chíní, and Pahlaví, and thus
 Delineate sounds. How many better arts

V. 22

Explored he in a reign of thirty years,
Yet passed away! His time of life was spent
And all his toils became his monument.
O world! caress not those whom thou wilt soon
Cut off, for such caressing is no boon;
Thou raisest one to very heaven on high,
Then biddest him in sorry dust to lie.