

**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

TERMEZ STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF HISTORY

FINAL QUALIFICATION PAPER

On the theme:

**“ INTERPRETATION OF ZARAOSTRANISM SAINTS IN WRITTEN AND
MATERIAL SOURCES ”**

Done by: 4th course student of the faculty of History

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**The Final Qualification Work is preliminary discussed in the faculty of
History.**

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INTRODUCTION

The Culmination of theme: Obviously, Avesta valuable encyclopedic resource reflecting the view of the world of our ancestors. He is the world itself all the philosophical doctrines effect. However, history of painful tests, "Avesta" is also avoided. Nearly a quarter of the village's only (four of 21 books). Unfortunately, parts of the source text are also not free from the effects of time. For this reason, studies conducted by historians today, but he was the only conclusions, including where the subscription is based on the opinions of scientific hypotheses. The birthplace of Zoroaster and Zaratushtaning historians seem to be the end of the chapter. As part of this final qualifying of his native gods, or image, the emergence and development although it is impossible to clarify that, on the basis of research in this area in recent years, foreign languages have been expressed in terms of the students.

Theme historiography: the teachings of Zoroaster, true scientific study of eighteenth-century European historians associated with the name. At this point jondagi popular form tarixchidardan Dyuperron E.Bryunuf F.Shpigel V.Gayter J.Darmsteter E.Benvenist E.Gerifeld U.Xening G.Videngren I.Markvort K.Glender J. Dyushen Giyemen M.Mole M.Boys R.Fray S.X.Tagi Soden, M.Pur Dawood, P.Amiet B.T.Anklesaria N.Boroffka P.Kalmeyer M. S.Chattopadxyaya, G. Kontenau G.Noli S.S.Lamberg Karlovy J.P.Mellori V.M.Mayr N.R.Meyer Melikyan, J.Modi A.Parrot K.F.Shauffer Forrer E.Strommenjer K.Kolmeyer Ch.L.Vulli research, and ideas related to the solution of many problems. Zoroastrianism history of Russian and Soviet historian VI Abaev, D. VI Abudlloev Audio I. Aliyev, I.V. Artemov V. Asmus, GM Bongard - Levin, EA Grantovskiy, MA Dandamaev T.A. Dubrovina, mp Laskareva, A.R. Doroshenko, I.M.Dyakonov MMIsakova Dyakonov, G. 3danovich L.A. Lelekov, VA Livshitskiy, BA Litvinov, V.G. Lukonin plant Rapoport J M Lebedinskiy VI mental Steblin Sroda I.N.Xlopin famous historian also attracted the attention of scientists, which is to create the scientific literature. And especially in the holy book of Zoroastrianism, "Avetik" to deal with the history of independence in

later life A.A.Asqarov A.S.Sagdullaev T.Sh.Shirinov Sh.B.Shaydullaev M.Ishoqov AA Anarbaev, K.Abdullaev M.H.Esanov scientists have commented on this valuable research.

Annotation of the literatures : The writing of the final qualification work Republic President Islam Karimov "The historical memory has no future," "High spirituality is an invincible force" and other works of objective historical interpretation as a methodological basis.

Zoroastrianism and its holy book "Avesta" the first information about the works of ancient Greek and Roman historians. Their Biruni "the rest of the people of ancient monuments" and Narshakhi "History of Bukhara" in the works of such important information are also presented.

That was the first creating "Avesta" in English, Russian (translation I.S.Komenskiy Moscow "Friendship" People Publishing House, 1993.) And Uzbekistan (A.Mahkam translation of "Sharq" publishing house, 2001; M.Ishoqov "Avetik Yash book", "East" publishing House, 2001). English version is used. At the same time the related Amie P. "Bactriane proto-historique en: Syria Liv" (Paris. 1977), Amiel P. "Glyptique Susienne (Mémoires de la Delegation Archéologique en Iran XLIII)" (Paris. 1972); Boroffka N. And b. "Bronze Age tin from Central Asia: Preliminary Notes // Ancient interactions: East and West in Eurasia" (Cambridge. 2002), Boyce, M., "A History of Zoroastrianism," Vol. 1-3. (Leider / Koeln, 1975, 1982, 1989), Boyce M. Haoma. "Priest of the Sacrifice" Henmg W. B. Memorial Volume. (L., 1970), Qatar M. "Margiana at the end of the Bronze Age and beginning of the Iron Age" // [Near the sources of Civilization. A volume in honor of the 75th anniversary of Victor Sroda] (Moscow. 2004), Dubova NA Ryukshina GV "New data on anthropology of the necropolis of upstream-Depe" // Sroda V. Necropolis of Gonul. 2nd Edition. (Athens, 2007), Fray R. "The History of AncientIran" (Munich, 1983), Meyer Melikyan NR, Avetik NA "Analysis of Florida remains in the ceramic vessel from the upstream temenos" // Sroda V. Margiana and Protozoroastrism. (Athens, 1998), V. Sroda "Myths of Ancient Bactrian and Margiana on its Seals and

Amulets" (Moscow. 1998), Sroda V. "Necropolis of upstream" (Athens, 2007), V. Sroda "Long before Zaratushtra (Archaeological evidence of Protozoroastrianism in Bactrian and Margiana)" (Moscow. 2010), Michael Shinko "Aniconism in the Religious Art of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia" // Bulletin of the Asia Institute. New Series / Volume 22. (U.K. 2008) Eduldji K.E. "Spacious Motif - zoroastrians heritage monography " (Canadian. 2014), Pots D.T. "Nana in Bactrian" // Journal of the Institute of Silk Road Studies. (Kamakura., 2001) as used in the publications

Limit of studying: The qualifying period arise in the case of periodic boundary Zoroastrianism is the last period of bronze and early iron (II-I thousand years BC) to the early Middle Ages, which covers the period.

Goals and objectives of the graduation: Graduation aim of the roots of the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism, and its direct link with nature divinity, the religion, the prophet Zaratushtra religious reforms passed a long historical period, even after the formation of the time and place as the influence of religion, Zoroastrianism and the cult of originality general characteristics of the study on the basis of written and material sources.

The following as the main objectives of the work in the show:

- a) synthesis of the analysis of the beings in the image of Zoroastrianism;
- b) a description of the source of the beings in the written and Zoroastrianism, and image;
- c) the god of Zoroastrianism specific and general characteristics of the study;

object and subject of the research: Experimental research facilities in Central Asia and the work of ancient Zoroastrianism in Iran Chanting feature, written and material sources, including the image of the wall or part of this image to the characteristics of the different regions and eras, to explore the factors that affect them

The methods. scientific and methodological basis of several methods. Coverage of the subject, synthesis, analysis, comparison of theoretical dialectic, philosophical and historical methods were used.

Main results of final qualification paper; protection taken out of the religion of Zoroaster's main historical product of the minds of the peoples of Central Asia, during the Millennium Zoroastrianism, an evolutionary advanced non-philosophical doctrine of human nature and society is an integral part of the divine description of the example of the rich imagination of our ancestors. Zoroaster cult of the historical evolution and the nature of the regional impact of the conditions.

Science news: the religion of Zoroastrianism in the organization of work, the period he formed and regions on the basis of the analysis of the research literature written material sources include a comparative analysis of the cult of Zoroastrianism:

- a) the beings in the image of God as the others;
- b) East (Central Asia) and the West (Ancient Iran) Zoroastrism-up compared to the beings in the image;
- c) analysis of Zoroastrianism other religions transformatsiyasi god;

Theoretical and practical importance of the research: Research Scholarship recipients at all levels of education, religion and spirituality to give the necessary information to enrich their knowledge is important. Zoroastrians final qualifying work is an excellent use of textbooks in higher educational institutions and students can be read as a special course.

Qualifying works Test: Qualification meeting of the Department of History of Uzbekistan, Termez State University, the Faculty Council considered and recommended to protect.

STRUCTURE QUALIFICATION: Introduction, Chapter 2, each consisting of several paragraphs, conclusions and list of used literature and volume 83-page.

ЎЗБЕКИСТОН РЕСПУБЛИКАСИ

ОЛИЙ ВА ЎРТА МАХСУС ТАЪЛИМ ВАЗИРЛИГИ

ТЕРМИЗ ДАВЛАТ УНИВЕРСИТЕТИ

Факультет: Тарих факултети талабаси:

Кафедра: Ўзбекистон тарихи

Мутахассислиги: 5120300 Tarix(амлакатлар ва минтақалар бўйича)

Ўқув йили: 2012/2016

БАКАЛАВР МАЛАКАВИЙ БИТИРУВ ИШ АННОТАЦИЯСИ

КИРИШ

МАВЗУНИНГ ДОЛЗАРБЛИГИ: Шубҳасиз, Авеста аجدодларимиз дунё қарабини ўзида акс еттирган бебаҳо қомусий манба. У дунёда ўзидан кейинги барча фалсафий таълимотларга сезиларли таъсир кўрсата олган. Бироқ, тарихнинг бешафқат синовлари “Авеста”ни ҳам четлаб ўтмади. Бизгача унинг фақатгина чорак қисмига яқини (21 китобидан тўрттаси) етиб келган ҳолос. Афсуски манба матнининг мавжуд қисмлари ҳам вақт таъсиридан холи эмас. Шу боис бугунги кунгача тарихчилар томонидан олиб борилган изланишларга қарамай у ҳақда ягона ҳулоса йўқ, жумладан қаерда ёзилганлиги ҳақидаги фикрлар ҳам илмий гипотезаларга асосланади. Зардуштийлик ва Заратуштранинг ватани борасидаги тарихчилар баҳсининг яқини кўринмайди. Мазкур битирув малакавий иш доирасида унинг ватани борасида ёки илоҳлар тасвирининг аниқ пайдо бўлиши ва ривожланишини очиқ бериш иложсиз, шундай бўлса-да, бу борада охириги йилларда хорижий тилларда қилинган тадқиқотлар асосида талаба нуқтаи назаридан мулоҳазалар баён этилди.

МАВЗУНИНГ ТАРИХШУНОСЛИГИ: Зардуштийлик таълимотининг чинакам илмий тадқиқ этилиши XVIII аср европалик тарихчилар номи билан боғлиқ. Ушбу мавзуда жондаги машҳур тарихчидардан Анкетил Дюперрон, Э.Брюнуф, Ф.Шпигел, В.Гайтер, Ж.Дармстетер, Э.Бенвенист, Э.Герифелд, У.Хенинг, Г.Виденгрэн, И.Маркворт, К.Глендер, Ж.Дюшен-Гийемен, М.Моле,

М.Бойс, Р.Фрай, С.Х.Таги-зоде, М.Пур-Давуд, П.Амиэт, Б.Т.Анклесариа, Н.Бороффка, П.Калмейер, М.Каттани, С.Чаттопадхья, Г. Контенау, Г.Ноли, С.С.Ламберг-Карловский, Ж.П.Меллори, В.М.Майр, Н.Р.Мейер-Меликян, Ж.Моди, А.Паррот, К.Ф.Шауффер-Форрер, Э.Стромменжер, К.Колмейер, Ч.Л.Вулли кабилар тадқиқот олиб бориб, кўплаб муаммоларни эчимига оид фикрларини билдирганлар. Зардуштийлик тарихи рус-совет тарихчиларидан В.И. Абаев, Д. Абудллов, В.И. Авдиев, И. Алиев, И.В. Артемов, В. Асмус, Г.М. Бонгард – Левин, Э.А. Грантовский, М.А. Дандамаев, Т.А.Дубровина, Е.Н. Ласкарева, А.Р. Дорошенко, И.М.Дьяконов, М.М. Дьяконов, Г. Зданович, Л.А. Лелеков, В.А. Лившиц, Б.А. Литвинский, В.Г. Луконин, Ю.А. Рапопорт, И.М. Стеблин – Каменский, В.И. Сарианиди, И.Н.Хлопин каби машҳур тарихчи олимларнинг ҳам диққатини ўзига жалб этиб, соҳага илмий адабиётларнинг яратилишига замин бўлган. Зардуштийлик ва айниқса унинг муқаддас китоби “Авеста” тарихи билан шуғулланиш мустақилликдан сўнг Ўзбекистонда ҳам жонланди А.А.Асқаров, А.С.Сагдуллаев, Т.Ш.Ширинов, Ш.Б.Шайдуллаев, М.Исҳоқов, А.А. Анарбаев, К.Абдуллаев, М.Ҳ.Эсанов каби олимлар ўз тадқиқотларда бу ҳақда қимматли фикрларни билдириб келмоқда.

АДАБИЁТЛАР ТАҲЛИЛИ: Битирув маликавий ишининг ёзилишида Республикамиз Президенти И.А.Каримовнинг “Тарихий хотирасиз – келажак йўқ”, “Юксак маънавият – енгилмас куч” ва бошқа асарларидан ҳолисона тарихий талқин учун методологик асос сифатида фойдаланилди.

Зардуштийлик ва унинг муқаддас китоби “Авесто” ҳақидаги илк маълумотлар қадимги Юнон-Рим тарихчилари асарларида ҳам учрайди. Ватандошимиз Берунийнинг “Қадимги халқлардан қолган ёдгорликлар” ва Наршахийнинг “Бухоро тарихи” каби асарларида ҳам муҳим маълумотлар баён этилган.

Ушбу ишнинг яртаилишида биринчи навбатда “Авеста”нинг инглиз, рус (И.С.Коменский таржимаси, Москва “Дружба народов” нашриёти, 1993-йил.) ва ўзбек (А.Маҳкам таржимаси, Тошкент “Шарқ” нашриёти, 2001-йил; М.Исҳоқов

“Авето Яшт китоби”, Тошкент “Шарқ” нашриёти, 2001-йил.) тилидаги нусхаларидан фойдаланилди. Шу билан биргаликда мавзуга алоқадор Амиэт П. “Bactriane proto-historique, en: Syria LIV”, (Париж. 1977), Амиэт П. “Glyptique Susienne (Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique en Iran XLIII)” (Париж. 1972);

Бороффка Н. Ва б. “Bronze Age tin from Central Asia: Preliminary notes // Ancient interactions: east and west in Eurasia” (Cambridge. 2002), Boyce M. “A history of Zoroastrianism” Vol. 1-3. (Leiden / Koeln, 1975, 1982, 1989), Boyce M. Haoma. “Priest of the Sacrifice” Henning W. B. Memorial Volume. (L., 1970), Катани М. “Margiana at the end of Bronze Age and beginning of Iron Age” // [Near the sources of civilization. A volume in honor of the 75th-anniversary of Victor Sarianidi] (Москва. 2004), Дубова Н.А., Рюкшина Г.В. “New data on anthropology of the necropolis of Gonur-Depe” // Sarianidi V. Necropolis of Gonur. 2nd Edition. (Athens, 2007) Фрай Р. “The History of Ancient Iran” (Munich, 1983), Мейер-Меликян Н.Р., Аветов Н.А. “Analysis of floral remains in the ceramic vessel from the Gonur temenos” // Sarianidi V. Margiana and Protozoroastrianism. (Athens, 1998), Сарианиди В. “Myths of Ancient Bactria and Margiana on its Seals and Amulets” (Москва. 1998), Сарианиди В. “Necropolis of Gonur” (Athens, 2007), Сарианиди В. “Long before Zaratushtira (Archaeological evidences of Protozoroastrianism in Bactria and Margiana)” (Москва. 2010.), Майкл Шинкар “Aniconism in the Religious Art of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia” // Bulletin of the Asia Institute. New Series/Volume 22. (U.K. 2008) Эдулджи К.Э. “Farohar Motif - zoroastrians heritage monography” (Канада. 2014), Потс Д.Т. “Nana in Bactria” // Journal of the Institute of Silk Road Studies. (Kamakura. 2001) каби адабиётлардан фойдаланилди.

ТАДҚИҚОТНИНГ ДАВРИЙ ЧЕГАРАСИ: Ушбу малакавий ишнинг даврий чегараси зардуштийлик вужудга келган давр деб ҳисобланувчи сўнги бронза ва илк темир даври(милoddан аввалги II-I минг йилликлар)дан илк ўрта асрларгача бўлган даврни ўз ичига олади.

БИТИРУВ ИШИНИНГ МАҚСАД ВА ВАЗИФАЛАРИ: Битирув ишининг мақсади зардуштийлик динининг қадимий илдизлари, унинг бевосита табиатни илоҳийлаштириш билан боғлиқлиги, бу диннинг пайғамбар Заратуштра диний ислоҳотигача ҳам узоқ тарихий даврни босиб ўтганлигини, дин сифатида шакллангандан сўнг ҳам замон ва макон таъсирида ўзгарганлигини, зардуштийлик культларининг ўзига хослиги ва умумий хусусиятларини ёзма ва моддий манбалар асосида тадқиқ этишдан иборат.

Қуйидагиларни ишнинг асосий вазифалари сифатида кўрсатишимиз мумкин:

- а) зардуштийлик иллоҳлари тасвирларини анализ - синтез қилиш;
- б) зардуштийлик иллоҳларнинг ёзма ва моддий манбалардаги тавсифи ва тасвирини ўрганиш;
- с) зардуштийлик илоҳларининг ўзига хос ва умумий хусусиятларини ўрганиш;

МАВЗУНИНГ ТАДҚИҚОТ ОБЕКТИ ВА ПРЕДМЕТИ: Битирув малакавий ишнинг тадқиқот объекти – Марказий Осиё ва Қадимги Эрон ҳудудидаги зардуштийлик иллоҳларининг хусусияти, ёзма ва моддий манбалардаги, жумладан деворий сурат ёки буюмлардаги тасвирини ўрганиш, бу тасвирларнинг турли ҳудудлар ва даврларга хос хусусиятларини, уларга таъсир кўрсатган омилларни тадқиқ этишдан иборат.

МАВЗУНИНГ БАЖАРИЛИШ УСУЛ ВА МЕТОДЛАРИ: Тадқиқотнинг илмий-услубий асосларини белгилашда бир неча усулларга мурожаат қилинди. Мавзуни ёритишда синтез, анализ, назарий таққослаш, диалектик, фалсафий-тарихий методлар қўлланилди.

ҲИМОЯГА ОЛИБ ЧИҚАЛАЁТГАН АСОСИЙ ҲОЛАТЛАР: Ҳимояга олиб чиқиладиган асосий ҳолатларга Зардуштийлик динининг Марказий Осиё халқларининг тарихий тафаккури маҳсули бўлиб, мингйилликлар давомида тадрижий тараққий этган фалсафий қарашлари бўлганлиги, зардуштийлик таълимотида инсоннинг табиат ва жамиятнинг ажралмас қисми бўлганини

илоҳларга берилган тавсифларда аجدодларимизнинг бой тасаввури мисолида кўриб чиқилади. Зардуштийлик култарининг тарихий шароит таъсиридаги эволюцион ва минтақавий характери тадқиқ этилади.

МАНЗУНИНГ ИЛМИЙ ЯНГЛИКЛАРИ : Ишни ташкил этишда зардуштийлик дини, у шаклланган давр ва ҳудудларга оид олиб борилган тадқиқотлар, адабиётлар таҳлили асосида зардуштийлик култарининг ёзма моддий манбалардаги акси қиёсий таҳлил этилиб:

- а) Иллоҳлар тасвири аллоҳида бўлим сифатида ўрганилди;
- б) Шарқий (Марказий Осиё) ва Ғарбий (Қадимги Ерон) зардуштий-лик иллоҳларини тасвирини таққосланди;
- с) Зардуштийлик илоҳларининг бошқа динлардаги трансформацияси таҳлил этилди;

ТАДҚИҚОТНИНГ НАЗАРИЙ-АМАЛИЙ АҲАМИЯТИ: Тадқиқот таълимнинг барча босқичларидаги таҳсил олувчиларга диншунослик ва маънавиятга оид билимларини бойитишда керакли маълумотлар бера олиши билан аҳамиятлидир. Зардуштийликка оид битирув малакавий ишларда, олий ўқув юртлари учун мукамал дарсликлар яратишда қўллаш ҳамда талабаларга махсус курс сифатида ўқилиши мумкин.

МАЛАКАВИЙ ИШИНИНГ АПРОБАЦИЯСИ: Малакавий битирув иши Термиз давлат университетининг Ўзбекистон тарихи кафедраси мажлисида, Тарих факултети кенгашида кўриб чиқилди ва ҳимоя қилишга тавсия этилди.

МАЛАКАВИЙ ИШИНИНГ ТУЗИЛИШИ: Иш кириш, ҳар бири бир нечта параграфлардан иборат 2 боб, умумий хулосалар ва фойдаланилган адабиётлар рўйхатидан иборат ва ҳажми 83-бет.

Бакалавр талабаси:

Имзо

CHAPTER I.

A SCIENTIFIC-THEORETICAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ZOROASTRIANISM.

I.1 The history of Zoroastrianism.

Firstly, we started to theme from Zoroastrianism and the history of it. Cause , if you don't know about the history of Zoroastrianism. You never analyze of divinites. So, the interpretation of Zoroastrianism deities were represent from describing of holy books. Zoroastrianism¹ or more natively Mazdayasna², (The Zoroastrian name of the religion is Mazdayasna, which combines Mazda- with the Avestan language word yasna, meaning "worship, devotion". In English, an adherent of the faith is commonly called a Zoroastrian or a Zarathustrian. An older expression still used today is Behdin, meaning "The best Religion | Beh > Middle Persian Weh(good) + Din Middle Persian dēn Avestan Daēnā" The term Mazdaism /'mæzdə.ɪzəm/ is a typical 19th century construct, taking Mazda- from the name Ahura Mazda and adding the suffix -ism to suggest a belief system. The March 2001 draft edition of the Oxford English Dictionary also records an alternate form, Mazdeism, perhaps derived from the French Mazdéisme, which first appeared in 1871.) is one of the world's oldest, and at one time most powerful religions, "combining a cosmogonic dualism and eschatological monotheism in a manner unique... among the major religions of the world"³. Ascribed to the teachings of the Iranian Prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra)⁴, he exalted their deity of wisdom, Ahura Mazda, as its Supreme Being⁵. Leading characteristics, such as messianism, heaven and hell, and free will influenced other religious systems, including Second Temple Judaism, Gnosticism, Christianity, and Islam. ⁶ With possible roots dating back to the second millennium BCE, Zoroastrianism enters recorded history in the 5th-century

¹ Gerardo Eastburn. The Esoteric Codex: Zoroastrianism.

² Gerardo Eastburn. The Esoteric Codex: Zoroastrianism.

³ (Bo Yasnad, James W.; et al. (1979), "Is Zoroastrianism Dualistic or Monotheistic?", Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Vol. XLVII, No. 4, pp. 557–588,)

⁴ Gerardo Eastburn. The Esoteric Codex: Zoroastrianism

⁵ Gerardo Eastburn. The Esoteric Codex: Zoroastrianism

⁶ Hinnel, J (1997), The Penguin Dictionary of Religion, Penguin Books UK

BCE,⁷ and including a Mithraic Median prototype and Zurvanist Sassanid successor it served as the state religion of the pre-Islamic Iranian empires from around 600 BCE to 650 CE. Zoroastrianism was suppressed from the 7th century onwards following the Muslim conquest of Persia. Recent estimates place the current number of Zoroastrians at around 2.6 million, with most living in India and Iran.⁸ The religious philosophy of Zoroaster divided the early Iranian gods.⁹ The most important texts of the religion are those of the Avesta. (A significant portion of the Avesta has been lost, known of only through references and brief quotations in the later works, primarily from the 9th to 11th centuries, and mostly only the liturgies of which have survived.) In Zoroastrianism, the creator Ahura Mazda, through the Spenta Mainyu (Good Spirit, "Bounteous Immortals") is an all-good "father" of Asha (Truth, "order, justice,) in opposition to Druj ("falsehood, deceit")

"He" and his works are evident to humanity through the six primary Amesha Spentas¹⁰ and the host of other Yazatas, through whom worship of Mazda is ultimately directed. Spenta Mainyu adjoined unto "truth"¹¹ oppose the Spirit's opposite, Angra Mainyu and its forces born of Akəm Manah ("evil thinking"). (Zoroastrianism has no major theological divisions, though it is not uniform; modern-era influences having a significant impact on individual and local beliefs, practices, values and vocabulary, sometimes merging with tradition and in other cases

⁷ Gerardo Eastburn. *The Esoteric Codex: Zoroastrianism*. p.3

⁸ "Is Zoroastrianism Dualistic or Monotheistic?", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. XLVII, No. 4, pp. 557–588,⁸ Besides the Zoroastrian diaspora, the older Mithraic faith YASNAZDÂNISM is still practised amongst the Kurds. (Boyce, James W.; et al. (1979), "Is Zoroastrianism Dualistic or Monotheistic?", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. XLVII, No. 4, pp. 557–588,)

⁹ Boyce 1979

¹⁰ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amesha-spenta-beneficent-AMESHA SPENTA>, an Avestan term for beneficent divinity, meaning literally "Holy Spirit/Bounteous Immortal"... Among Zoroastrian priests today the term is frequently applied to the "calendrical" divinities, that is, to all those who have received dedications of the day of the month, together with extra three, Burz YASNAZAD, Hōm, and Dahmān Āfīn... The term is, however, more often used in a restricted sense for the greatest of the spənta beings, that is, for the great Heptad who belong especially to Zoroaster's own revelation, namely Ahura Mazda himself (sometimes together with, or represented by his Holy Spirit, Spənta Mainyu) and the six whom he first evoked among the Yazataas

¹¹ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/asa-means-truth-in-avestan> "Since the Aməša Spəntas represent the totality of good moral qualities, it is easy to understand why, by analogy with the inherited opposition between *rtā- "truth" and *drugh- "lie," the other Aməša Spəntas were similarly assigned their evil counterparts."

displacing it. Liberality is emphasized in the scripture, and—like the Roman religion—the religion was generally inclusive, with Cyrus the Great annexing Babylonia in the name of its God Marduk.¹² In Zoroastrianism, the purpose in life is to "be among those who renew the world...to make the world progress towards perfection". Its basic maxims include:

- Humata, Hukhta, Huvarshta, which mean: Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds.
- There is only one path and that is the path of Truth.
- Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, and then all beneficial rewards will come to you also.

The most important texts of the religion are those of the Avesta, which includes the writings of Zoroaster known as the Gathas, enigmatic poems that define the religion's precepts, and the Yasna, the scripture. The full name by which Zoroaster addressed the deity is: Ahura, The Lord Creator, and Mazda, Supremely Wise. He proclaimed that there is only one God, the singularly creative and sustaining force of the Universe. He also stated that human beings are given a right of choice, and because of cause and effect are also responsible for the consequences of their choices. Zoroaster's teachings focused on responsibility, and did not introduce a devil, per se. The contesting force to Ahura Mazda was called Angra Mainyu, or angry spirit. Post-Zoroastrian scripture introduced the concept of Ahriman, the Devil, which was effectively a personification of Angra Mainyu.[\]

¹² "[ACHAEMENID RELIGION](http://iranicaonline.org)". iranicaonline.org.

II.2. Avesta and avestology.

The religious book of Zoroastrians that contains a collection of sacred texts. At first authenticity of Avesta has been called into question, but nevertheless already to the end of XVIII century it has been finalised. Avesta is the name the Mazdean (Mazdayasnian) religious tradition gives to the collection of its sacred texts. The etymology and the exact meaning of the name (Pahlavi 'p(y)st'k/abestāg) can not be considered established, although, despite a recent study by W. Belardi ("Il nome dell'"Avesta""), Bartholomae's hypothesis still seems to be very convincing: we should read abestāg and derive this from Old Iranian upa-stavaka- "praise." Properly speaking Avesta is the collection of texts in Avestan, and Zand their translation and commentary in Book Pahlavi. The interest of the book of Avesta is twofold; on the one hand, it transmits to us the first Mazdean speculations and, on the other hand, it contains the only evidence for Avestan, an Old Iranian language which together with Old Persian constitutes the Iranian sub-division of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European. The Avesta is a compilation of ancient texts, which we owe to the collaboration of the Mazdean priesthood and the Sasanian political power, but of which, unfortunately, only a fraction has been transmitted to us by the Parsi communities of India and Iran, which still remain true to the old religion. The corpus which Western scholarship has reconstituted is found in manuscripts that all date from this millennium; the most ancient dates from A.D. 1288.

The indigenous history of the sacred books is told in several Pahlavi texts. In essence it is as follows: The twenty-one nasks "books" of the Avesta, which were created by Ahura Mazda, were brought by Zaratushtra to king Vishtaspa. The latter or, according to another tradition, Dara Dārāyān, had two copies of them written down, one of which was deposited in the Shasabigan¹³ treasury, the other in the "house of the archives" . At the time of Alexander's conquest, the Avesta was

¹³ Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems*, pp. 230-31; Markwart, *Provincial Capitals*, p. 108, gives Šapīkān or Ščīkān; Nyberg, *Manual II*, Wiesbaden, 1974, p. 186, prefers Šēčīkān

destroyed or dispersed by the Greeks, who translated into their own language the scientific passages of which they could make use. The first attempt at restoring the Avesta was made under the Arsacids, when a king Valaxsh had the fragments collected, both those which had been written down as well as those which had been transmitted only orally. This undertaking was carried on in four phases under the Sasanians: Ardasher (226-41) ordered the high priest Tansar to complete the work of collecting the fragments that had begun under the Arsacids and gave official protection for this undertaking; SHapur I (241-72) initiated a search for the scientific documents that had been dispersed by the Greeks and the Indians and had them reintroduced into the Avesta; under Shapur II (309-79) Adurbad I Mahraspandan made the general revision of the canon and ensured its orthodox character against sectarian divergences by submitting himself successfully to the ordeal by fire at the time of a general controversy; finally, a revision of the Pahlavi translation took place under K̅osrow I (531-79). The origin of the Avestan texts. It is on this point that the testimony of the Dēnkard and the Ardā Wiraz-namag is obviously the most based on legends and so the least trustworthy; there never was an Avesta set down under the Achaemenids and destroyed or dispersed by Aleksandr Makedonskiy. Its phonetic characteristics prove with absolute certainty only that this is not the dialect of Pārs/Fārs. One can locate it almost anywhere else without having to face serious counterarguments. Thus scholars have located it in the northwest (Tedesco, “Dialektologie”), the northeast (Morgenstierne, Report), Chorasmia (Henning, Zoroaster), Margiana-Bactria (Humbach, “Al-Biruni”), or Sistan (Gnoli, Ricerche). So the Old Avestan texts are probably several centuries older than the others, although a precise date can not yet be justified. In the last ten years a general consensus has gradually emerged in favor of placing the Gathas around A.D. 1000 and assuming that the composition of the best texts of the recent Avesta is more or less contemporary with the Old Persian monuments. The Videvdad seems to be more recent than the Yashts or the Yasna and it has also been suggested that it

belongs to a particular liturgical school; however, no linguistic or textual argument allows us to attain any degree of certainty in these matters.

The Avesta was written in various periods and it was a little different from each other, also it was changed every that period, of course, this depends on time and territory. The “Arsacid Avesta.” The existence of a written Arsacid canon was at the center of one of the most important disputes in the history of Iranian studies. In 1902 Friedrich-Carl Andreas enunciated the hypothesis that the Avestan Vulgate was full of mistakes resulting from a clumsy transcription in a differentiated phonetic alphabet of a text originally written in a script of the Pahlavi type, i.e., the vowels were not usually marked and the same letter was used for different consonants. Thus the analysis of a modern scholar agreed with the teachings of the Dēnkard in postulating the existence of an Arsacid archetype. As a matter of fact, early testimonies are at variance in the question of Mazdean books in the first centuries of our era. Saint Basil states that the magi had no books and the Ardā Wirāz-nāmag relates that Ardashēr collected the Avestan texts as they had been memorized by priests who had been summoned for this purpose; however, according to a passage from the Coptic Kephalaia, Mani reported that Zarathushtra’s disciples wrote his words down “in the books they are reading today.” By a curious coincidence, three outstanding Iranian scholars, more or less simultaneously, published strong criticism of the theory, denying either the existence or at least the relevance of the “Arsacid Avesta”: G. Morgenstierne, H. W. Bailey stated that “the hypothetical Arsacid text will probably prove to be unreal, and the alleged transcribers not to have existed.”¹⁴ and W. B. Henning did not deny the existence of an Arsacid text, but its practical importance. The search for the 'Arsacid archetype' was increasingly criticized in the 1940s and was eventually abandoned in the 1950s after Karl Hoffmann demonstrated that the inconsistencies noted by Andreas were actually due to unconscious alterations introduced by oral transmission. Hoffmann identifies¹⁵ these changes to be

¹⁴ G. Morgenstierne (“Orthography and Sound-system,” pp. 30-31), W. B. Henning (“Disintegration,” pp. 47-48)

¹⁵ Humbach, Helmut (1991)

due ,¹⁶.in part to modifications introduced through recitation; in part to influences from other Iranian languages picked up on the route of transmission from somewhere in eastern Iran (Central Asia) via Arachosia and Sistan through to Persia; and in part due to the influence of phonetic developments in the Avestan language itself.

The Sasanian Avesta. It has now been established beyond any doubt that the known Avestan Vulgate originates from a canon which was arranged and written down under the Sasanians in an alphabet typologically similar to the Greek alphabet, invented ad hoc in order to render with extreme precision the slightest nuances of the liturgical recitation. The comparison of the Avestan letters with those of Pahlavi allowed K. Hoffmann¹⁷ to date the fixing of the canon and its writing down to the fourth century, i.e., approximately under SHapur II. This enterprise, which is indicative of a Mazdean revival and of the establishment of a strict orthodoxy closely connected with the political power, was probably caused by the desire to compete more effectively with Buddhists, Christians, and Manicheans, whose faith was based on a revealed book. The earliest reference to the Avesta in Sasanian times is perhaps to be found in the inscriptions of Kirder (Karter)¹⁸

The Structure of Avesta, According to Denkard, the 21 nasks (books) mirror the structure of the 21-word-long Ahuna Vairya prayer: each of the three lines of the prayer consists of seven words. Correspondingly, the nasks are divided into three groups, of seven volumes per group. Originally, each volume had a word of the prayer as its name, which so marked a volume's position relative to the other volumes. Only about a quarter of the text from the nasks has survived until today. The Yasna (from yazishn "worship, oblations", cognate with Sanskrit yajña), is the primary liturgical collection, named after the ceremony at which it is recited. It consists of 72 sections called the Ha-iti or Ha. The 72 threads of lamb's wool in the Kushti, the sacred thread worn by Zoroastrians, represent these sections. The

¹⁶ The Gathas of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts, Part I, Heidelberg: Winter

¹⁷ Henning Memorial Volume, p. 275

¹⁸ P. O. Skjærvo, AMI 16, 1983 [1985], pp. 269-306.

central portion of the Yasna is the Gathas, the oldest and most sacred portion of the Avesta, believed to have been composed by Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) himself. The Gathas are structurally interrupted by the Yasna Haptanghaiti ("seven-chapter Yasna"), which makes up chapters 35-42 of the Yasna and is almost as old as the Gathas, consists of prayers and hymns in honour of the Supreme Deity, Ahura Mazda, the Angels, Fire, Water, and Earth. The younger Yasna, though handed down in prose, may once have been metrical, as the Gathas still are.

The Visperad (from *vîspe ratavo*, "(prayer to) all patrons") is a collection of supplements to the Yasna. The Visperad is subdivided into 23 or 24 *kardo* (sections) that are interleaved into the Yasna during a Visperad service (which is an extended Yasna service). The Visperad collection has no unity of its own, and is never recited separately from the Yasna.

The Vendidad (or *Vidēvdāt*, a corruption of Avestan *Vî-Daēvô-Dāta*, "Given Against the Demons") is an enumeration of various manifestations of evil spirits, and ways to confound them. The Vendidad includes all of the 19th *nask*, which is the only *nask* that has survived in its entirety. The text consists of 22 *Fargards*, fragments arranged as discussions between Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster.

The Yashts (from *yeshti*, "worship by praise") are a collection of 21 hymns, each dedicated to a particular divinity or divine concept. Three hymns of the Yasna liturgy that "worship by praise" are—in tradition—also nominally called *yashts*, but are not counted among the *Yasht* collection since the three are a part of the primary liturgy. The *Yashts* vary greatly in style, quality and extent. In their present form, they are all in prose but analysis suggests that they may at one time have been in verse.

The Korda Avesta "little Avesta" contains the prayers which are recited by the faithful on everyday occasions as opposed to those which are recited by the priest. The name of this book is not mentioned in the Pahlavi literature and therefore it is difficult to estimate its age. It comprises:

Niyayishns “praises,” addressed to the sun, Mithra, the moon, the waters, and the fire, composed of excerpts from the corresponding Yashts, the last from (Z. Taraf, *Der Avesta-Text Niyayish.*)

Gahs “moments of the day,” addressed to the genii presiding over the great divisions of the day: hāuuana- “the morning,” rapith βiina- “midday,” uzaieirina- “the afternoon,” aiβisrūthrima- “the night, from midnight up to the dawn.”

Afrinagans “blessings” which are recited respectively in honor of the dead, at the five epagomenal days which end the year, at the six feasts of seasons, at the beginning or the end of summer.

The Yashts are hymns addressed to the principal deities. There are twenty-one Yashts, unequal in size and interest; among them we find those texts which in addition to the Gathas provide the most information about the origins of Mazdaism and its doctrine at the time of its early development. All of them are written in what appears to be prose, but which, for a large part, may originally have been a (basically) eight-syllable verse, oscillating between four and thirteen syllables, and most often between seven and nine¹⁹ Yasht. 1-4 are mediocre, meaningless texts, composed in incoherent language; they probably result from a very late expansion of the Yasht collection. to Ahura Mazdā; to the Aməša Spəntas; to Asha; to Hauruuatat. Yasht is an important hymn addressed to Arəduui Sura Anahita, goddess of the waters. It falls into five principal sections: verses 1-5, praise of the goddess; enumeration of the mythical sacrificers with allusions to their feats; Anahita informs Zarathushtra of her sacrificial requirements; 97-118, enumeration of the sacrificers of the circle of the prophet: Zarathushtra, Vishtāspa, Zairiuuairi; 119-32, description of the goddess as a beautiful noble maiden.

¹⁹ Gropp, *Wiederholungsformen*, p. 137; G. Lazard, “La métrique de l’Avesta récent,” in *Orientalia J. Duchesne-Guillemin Emerito Oblata*, Acta Iranica 23, Leiden, 1984, pp. 284-300.

CHAPTER II.

ZOROASTRIANISM DIVINITIES AS A SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM.

II.1. Zoroastrianism deities in the analysis of written sources.

We have tried more learning about every deities in written sources. Also, firstly, we discussed about the divinities of Ahura.

AHURA, designation of a type of deity inherited by Zoroastrianism from the prehistoric Indo-Iranian religion. The emergence of the dualistic cosmos was a process of polarization in which some of the *asuras*, such as Agni (Fire), Soma, Varuṇa, and Mitra, went over to the “younger gods,” the *devas*. The other *asuras* were driven away from the earth and remained as exiles in the nether world. In the later texts the term *asura* is limited to the latter group. Varuṇa was incorporated into the ordered world as the lord of the subterranean world, including the cosmic waters on which the earth rests, and of the cosmic law; but his character remained ambiguous. This wisdom, “(revealed) insight into the cosmic order” (*medha’ rtásya*), was the exclusive privilege of seers²⁰. Iranian *Mazda* was equivalent to *médhira*. The Old Iranian high god was historically identical with Varuṇa (in part also with the dual deity *Mitra’Varuṇa*), but had no proper name. He is simply referred to as Ahura or Ahura Mazda, “the wise Ahura.” Zarathustra considered him the *Ahurapar excellence* (“Thou who art the mightiest Ahura and the Wise One,”²¹ “the Wise One and the (other) Ahuras,”²²); he also called him *Mazda* “the Wise One” or *Mazda Ahura* (sometimes *Ahura Mazda*). In the later Avesta traces of a pre-Zoroastrian mythology are preserved in *ahuraḍata* “created by the Ahura”²³, in *ahura* as an epithet of Mithra and the mythological figure Apam Napat “grandson of the waters,” and in *ahurani* “wife of Ahura” as an epithet of the waters and the name of a deity of the water. Cf. Varuṇa as the lord of the waters. In the archaic metrical

²⁰ Rig Veda 8.6.10

²¹ Avesta Yasht. 33.11;

²² Avesta Yasht. 30.9, 31.4

²³ L. Renou and E. Benveniste, *Vrtra et Vrθragna*, Paris, 1934, pp. 42.

formula *Mithra Ahura berezanta* “Mithra and Ahura, the exalted ones”²⁴. The question as to what was his ancient Indo-Iranian name can not be answered, because taboo substitutes can have arisen at any time²⁵. Cf. *Prácetas* in the *Yajur Veda*, and *anamaka* “nameless” and *Dathush* “Creator” in the Old Persian and the Zoroastrian calendars respectively. Apart from these traces of Ahura, *Mazda* has in Younger Avestan become an integral part of the name *Ahura Mazda*. In western Iran the corresponding form has coalesced to *Aura Mazda* (cf. Mid. Pers. *Ohrmazd* (q.v.)). This does not prove that the Achaemenid kings had adopted Zarathustra’s god. Since the religious terminology reflects a non-Zoroastrian religion²⁶, it is rather the name of the pre-Zoroastrian high god of Iran, the addition of *Mazda* having become current in western as well as eastern Iran, though this is debated²⁷. The practice in Iran of personal, mystical devotion to Ahura is exemplified by Zarathustra’s songs, parallel to the *Varuṇa* hymns of the *Rig Veda*. Both in Old Persian religion and in Zarathustra’s theology, Ahura Mazda is regarded as the creator of heaven and earth. From both is excluded worship of the *daivas*—“non-orthodox gods” in Old Persian; “god, wrong god, demon” in Zarathustra’s terminology²⁸; but later exclusively “demon” in Iran proper. In contrast to this modification of religious attitudes in Iran and Asia, In Zarathustra’s religion Ahura Mazda stands for the dual deity *Mitra’-Varuṇa* of the *Veda*, the inauspicious aspects of *Varuṇa* being outweighed by the propitious ones of *Mitra* (except, perhaps, in the doctrine of the Twin Spirits²⁹). In western Iran the situation is not clear. The compound *Miça-Aura Mazda* is attested in “*Mesorromásdes*”³⁰. This term can not, for formal reasons, be a recent formation but must be a transformation of *Miça-Ahura*, the southwest Iranian variant of the archaic

²⁴ Avesta Yasht. 10.113, etc.

²⁵ Nyberg, *Irans forntida Religioner*, Stockholm, 1937, p. 108; F. B. J. Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aša,” *IJ* 8, 1964-65, p. 109, n. 68.

²⁶ F. B. J. Kuiper, On the interpretation of Ahura Mazdā as “Lord Wisdom,” *IJ* 4, 1960, pp. 184-86.

²⁷ E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion according to the Chief Greek Texts*, Paris, 1929, p. 39ff., Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans*, Stuttgart, 1965, p. 81 ; contra: J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La religion de l’Iran ancien*, Paris, 1962, p. 167ff.

²⁸ J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster*, Oxford, 1958, p. 189.

²⁹ Avesta Yasna 30.3-5

³⁰ Plutarch *Ad principem ineruditum* 3; S. Wikander, “Mithra en vieux perse,” *Orientalia Suecana* 1, 1952, pp. 66-68.

formula Mithra Ahura. If so, Mithra must have been worshiped all the time alongside the (pre-Zoroastrian) Ahura Mazda, although he occurs for the first time (with his Median name *Mithra*) in the late inscription of Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-358 B.C.).

AHURA MAZDA (Old Persian Ahuramazda, Parth. Aramazd, Pahl. Ohrmazd/Hormizd, New Pers. Ormazd), the Avestan name with title of a great divinity of the Old Iranian religion, who was subsequently proclaimed by Zoroaster as God. There is controversy also over the grammatical form of his Avestan name. Some scholars render it as Mazda, others as Mazdah; some interpret it as a substantive, “Wisdom,” others as an adjective, “wise,” qualifying Ahura “lord.”

The earthly prototype for Mazda’s ancient concept seems to have been the high priest, who gave counsel and leadership through his wisdom and knowledge of the law. Ahura Mazda maintains the cosmic law of *asa*; and the two lesser Ahuras, Mithra and Vouruna, identified by the present writer with Apam Napat, are vigilant and active in carrying out his ordinances. Some of the words spoken of Ahura Mazda in the Avesta have echoes in Vedic celebrations of Mitra and Varuṇa. In one evidently archaic verse³¹ his worshippers say to him, “We establish Thee as the god possessing good supernatural power (*maya*-), zealous, accompanied by *asa*,” while in the Gathas Zoroaster hails him as “all-seeing”³² and “seeing afar”³³, the one “whom none deceives”³⁴. The prophet also speaks of him as “clad in hardest stone” i.e. the sky³⁵, although he also uses terms which suggest an anthropomorphic concept, in keeping with general Indo-Iranian religious tradition, e.g. “the tongue of Thy mouth”³⁶, “the hand with which Thou holdest. . .”³⁷. Zoroaster gave a wholly new dimension to his worship, however, by hailing him as the one uncreated God³⁸,

³¹ Avesta Yasna. 41.3.

³² Avesta Yasna. 45.4.

³³ Avesta Yasna. 33.13.

³⁴ Avesta Yasna. 43.6.

³⁵ Avesta Yasna. 30.5.

³⁶ Avesta Yasna. 31.3, cf. Yasna. 28.11)

³⁷ Avesta Yasna. 43.4.

³⁸ Avesta Yasna. 30.3, 45.2.

wholly wise, benevolent and good, Creator as well as upholder of asa³⁹. But even as the good man, the asavan, is opposed on earth by the wicked man, the dregvant, so too, Zoroaster apprehended, there was an adversary of God, like him uncreated and in this respect his “twin.” This is the Hostile Spirit, Angra Mainyu. Zoroastrian tradition⁴⁰ states plainly what is adumbrated in the Gathas, that Ahura Mazda became the Creator (Av. Dadvah, Datar, Pahl. Dadar)—this being his constant appellation—to destroy Angra Mainyu, and so to achieve a universe that was wholly good. In one Gathic verse he is said to have achieved creation by his “thought”⁴¹, but elsewhere his instrument is said to have been his Holy or Bounteous Spirit, Spenta Mainyu⁴². The relationship between Ahura Mazda and the Holy Spirit is theologically as subtle and hard to define as that between Yahweh and the Holy Spirit in Judaism and Christianity; and it has been repeatedly argued that Christian doctrine owes a debt in this respect to Zoroastrianism. Spenta Mainyu appears as the active principle by which Ahura Mazda accomplished the acts of creation. It is also through Spenta Mainyu that he “comes to the world”⁴³, and so can be immanent in the wise and just man⁴⁴.

The first of Ahura Mazda’s creative acts was to emanate the six great Beings known from the tradition as the Amesha Spentas, who likewise are aspects of his own being, and with Spenta Mainyu make up a mighty heptad. Each of the seven takes for his own one of the seven creations, man being that of the Holy Spirit, i.e. he belongs especially to Ahura Mazda. This fundamental doctrine is alluded to in the Gathas, and is set out systematically in the tradition⁴⁵. The relationship of Ahura Mazda to the six Amesha Spentas is again a subtle one, and its closeness is expressed metaphorically by the prophet when he calls Ahura Mazda the father of Asa and of

³⁹ Avesta Yasna. 31.8.

⁴⁰ Bundahisn 1.3

⁴¹ Avesta Yasna. 31.11

⁴² Avesta Yasna. 44.7; 31.3; 51.7.

⁴³ Avesta Yasna. 43.6.

⁴⁴ Avesta Yasna. 33.6.

⁴⁵ Bundahišn 3.12; The Supplementary Texts to the Sayest ne-sayest, ed. and tr. F. M. Kotwal, 1969, 11.5.

Vohu Manah⁴⁶ (, and speaks of Armaiti as his daughter⁴⁷; but it is conveyed even more vividly by his addressing Ahura Mazda now as “Thou,” now (when he conceives of him together with one or more of the Amesha Spentas) as “You,” e.g. “Lord, with Asa may You grant to these strength and dominion have known Thee truly, O Mazda”⁴⁸; “I first entreat all (You), O Mazda, for that by which Thou mayst satisfy the purpose of Vohu Manah . . .”⁴⁹.

As creator and upholder of asa, Ahura Mazda is the guardian of justice, and a friend of the just man⁵⁰. It is therefore with trust that Zoroaster speaks to him, seeking enlightenment and help. “Teach me” (he entreats) “through the eloquence of Thy Spirit”⁵¹, “Tell me the things which Thou knowest, Lord”⁵². He is “eager to behold and take counsel” with him⁵³, and there is no doubt of his certainty that he has actually seen Mazda in prophetic vision, and conversed with him. The prophet has accepted the task of telling mankind of the truths which he has thus learnt⁵⁴, and when rebuffed he looks for help and support from his Lord. “I lament to Thee. Take heed of it, Lord, granting the support which friend should give to friend”⁵⁵.

Yet the prophet feels also the awe due to the God who is “Creator of all”⁵⁶, and who, as Lord of asa, presides over a strict justice for mankind by which the wicked, who have chosen to act “at Lie’s commands”⁵⁷ will be in due course condemned. Their destination is the Worst Existence, i.e., Hell, which has been brought into being by Angra Mainyu⁵⁸. Mazda has “appointed recompenses”⁵⁹, decreeing that “the end shall be different for each”⁶⁰; but he “has left to men’s wills (the choice between)

⁴⁶ Avesta Yasna. 31.8, 44.3, 45.4, 47.2.

⁴⁷ Avesta Yasna. 45.4.

⁴⁸ Avesta Yasna 29.10.

⁴⁹ Avesta Yasna 28.1.

⁵⁰ Avesta Yasna 47.5.

⁵¹ Avesta Yasna 28.11.

⁵² Avesta Yasna 48.2.

⁵³ Avesta Yasna 33.6.

⁵⁴ Avesta Yasna 45.3, 5; 31.1

⁵⁵ Avesta Yasna 46.2.

⁵⁶ Avesta Yasna. 44.7.

⁵⁷ Avesta Yasna. 31.1.

⁵⁸ Avesta Yasna. 30.4.

⁵⁹ Avesta Yasna. 43.5.

⁶⁰ Avesta Yasna. 48.4.

holy and unholy”⁶¹, and it is their own inner selves (daena-) which lead sinners to destruction⁶². In taking the immense step of seeing Ahura Mazda as God, rather than only as one of the great gods of the Iranian pantheon, Zoroaster stopped short of conceiving him as omnipotent. According to his revelation, suffering and evil in this world, and torment in the next, have a source other than Ahura Mazda. He can diminish and in the end annihilate them, but not control or direct them in the present.

The modifications of Old Iranian doctrine in the light of this revelation can be observed in the Avesta other than the Gathas, and in the Pahlavi texts. Passages from Yasna Haptanhaiti suggest the process by which Mazda as supreme Creator took over the creative functions of Vouruna Apām Napat, and also (at the heart of the yasna liturgy) those of Mithra in connection with fire. In course of time moreover the epithet ahuradata- “created by the Ahura,” which probably referred originally to Vouruna, came to be understood as meaning “created by Ahura (Mazda),” and thus as a synonym of the commoner mazdadata-. The Zoroastrian faith itself is described in the creed, the Fravarane, as “Worship of Mazda” (Mazdayasna), and its adherents are Mazda worshippers, those whose worship is all ultimately directed to Mazda, even when its immediate recipient is a lesser divinity. The tradition makes plain the doctrine implicit in the Gathas, that all beneficent divinities were evoked by Ahura Mazda to aid him, and so to worship any of them is in reality to worship him.

The Younger Avesta is full of invocations of Ahura Mazda, and those Younger Avestan texts which are of pre-Zoroastrian origin were duly Zoroastrianized by the addition of such formulas as “Ahura Mazda said to Spitama Zarathustra.” The whole of the Avesta was regarded by the orthodox as representing Ahura Mazda’s words received by his prophet. This belief (still held by some Zoroastrians) was challenged in Islamic times, when the Pahlavi Denkard presents a “heretic” as saying that he could accept only the Gathic (gahanig) texts as truly the utterances of Ohrmazd⁶³. The defense against this was that the other Avestan texts are derived from the Gathic

⁶¹ Avesta Yasna. 45.9

⁶² Avesta Yasna. 51.13

⁶³ Denkard 3.7.

ones, and are thus also shaped by the power of Ohrmazd's omniscience, and do not originate in merely human knowledge.

The earliest reference to Ahura Mazda in western Iran appears to be in an Assyrian text, probably of the 8th century B. C., in which as-sa-ra ma-za-as is named in a list of gods. This would presumably be the Old Iranian divinity, rather than Zoroaster's God. There is now evidence to show that Cyrus the Great was a Zoroastrian; and there are many references to "Ahuramazda" (his name and title being thus fused in Old Persian) in the Achaemenid royal inscriptions, and especially in those of Darius the Great, which duly celebrated him as Creator: "A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness"⁶⁴. The last words appear doctrinally significant, in that according to Zoroaster's teachings the supreme Lord is Creator only of what is good. Darius expresses again and again his conviction that he is Ahuramazda's instrument for establishing order and justice on earth: "When Ahuramazda saw this earth turbulent, then he bestowed it on me By the will of Ahuramazda I set it again in its place"⁶⁵. "After Ahuramazda made me king in this earth, by the will of Ahuramazda all (that) I did was good"⁶⁶. In the early Achaemenid inscriptions Ahuramazda only is named, although occasionally "with all the gods"⁶⁷. On one of the Elamite tablets from Persepolis he appears with "Mithra-(and)-the Baga (i.e., Vouruna)," the last two names being joined in an ancient pair-compound⁶⁸; and at the end of the Achaemenid period Artaxerxes III again makes this invocation. This usage is parallel to Zoroaster's own invocation of "Ahura Mazda-(and-the-other)-Ahuras"⁶⁹; but earlier Artaxerxes II had invoked a new triad, "Ahuramazda, Anahita and Mithra"; and the latter two divinities were to be the most popular, under Ahuramazda, in the Sasanian period. Ahuramazda's name appears linked with Mithra's in the theophoric personal

⁶⁴ Darius Naqsh-e Rostam. 1-3.

⁶⁵ Denkard 31-36.

⁶⁶ Darius 2-4.

⁶⁷ Darius. Persepolis 14, 22, 24.

⁶⁸ Persepolis Fortification Tablets no. 337.

⁶⁹ Avesta Yasna. 30.9, 31.4.

names of Mesoromasdes, Mihrohrmazd, in both epochs. A votive inscription in Greek (set there presumably in Seleucid times) was found in the late Achaemenid “Fratadara” temple at Persepolis, which invokes Zeus Megistos, that is Ahuramazda, with two other divinities, presumed to be Mithra and Anahita.

No representations of Ahuramazda are recorded in the early Achaemenid period. (The winged symbol with male figure, formerly regarded by European scholars as his, has been shown to represent the royal *xvarenah*.) However, it seems that from the reign of Cyrus the Great down to that of Darius III, it was customary for an empty chariot drawn by white horses to accompany the Persian army. This chariot was sacred to “Zeus,” i.e., Ahuramazda, who was doubtless invoked to station himself in it invisibly⁷⁰. The use of images in Zoroastrian worship probably began in the western satrapies in the late 5th century B.C., although the first literary reference to it comes from the reign of Artaxerxes II. It was, it seems, under this king, in 365 B.C., that a Persian governor of Lydia set up a statue to “Zeus the Lawgiver (*baradata-*).” Ahuramazda’s name was regularly thus “translated” as Zeus by Greeks, the first attestation of his proper name, as *Horomazes*, being in the 4th century. Subsequently a brief citation from the works of Aristotle (Fragment 6) contains the statement that the Persian magi acknowledged “two first principles, a good spirit and an evil spirit, one called Zeus and *Oromasdes*, the other *Hades* and *Areimanius*.” The name Ahuramazda occurs written in Aramaic script as *’whrmzd* in the Aramaic version of Darius’ Behistun inscription, and also in one of the Arebsun inscriptions, which probably belong to the late Achaemenid period. In another of the Arebsun inscriptions his name appears “translated” by that of *Bel*, whose “queen, sister and wife” is there said to be the “Mazda-worshipping religion.”

The worship of “Aramazd” with images is attested during the Parthian period, especially (through the accident of surviving sources) in Armenia Zoroastrian

⁷⁰ Herodotus 1.189, 7.40; Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 8.3.12; Curtius Rufus, *History of Alexander*, 3.3.11.

iconoclasm, traceable from the beginning of the Sasanian period, gradually put an end to the use of all images in worship; but “Ohrmazd” appears represented in Sasanian investiture scenes as a dignified male figure, standing or on horseback, who wears a turreted crown and on occasion carries thebaresman (barsom) of the priests⁷¹. The Sasanian dynasty, declared its devotion to Ohrmazd in diverse other ways also. Five kings bore the name Hormizd; and Bahram II created (it seems) the title of “Ohrmazd-mowbad”⁷², which continued in use into Islamic times, apparently for a priest of great learning or authority. The forms of Zoroastrian devotional life first become clearly known from the Sasanian and post-Sasanian periods. All devotional acts, whether priestly or lay, begin with a formula of homage to Ahura Mazda. The obligatory prayers, to be recited five times daily, are prefaced with the declaration, in Middle Persian, that “Ohrmazd is Lord” and embody the Gathic verse ⁷³ (“Whom, Mazda, hast thou appointed my protector . . . ?”), while the Avestan part of the constantly recited Atash Niayesh begins with the Gathic verse⁷⁴: “Arise for me, Lord (Mazda)” By day Zoroastrian prayers may be said in the presence either of fire or the sun; and this fact may conceivably explain the usage whereby the Khotanese Sakas came to call the sun urmazde.

Attributed to Zoroaster the doctrine that the twin Spirits of that verse were Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, and that the “father” of both was Ahura Mazda. There is no trace of such a doctrine in Zoroastrian tradition (which most Western scholars at that time disregarded, as a corruption of Zoroaster’s own teachings); but when Haug propounded it in Bombay, Parsi reformists adopted it gratefully, as offering them an escape from the dualism for which Christian missionaries had been attacking them. In due course Parsi reformist writings reached Europe, and were taken there to express an independent Zoroastrian tradition, corroborating Haug’s interpretation. Accordingly the opinion became widespread that Zoroaster had

⁷¹ Survey of Persian Art, plates vol. I, pp. 154, 156, 160

⁷² Kirdēr’s inscription on the Ka’ba-ye Zardošt, line 9

⁷³ Avesta Yasna. 46.7

⁷⁴ Avesta Yasna. 33.12

himself proclaimed Ahura Mazda as God omnipotent, the ultimate source of evil as well as good.

AHRIMAN (Avestan: Angra/Aṇra Mainyu; not attested in Old Persian), demon, God's adversary in the Zoroastrian religion. He seems to have been an original conception of Zoroaster's; and the scanty evidence in the Gathas on this point may perhaps be supplemented from later sources. But the notion of Ahriman did not remain unchanged through the centuries. In the Gathas Angra Mainyu is the direct opposite of Spenta Mainyu; both spirits are essentially actors in the primeval choice, a great drama dominating the life of man and the destiny of the world. This feature, the drama of the choice, is missing in the cosmogonies in the Pahlavi books, where Ahriman serves as the negative counterpart, not of the other spirit, but of God, Ohrmazd. Other variations in the concept of Ahriman were due to heresy, or to differences in the level of culture or intelligence. At one end of the spectrum it is said that, since Ohrmazd is, then Ahriman is not, i.e., has no material existence. At the other end, on the level of folktale, there is the story of Ahriman transformed into a horse and ridden for thirty years by Taxma Urupi. The following review of the evidence is chronological so far as is possible.

The Gathas. The name Angra Mainyu appears only once⁷⁵, when the “more bounteous of the spirits twain” declares his absolute antithesis to the “evil” one in all things. The same spirit is intended⁷⁶ as one of the twin spirits who made the great choice, although the epithet used there is aka (“evil”); this same epithet recurs in⁷⁷, when Aka Mainyu is apostrophized with all the daevas who have deceived mankind and themselves. The daevas are said⁷⁸ to be the offspring, not of Angra Mainyu, but of Akem Manah (“evil thinking”). But in⁷⁹ it is the “deceiver,” debaaman, most probably Angra Mainyu, who induces them to choose acisstem manah (“The worst thinking”). The abode of the wicked in the hereafter is said to be the abode of this

⁷⁵ Avesta Yasna. 45.2.

⁷⁶ Avesta Yasna. 30.3.

⁷⁷ Avesta Yasna. 32.5.

⁷⁸ Avesta Yasna. 32.3.

⁷⁹ Avesta Yasna. 30.6.

same “worst thinking,” not of Angra Mainyu⁸⁰. One would have expected the latter to reign in hell, since he had created “death and how, at the end, the worst existence shall be for the deceitful”⁸¹.

It can be deduced from a comparison with India that there must have existed in Iranian belief, before Zoroaster, gods and demons, notably demons of death. Among the great gods was Vayu, an ancient god (perhaps already Indo-European according to Abaev, ambiguous like Roman Janus and liable to split into two opposites. There existed also tales, if not myths, of the birth of wonderful twins. Zoroaster, who propounded belief in one supreme god, yet wanted to explain the existence of evil—a fact of life—as a consequence of free choice. The myth of the Twin Spirits is a model he set for the choice every person is called upon to make. It can not be doubted that both are sons of Ahura Mazda, since they are explicitly said to be twins, and we learn from⁸² that Ahura Mazda is the father of one of them. Before choosing, neither of them was wicked. There is therefore nothing shocking in Angra Mainyu’s being a son of Ahura Mazda, and there is no need to resort to the improbable solution that Zoroaster was speaking figuratively. That Ohrmazd and Ahriman’s brotherhood was later considered an abominable heresy is a different matter; Ohrmazd had by then replaced the Bounteous Spirit; and there was no trace any more, in the orthodox view, of the primeval choice, perhaps the prophet’s most original conception.

The Seven Chapters. Whereas Ahura Mazda was said in the Gathas⁸³ (to have created both light and darkness, he appears in one of the Seven Chapters⁸⁴ as the creator of “light and the earth and all good things.” From this it can be inferred that the creator of darkness was Angra Mainyu.

⁸⁰ Avesta Yasna. 32.13.

⁸¹ Avesta Yasna. 30.4.

⁸² Avesta Yasna. 47.2-3.

⁸³ Avesta Yasna. 44.5.

⁸⁴ Avesta Yasna. 37.1.

The Younger Avesta⁸⁵, and Aogemadaeca 28 place Angra Mainyu's sojourn in the nether world, a world of darkness. According to Videvdat he dwells in the north, the region of the daevas⁸⁶.

Angra Mainyu is the chief of all the daevas and is called⁸⁷ *daevanām daevō* "the daeva of daevas." This expression probably imitates the title of the Achaemenid rulers, "king of kings." But the superlative *daevō.tema* is not attributed to him but to the demon Paitisha ("opponent," at the end of an enumeration in Videvdat beginning with Angra Mainyu⁸⁸), who is also called *daevaof daevas*. Nowhere is Angra Mainyu said to be the creator of the daevas or their father.

The fight between the two spirits for the possession of *xvarenah* is recounted in Yasht⁸⁹ in Yasna⁹⁰ and elsewhere the two of them are said to have created the world. But the Vendidad, in its first chapter, gives a different picture; here it is Ahura Mazda's creation, not Spenta Mainyu's, which is challenged by Angra Mainyu's counter-creation. To the creation of each of the sixteen countries by Ahura Mazda, Angra Mainyu replies by creating some evil being, illness, scourge, or vice. This shift in the position of Ahura Mazda, his total assimilation to this Bounteous Spirit, must have taken place in the 4th century B.C. at the latest; for it is reflected in Aristotle's testimony, which confronts Ariemānos with Oromazdes.

At the beginning of creation, the recital of the Ahuna Vairya prayer by Ahura Mazda put Angra Mainyu to flight⁹¹. Angra Mainyu created Azi Dahaka⁹²; but he recoiled in fear from Mithra's mace⁹³. He broke into Asha's creation⁹⁴ but had to flee

⁸⁵ Avesta Videvdat. 19.47, Yasht. 15.43

⁸⁶ Avesta Videvdat.19.1 and 44,

⁸⁷ Avesta Videvdat. 19.1, 43-44.

⁸⁸ Avesta Videvdat. 19.43

⁸⁹ Avesta Yasht 19.46.

⁹⁰ Avesta Yasna. 57.17

⁹¹ Avesta Yasna. 19. 15.

⁹² Avesta Yasna. 9.8.

⁹³ Avesta Yasht. 10.97 and 134.

⁹⁴ Avesta Yasht. 13.77.

from the face of the earth⁹⁵ when Zoroaster was born. He nevertheless tempted the prophet, promising him the sovereignty of the world, if he would only reject the faith of Mazda⁹⁶. On Zoroaster's refusal, he let loose legions of demons to assail him, but Zoroaster scattered them in flight⁹⁷. He seeks to prevent the waters from flowing and the plants from maturing, but the Fravashis are a defense against him⁹⁸ and he can not destroy Tishtrya⁹⁹. In the final struggle, he will be vanquished and reduced to impotence¹⁰⁰. The grotesque episode of Taxma Urupi riding Angra Mainyu for thirty years is mentioned twice in the Avesta¹⁰¹.

The Cult of Ahriman. That there existed Ahriman worshippers is attested by Plutarch and in a Denkard passage. The former (Isis and Osiris) says that Zoroaster taught the Persians to sacrifice to Areimanios "offerings for averting ill, and things of gloom. For, pounding in a mortar a herb called omomi, they invoke Hades and darkness; then having mingled it with the blood of a slaughtered wolf, they bear it forth into a sunless place and cast it away." And the Denkard says: "The perverted, devilish, unrighteous rite of the "mystery of the sorcerers" consists in praising Ahriman, the destroyer"¹⁰². Such a cult must have passed to the mysteries of Mithra, where dedications are found Deo Arimanio. The possibility of statues of Ahriman will be discussed below.

The Dead Sea Scrolls; Satan. There is a parallel, though probably no historical connection, between the Iranian myth and the doctrine of the two Spirits taught in the Manual of Discipline (tr. T. H. Gaster, The Dead Sea Scrolls, 3rd ed., New York, 1976, pp. 44-65). Yet Iranian influence, especially during and after the exile of the Jews in Babylonia, may very well have helped in bringing about the change in the conception of Satan from a servant of God (e.g., in Zechariah, 3:1ff.) to his

⁹⁵ Avesta Yasht. 17.19.

⁹⁶ Avesta Videvdad. 19.6ff.

⁹⁷ Avesta Videvdad. 19.46-47.

⁹⁸ Avesta Yasht. 13.12-13, 71, 78.

⁹⁹ Avesta Yasht. 8.44.

¹⁰⁰ Avesta Yasht. 19.96.

¹⁰¹ Avesta Yasht. 15.12, 19.29.

¹⁰² Dēnkard p. 182.6.

adversary. Satan's promotion is conspicuous in two successive versions of one and the same episode: II Samuel 24 recounts how God's wrath was unleashed against Israel and how he prompted David to a census of his people. In I Chronicles 21 Satan has taken the place of God: "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."

In Sogdian, the name corresponding to Ahrmen is SHimnu. E.g., "When God was fighting maleficent SHimnu . . ." (T II S 20); the conception is the same. The name appears in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 39a) under the form 'hwrmyn and among the Buriats under the form Arima.

Pahlavi Texts. The name 'hl(y)mn, Ahriman, is often written upside down as a sign of contempt and disgust. Very frequently it is replaced by Gan(n)ak Menog, "the Stinking Spirit." Apparently evil smell is emphasized because it belongs to death, illness, filth, and foul food. The lot of the wicked in the hereafter, according to¹⁰³, is darkness, foul food, and cries of woe. The voice of Ahriman is said to be a horrible noise¹⁰⁴. For he is the complete antithesis of Ohrmazd, who is luminous, sweet-smelling and sweet-voiced. Pahlavi books make no reference to the choice made by the two spirits, at the beginning of all things, between good and evil, depicting them as two direct adversaries having contrary and incompatible natures. One is on high, the other below; between them is Space or the Void (Vay). They seem to have existed in this state eternally till the invidious assault of Ahriman set things into motion. The question of their origin is not even raised. Since this question had been raised and an answer found in current speculations on Zurvan, the omission was deliberate and in keeping with the Denkard passage¹⁰⁵ condemning the doctrine whereby Ohrmazd and Ahriman were brothers in one womb.

Ohrmazd, in his omniscience, knows of the existence of Ahriman and of the inevitability of an attack from that quarter. During the first 3,000 years Ahriman

¹⁰³ Avesta Yasht..31.20

¹⁰⁴ Bundahišn, p.188.

¹⁰⁵ Denkard p. 829.1-5.

becomes aware of the existence of Ohrmazd; but “seeing valor and supremacy superior to his own, he fled back to the darkness and fashioned many demons—a creation destructive and meet for battle”¹⁰⁶. Ohrmazd meanwhile had created or given birth to the form of fire, out of which the universe is to develop. He chanted the Ahunvar prayer by which he revealed to Ahriman his own final victory; Ahriman swooned and fell back into the darkness and lay there unconscious for 3,000 years¹⁰⁷. At the end of this period, Ahriman, who until then has resisted the exhortations of his demons, is incited to attack by Jeh, the Whore, who joins herself to him who defiles her. From this stems the fact that all women are afflicted with menstruation and some with sterility. Ahriman then attacks Ohrmazd’s creation. He floods it with his own creatures, all impure and evil, from reptiles to planets. Plutarch’s version (Isis and Osiris 47) preserves the memory of the cosmic egg; Ohrmazd, having made twenty-four gods, puts them in an egg (obviously the celestial sphere); Ahriman engenders an equal number of evil spirits which bore through the egg, whence the mixture of good and evil. The entire universe is divided between Ohrmazd and the other yazds, on one side, and Ahriman and the other devs, on the other. Ahriman slays the Primal Bull, then the Primal Man, Gayōmard. And the battle goes on, between Ohrmazd and Ahriman, in the soul of every man and in the whole universe.

But the battle is unequal, for Ahriman is stupid. Two theologians (Zatspram 3.23 and the author of the SHkand Gumanig Vičar 4.63-79 (ed. J. de Menasce, Fribourg en Suisse, 1945) have seen clearly that the world was created by Ohrmazd as a trap and snare for Ahriman: “By his very struggles in the trap and snare the beast’s power is brought to nothing.” A third theologian, Mardan-Farrox, in his Dadistan i denig, justifies somewhat differently the divine attitude. It would have been against God’s justice and goodness to punish Ahriman before he wrought evil; this is why the world is created. Ohrmazd in his omnipotence could have prevented

¹⁰⁶ Bundahišn 4.12.

¹⁰⁷ (Bundahišn 1.15)

Ahriman from invading the world; but Ahriman would then have been able to torment it eternally from outside.

An interesting view on Ahriman's nature is illustrated in the *Denkard*¹⁰⁸, which states that "Ahriman has never been and will never be," a logical consequence of his being almost the perfect antithesis of Ohrmazd, who is; not quite the perfect antithesis, however, for then he would cease to exist altogether and no Zoroastrian can intend this. What is meant is shown in *Dadistan i denig* 18.2-3: Whereas Ohrmazd is present in the material world through his creation, Ahriman has noetig corresponding to him at all. There is thus no symmetry between Ohrmazd's and Ahriman's material creations. The shapes taken on by Ahriman (of a snake, fly, lizard, or man), as well as those of his creatures, such as Azi Dahaka, are not their own, but borrowed for a limited period and will "be smashed and annihilated in the millennium of Zoroaster"¹⁰⁹.

This moralistic conception tended to reduce man's struggle with Ahriman to a spiritual combat within his own soul. Another, very philosophical view is, in Zaehner's paraphrase, that Ohrmazd, at the beginning, as wisdom and the knowing faculty, was latent and potential only; he was not yet actualized¹¹⁰. This groping awareness sought an object outside itself, and, finding none, an object generated itself without God willing it, and this self-generated object was none other than Ahriman.

Eschatology. Views vary as to the final fate of Ahriman, whether he will be reduced to powerlessness¹¹¹ or annihilated (*Denkard*, *passim*). The *Bundahishn* and *Mah Fravardin* 38¹¹² recount that he is led back to the hole through which he first entered the world; and according to the latter, he is then decapitated. According to the *Pahl. Rivayat* (pp. 48, 93ff.), "The Foul Spirit rises up and goes towards the Bounteous

¹⁰⁸ *Dēnkard* p. 534.5-6.

¹⁰⁹ *Dēnkard*, pp. 98-100.

¹¹⁰ *Dēnkard*, p. 282.21ff.

¹¹¹ *Mēnōg ī Xrad* 8.11-15

¹¹² tr. K. J. Jamasp Asana, K. R. Cama Memorial Volume, Bombay, 1900, pp. 122-29.

Spirit (a rare instance in Pahlavi of the ancient Twins opposing each other) and cries out thus: "I created this creation; and Az, the demon-created, who has swallowed my creation, now desires to swallow me: I make thee judge over us." Ohrmazd arises with Srosh the blessed; and Srosh the blessed smites Az, and Ohrmazd smites the Foul Spirit."

Portraits of Ahriman. Ahriman is represented in human shape, crushed under the feet of Ohrmazd's horse in the Sasanian Ardashir I's investiture relief at Naqsh-e Rostam. Like Ohrmazd facing the king, Ahriman's figure is a mirror-image of Ardavan V lying under the feet of Ardashir's horse. But he has animal ears and snakes in his hair. The personage lying under the feet of both Ohrmazd and Ardashir II in the latter's relief of investiture at Taq-e Bostan is also most probably Ahriman. The idea of interpreting as Ahriman the lion-headed statues in the Mithraic mysteries must be abandoned since J. R. Hinnells' novel and decisive interpretation¹¹³.

The Persian rewayats and the Saddar. Among the numerous mentions of Ahriman in these texts, only a few original features appear. In Saddar 20, the soul of Kershasp recounts how the wind was deceived by the speech of Ahriman. In the rewayats of Bahman Esfandiar and of Nariman Noshang it is announced that the millennium of Ahriman is nearing its end. The conception of Ahriman, following a trend already noted in the Denkard, tended to become more and more spiritual, as an allegory of the evil tendencies in man. This was to end up in the complete disappearance of Ahriman; a catechism written by a Parsee high-priest in 1910 does not even mention him.

MITHRA. The name of the Indo-Iranian god Mitra (Vedic Mitra, Avestan Mithra, Old Persian Mitra, Mithra instead of the genuine OP form Miça) is based on the common noun *mitrá* "contract" with the connotations of "covenant, agreement, treaty, alliance, promise." This meaning of the common noun was recognized in the

¹¹³ ("Reflections on the Lionheaded Figure in Mithraism," a paper of the Second Congress of Mithraic Studies, Tehran, 1975)

19th century and codified by C. Bartholomae¹¹⁴, who, however, took the god Mithra as an Aryan sun deity without clarifying the relation between the common noun and the name. A. Meillet (1907) rectified earlier interpretations, such as the idea that Mitra represents light or the sun considered as a moral being, which would make the common noun derive from a function of the god (for a discussion of these views, see Schmidt,)¹¹⁵. Meillet showed that the abstract meaning of the common noun largely agrees with the character and functions of the god. Mitra is thus the personification and deification of the concept “contract.”

Meillet used an etymology (derivation from an Indo-European root, *mei* “to exchange”) which is only one of several possibilities, none of which can be proved. L. Gray¹¹⁶ argued for a derivation from the root *me* “to measure,” assuming that Mitra was the designation of the sun as the “measurer” of the day and that the ethical aspects accrued to him secondarily¹¹⁷. Though Mithra is closely associated with the sun in the Avesta, he is not the sun¹¹⁸ (, and the Vedic Mitra is not either (cf. Gonda¹¹⁹). The virtual identity of the Avestan Mithra with the sun was, however, argued for by H. Lommel¹²⁰, but refuted by I. Gershevitch¹²¹ (1975, pp. 75 ff.). A completely different interpretation is offered by G. von Simson (1997, pp. 22 ff.) who deduces from Yasht¹²² that Mithra is both the morning and the evening star (Venus), while in the Veda Mithra is supposed to be the morning star and Varuṇa the evening star.

The range of meaning of the common noun is best exemplified by two Avestan passages, viz. Vendidad¹²³ and Yasht¹²⁴. In Vendidad¹²⁵ we find a scale of mithraand

¹¹⁴ Ch. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg, 1904. W. Belardi, *Mithraici e Mazdei*, Rome, 1977.

¹¹⁵ H-P. Schmidt, “Indo-Iranian Mitra Studies: The State of the Central Problem,” in *Études Mithriaques*, Acta Iranica 17, Leiden, 1978, pp. 344.

¹¹⁶ L. H. Gray, *The Foundations of the Iranian Religions*, Bombay, 1929. P.96.

¹¹⁷ Gh. Gnoli, “Sol Persice Mithra,” in U. Bianchi, ed., *Mysteria Mithrae*, Leiden, 1979, p. 727.

¹¹⁸ Boyce M. *A history of Zoroastrianism*. Vol. I-II. Leiden — Köln, 1982.c 69.

¹¹⁹ J. Gonda, *The Vedic God Mitra*, Leiden,, 1972. pp. 54-61

¹²⁰ H. Lommel, *Die Yāšt's des Avesta*. Göttingen, 1927.

¹²¹ I. Gershevitch, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*. Cambridge, 1997, pp 75.

¹²² Avesta Yasht. 10.13 and 95.

¹²³ Avesta Vendidad 4.

the punishments for breaking them. The first two in the list, a mithra concluded by word and one by handshake do not tally with the other four, viz. mithra of the size of a sheep, an ox, a slave, and a land. As Lüders (1917) has shown, the list of the last four closely agrees with Indian ones which refer to the punishment of a king who breaks his promise to reward a person: relatives of the king will be killed. Also in Vendidad¹²⁶ a broken mithra does away with relatives. It has been long recognized that in this context mithra means “contract” or “promise,” which is the narrowest connotation of the term. Yasht¹²⁷ gives a list of the degrees of sanctity of different mithra: between friends it is 20-fold, 30-fold between fellow-citizens, 40-fold between partners, 50-fold between husband and wife, 60-fold between fellow students, 70-fold between disciple and teacher, 80-fold between son-in-law and father-in-law, 90-fold between brothers, 100-fold between father and son, 1,000-fold between two countries; 10,000-fold is the mithra of the religion (because the breach would amount to apostasy). The inclusion of natural relationships in this list makes it impossible to take mithra here in the sense of “contract.” The sense of “alliance” is more appropriate since an alliance can include an involuntary relationship which is binding¹²⁸. In particular, the fact that in later Sanskrit mitra means “friend” and in New Persian mehr means “love, friendship” has led some scholars to reject Meillet’s thesis. E. Herzfeld¹²⁹ assumed the virtual identity of mithra with the later Sanskrit and New Persian meanings. Though admitting the connotation “contract, promise” in certain contexts, he defined mithra as “the moral obligation on which the society was founded.” Yasht¹³⁰ can support this definition, but the claim that Mitra was not a pale personification of the abstract “contract,” but “the friend,” is hardly convincing, since “contract, alliance” is very well suited to be the moral foundation of society whose welfare depends on peace, on people getting along with each other. A view

¹²⁴ Avesta Yasht. 10.116-17.

¹²⁵ Avesta Vendidad. 4.2

¹²⁶ Avesta Vendidad. 4.5

¹²⁷ Avesta Yasht. 10.116-17

¹²⁸ J. P. Brereton, *The Rgvedic Adityas*, New Haven, 1981. pp. 27.

¹²⁹ E. Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and his World*, 2 vols., Princeton, 1947. P. 467.

¹³⁰ Avesta Yasht 10.116-17

similar to Herzfeld's was expressed by W. Lentz¹³¹, who argued that a more general definition like "piety" would also do justice to the religious aspect. J. Gonda¹³² insisted on Vedic *mitrá* "friend, friendship," not "contract, contract-partner," and stressed the god's benevolence and helpfulness.

The expression for concluding a contract in Avestan is *mithrem kar*¹³³, in Vedic *mitráṃ dha*¹³⁴. In Avestan there is also the expression *mithrem fras* "to mutually ask a promise from each other"¹³⁵, which has a parallel in Vedic *sám praś* "to come to an agreement"¹³⁶. To break a contract is in Avestan *mithrem druj* "to deceive a contract"¹³⁷ or *mithrem jan* "to smash a contract"¹³⁸; both expressions are known in Old Indian, though not in the *Rigveda*¹³⁹. The demon *Namuci* addresses *Indra*, by whom he has been tricked, as *mitradruh* and *mitrahan* (*Maitrayaṇiya saṃhita* 4.3.4). Although in later Sanskrit *mitra* is generally only "friend," the older meaning may have survived in the *Mahabharata*¹⁴⁰. Also in Middle and New Persian Zoroastrian sources *mihr* is still understood as "contract, promise"¹⁴¹.

There are quite a number of close agreements in the vocabulary used in connection with the Avestan *Mithra* and the Vedic *Mitra*. This shows that, not only the name, but also many of his characteristics are inherited from Indo-Iranian. The vocabulary listed here is not exclusive to *Mitra*, but is shared with other gods, in particular with *Varuṇa* and the *Adityas*, to whom *Mitra* belongs. It is legitimate to

¹³¹ W. Lentz, "Mithras Verfügung über die Herrschaftsgewalt (Yasht 10. 109 und 111)," in *Indo-Iranica. Mélanges Georg Morgenstierne*, Wiesbaden, 1964, pp. 108-23.

¹³² J. Gonda, *The Vedic God Mitra*, Leiden, 1972.

¹³³ *Avesta Vendidad*. 4.3.

¹³⁴ *Rigveda*. 10.108.3.

¹³⁵ *Avesta Yasht*. 10.2

¹³⁶ *Rigveda* 1.165.3; 4.18.2; see Thieme, 1975, p. 27.

¹³⁷ *Avesta Yasht*. 10.45.

¹³⁸ *Avesta Yasht*. 10.2; cf. 10.82,

¹³⁹ cf., however, *dróghamitra* "whose contract, promise is a lie, deception," *Rigveda* 10.89.12

¹⁴⁰ M. A. Mehendale, "On *mitradrúh* and *mitradroha*," *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 69, 1988, pp. 249-54.

¹⁴¹ H-P. Schmidt, "Indo-Iranian *Mitra* Studies: The State of the Central Problem," in *Études Mithriaques, Acta Iranica* 17, Leiden, 1978, pp. 351-77.

include them here because the Adityas are a close-knit group¹⁴². The Avestan references are to the Mihr Yasht¹⁴³, the Vedic ones to the R̥gveda.

Mithra/Mitra is worthy of worship (yesnya, 10.5; yajñiyá, RV 9.77.5). He is characterized by riches (raevant, 10.78; revánt, RV 8.47.9). Mitra is of the breadth of the earth (zem.fraqā, 10.95) and goes around the edges of earth and surveys every thing between heaven and earth, Mitra has breadth (sapráthas, RV 3.59.7) and reaches around heaven and earth. Mithra/Mitra is honored with obeisance (nemah, 10.6; namasyà, RV 3.59.4). He rescues his worshippers from anxiety (āzah, 10.22-23; āmhas, RV 3.59.2). He is wakeful (jagauruuah, 10.7; jagr̥vās, RV 1.136.3), without sleep (axvafna, 10.7), as the Adityas are (ásvapnaj, RV 2.27.9). The dwellings of the deceivers of the treaty are destroyed (frazinte, 10.38), while the person who exerts himself in his obligation to Mitra is not destroyed (ná jiyate, RV 3.59.2, cf. 10.152.1). Mithra is called upon for mercy (marzdika, 10.5) and is very merciful (huuamarzdika, 10.140), Mitra and Varuṇa are called forgiving (mr̥ḍáyant, RV 1.136.1), but more often Varuṇa alone is asked for mercy. Mithra can be angry (zaremma, 10.47), and so can Mitra (jújuraṇá, RV 10.12.5). Mithra is the punisher (acaetar) of the deceivers of the alliance (10.26), Mitra, Varuṇa and Aryaman are the punishers (cetár) of untruth (RV 7.60.5). Mithra protects the country which takes a firm position in the good care (of him and the contract) (yatayeiti, 10.78); inversely, Mitra lets the people take a firm position (yatayati, RV 3.59.1) in keeping their contracts. He cannot be tricked (aḍaoyemna, 10.24); the Adityas are frequently called so (ádabdhā, e.g., RV 1.24.13, 2.27.3 and 9, 7.60.5). Mithra has watchers and is himself a watcher (spas, 10.45, 46); Varuṇa has watchers (spaś, RV 7.87.3; 9.73.4).

The Avestan hymn to Mithra starts with the statement of Ahura Mazda that he created Mithra and made him as worthy of worship and prayer as himself¹⁴⁴. Then it

¹⁴² P. Thieme, Mitra and Aryaman, Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 41, New Haven, 1957. P.29.

¹⁴³ Avesta Yasht. 10.

¹⁴⁴ Avesta .Yasht. 10.1.

is stated that a knave who deceives a treaty destroys the whole country, killing the truthful as much as a hundred sorcerers would. This is immediately followed by the injunction not to break a contract, whether concluded with a deceitful person or a truthful follower of the good Religion, for the contract is valid for both¹⁴⁵. Mithra, when deceived by the lord of the house, or the clan, or the tribe, or the country, smashes their respective domains¹⁴⁶. The treaty between countries is dominant in the hymn. Mithra aids those who are true to the treaty and punishes those who break it. He grants swiftness of horses and progeny to those do not deceive him¹⁴⁷. He robs the treaty-breakers of the vigor of their arms, the strength of their feet, the light of their eyes, the hearing of their ears¹⁴⁸. The arrows, spears, sling-stones, knives, and maces of those who enrage Mithra become ineffectual¹⁴⁹. He is a warrior driving a chariot. His main weapon is the mace¹⁵⁰, but he also uses arrows, spears, hatchets and knives¹⁵¹. The really bloody work is done by Verethrayna, Mithra's companion, who in his manifestation as a boar kills at one blow, knocks the opponent down, smashes his vertebrae, the pillars of life and the springs of life, cuts everything to pieces, mingles bones, hair and blood¹⁵². To those who are faithful to the treaty Mithra brings rain and makes plants grow¹⁵³; this refers to the ruler, since the welfare of a country depends on his moral behavior¹⁵⁴. Mithra provides (to the lords) great houses with busy women and fast chariots, with rugs and cushions, cattle-herds and slaves to the truthful one who worships him, regularly mentioning his name¹⁵⁵. But also the pauper following the doctrine of truth, but deprived of his rights, and even the maltreated cow invoke him, and he comes to their assistance¹⁵⁶. Mithra is ever wakeful, without

¹⁴⁵ Avesta .Yasht. 10.2.

¹⁴⁶ Avesta .Yasht. 10.18; cf. 83-87.

¹⁴⁷ Avesta .Yasht. 10.3.

¹⁴⁸ Avesta .Yasht. 10.23; cf. 49.

¹⁴⁹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.39-40.

¹⁵⁰ Avesta .Yasht. 10.96, 132.

¹⁵¹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.102, 129-30

¹⁵² Avesta .Yasht. 10.72; cf. 127 and Gershevitch, 1959, pp. 166 ff.

¹⁵³ Avesta .Yasht. 10.61.

¹⁵⁴ P. Thieme, *Mitra and Aryaman*, Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 41, New Haven, 1957. P. 32.

¹⁵⁵ Avesta .Yasht. 10.29, 31.

¹⁵⁶ Avesta .Yasht. 10.84-87.

sleep¹⁵⁷ and as such the enemy of sloth¹⁵⁸; he has a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes and watchers on every height and every outlook¹⁵⁹. He is watching also in the dark¹⁶⁰. Mithra catches also the person who thinks that the god does not see all the evil and deceitful deeds¹⁶¹. He is the first god to approach across the mountain-range Hara in front of the sun; from there he surveys the whole land of the Aryans¹⁶². Haoma worshipped him on the highest peak of the mountain range Hara¹⁶³. The Amesha Spentas consider Mithra as the overlord (ahu) and judge (ratu) of the living beings¹⁶⁴. Mithra is the beneficent protector and guardian of all creatures¹⁶⁵. He is the lord of the country¹⁶⁶ and the lord of the country of all countries¹⁶⁷. As such he is wicked and very good to countries and men and rules over peace and war¹⁶⁸. He grants peaceful and good dwellings¹⁶⁹. He is the one who draws the borderlines¹⁷⁰ to prevent conflict between neighbors. He smashes the heads of the demons (daeuua)¹⁷¹, who are afraid of him¹⁷², and is the foe of the supernatural witches. Mithra and Ahura strike down the evil sons of those who offer heavy libations¹⁷³, possibly bloody ones like the daevic Viiamburas¹⁷⁴. On the other hand, Mithra seems to have been worshipped with sacrifices of small and large cattle, birds and fowls¹⁷⁵. According to Gershevitch (1959, p. 271), however, Mithra is worshipped together with the animals (rejected by Zaehner, 1961, p. 117; Boyce, 1975a, p. 151, n. 23). Mithra's most frequent epithet "characterized by wide cattle-pastures" (vouru.gaoiioiti) reflects his

¹⁵⁷ Avesta .Yasht. 10.7.

¹⁵⁸ Avesta .Yasht. 10.97, 134.

¹⁵⁹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.45.

¹⁶⁰ Avesta .Yasht. 10.141.

¹⁶¹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.105.

¹⁶² Avesta .Yasht. 10.13.

¹⁶³ Avesta .Yasht. 10.88.

¹⁶⁴ Avesta .Yasht. 10.92.

¹⁶⁵ Avesta .Yasht. 10.54; cf. 103.

¹⁶⁶ Avesta .Yasht. 10.78, 99.

¹⁶⁷ Avesta .Yasht. 10.145.

¹⁶⁸ Avesta .Yasht. 10.29.

¹⁶⁹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.4.

¹⁷⁰ Avesta .Yasht. 10.61.

¹⁷¹ Avesta .Yasht. 10.26.

¹⁷² Avesta .Yasht. 10.97, 99.

¹⁷³ Avesta .Yasht. 10.113.

¹⁷⁴ Avesta .Yasht. 14.57.

¹⁷⁵ Avesta .Yasht. 10.110.

concern with peaceful conditions: cattle can only graze freely when there are no raids by neighbors with whom no treaty exists.

In stanzas 53-55 Mithra complains to Ahura Mazda that, though he is the beneficent protector of all creatures, men do not worship him with worship mentioning his name (aoxtō.namana yasna) as other gods are worshipped. If men would worship him in this way, he would come to them. The same is said of the star Tishtriia¹⁷⁶, who is defeated by the demon Apaosha “Dearth” because he was not properly worshipped until Ahura Mazda himself worshipped him. Mithra shares the epithet aoxtō.naman “whose name is mentioned” with Tishtriia “Sirius”¹⁷⁷, Sraosha “Obedience”¹⁷⁸, Atar “Fire”¹⁷⁹, Vanant “Vega”¹⁸⁰, and a god who is not identified¹⁸¹. The complaints of Mithra and Tishtriia indicate that they were ignored in earlier worship which followed the practice in the Gathas of Zarathushtra, where none of the traditional pagan gods is mentioned. J. Kellens¹⁸² assumes that the gods addressed by name were the Amesha Spentas, the Waters, and the Frauashis; and according to him the epithet aoxtō.naman properly belongs to Atar and Sraosha, who are deities in the Gathas. If, however, Mitra was connected with the middle of the year already in Indo-Iranian this conflicting claim is improbable¹⁸³.

The Avestan Mithra is accompanied by Verethrayna, the god Victory, who slays the enemies¹⁸⁴, doing what Mithra does himself throughout the hymn. In Yasht¹⁸⁵ Verethrayna brings disease and death to the person who deceives Mithra and abandons (the judgment of) Rashnu.

¹⁷⁶ Avesta .Yasht. Sirius; 8.10-11.

¹⁷⁷ Avesta .Yasht. 8.11.

¹⁷⁸ Avesta Yasna 3.20.

¹⁷⁹ Avesta. Vispered 9.5

¹⁸⁰ Avesta. Yasht. Yt. 21.1.

¹⁸¹ Avesta Yasna 22.27.

¹⁸² J. Kellens, “Trois réflexions sur la religion des Achéménides,” *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 2, 1976, pp. 128.

¹⁸³ H-P. Schmidt, “Indo-Iranian Mitra Studies: The State of the Central Problem,” in *Études Mithriaques, Acta Iranica* 17, Leiden, 1978, pp. 378.

¹⁸⁴ Avesta. Yasht. 10.70-72; cf. 127)

¹⁸⁵ Rigveda 14.47

Sraosha “Obedience” assists Mithra in battle together with Rashnu “Judge”: Mithra chases the enemy armies hither, Rashnu chases them thither, and Sraosha chases them everywhere, i.e., he scatters them¹⁸⁶. He participates in Mithra’s fight against the evildoer along with Nairiio.sanha, the messenger of the gods¹⁸⁷. He drives on Mithra’s right and Rashnu “Judge” on his left¹⁸⁸. Later Rashnu drives on Mithra’s right and Razishta Cista on his left¹⁸⁹. Sraosha has many traits in common with Mithra, and the *Srōsh Yasht*¹⁹⁰ is probably largely dependent on the *Mihr Yasht*.

Once, Mithra is virtually identified with Rashnu¹⁹¹. In his own *Yasht*, Rashnu is present at the oath ceremony or ordeal (*varah*), which takes place before the fire and with other ritual requisites¹⁹². He comes to help the innocent, but destroys the thief who has perjured himself¹⁹³. In *Vendidad* 4.54-55 a suspect is made to drink the golden oath-water, which brings out the truth by causing jaundice¹⁹⁴ if he knowingly perjures himself by contradicting Rashnu, the judge, and deceiving Mithra, the contract or promise. In that case, he is severely punished. Here we find Mithra connected with the oath, a feature which is also known from foreign sources. According to Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 7.5.53), Cyrus the Great swore by Mithra, and so did Artaxerxes II (Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 4) and his brother Cyrus (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 4.24).

Ashi “Reward” guides the chariot of Mithra¹⁹⁵, and she is a constant companion of Sraosha, as appears from his epithet *ashiia* “accompanied by Ashi”¹⁹⁶.

¹⁸⁶ Avesta. *Yasht*. 10.41.

¹⁸⁷ Avesta. *Yasht* 10.52.

¹⁸⁸ Avesta. *Yasht*. 10.100.

¹⁸⁹ Avesta. *Yasht*. 10.126, for an interpretation of this change of position, see Gershevitch, 1959, p. 39)

¹⁹⁰ Avesta. *Yasna*. 57.

¹⁹¹ Avesta. *Yasht*. 10.79-81; see Gershevitch, 1959, p. 223)

¹⁹² Avesta. *Yasht*. 12.3.

¹⁹³ Avesta. *Yasht*. 12.5-8.

¹⁹⁴ M. Schwartz, “*Pers. saugand xurdan*, etc. ‘To take an oath’ (not *’to drink sulphur’),” in C.-H. de Fouchécour and Ph. Gignoux, eds., *Études Irano-Aryennes offertes à Gilbertt Lazard*. Paris, 1989, pp. 293-95.

¹⁹⁵ Avesta. *Yasht*. 10.68,

¹⁹⁶ I. Gershevitch, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*. Cambridge, 1959, p. 194.

Atar, the god Fire, also belongs to the companions of Mithra. He grants the straightest path (of truth) to those who do not deceive the contract¹⁹⁷. The blazing Fire which is the Kavyan Fortune (xvarenah) flies in front of Mithra¹⁹⁸ and probably brings the Fortune to the ruler who keeps his promises, as Mithra himself bestows riches and fortune¹⁹⁹. The association of Mithra with fire can be deduced from later foreign sources, in particular from the fire ordeal which is to verify the truth of sworn depositions²⁰⁰. According to M. Boyce, in the Avesta this connection extends to the celestial fire, the sun²⁰¹. In India Varuṇa's abode is in the water²⁰², and he is present in the oath and ordeal water. Alliances (mitra) were concluded in front of the fire. In Iran Mithra has taken over the administration of oaths and verifies them by the fire ordeal.

Mithra's association with the sun is clearly defined in Yasht²⁰³: He is the first of the spiritual gods to rise over the mountain range Hara before the swift-horsed, immortal sun. In the Avesta there is no identification of the two; the Xorshed Niyayesh is recited in daily prayer together with the Mihr Niyayesh, only in late Pahlavi texts is the sun called God Mihr²⁰⁴. The long arms of Mithra, with which he catches the liar whether he is in the east or west, at the source of the mythic river Raṇha or the middle of the earth²⁰⁵, have been compared with the arms of the Vedic Savitar, who instigates sunrise and sunset²⁰⁶, but from this it does not follow that Mithra is the sun. The identification of Mithra with the sun is first explicitly attested in a Greek source: Strabo (first century B.C.) states that in their worship the Persians call the sun Mithra (Geographica 15.13.732). Such an identification may also be

¹⁹⁷ Avesta. Yasht. 10.3.

¹⁹⁸ Avesta. Yasht. 10.127; see Gershevitch, 1959, p. 278.

¹⁹⁹ Avesta. Yasht. 10.108.

²⁰⁰ M. Boyce and Fr. Grenet, A History of Zoroastrianism III, Leiden, 1991, pp. 35 f.

²⁰¹ M. Boyce and Fr. Grenet, A History of Zoroastrianism III, Leiden, 1991, pp. 28 f.

²⁰² H. Lüders, "Eine arische Anschauung über den Vertragsbruch," Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 1917, pp. 12 f.)

²⁰³ Avesta. Yasht. 10.13.

²⁰⁴ M. Boyce, "On Mithra's part in Zoroastrianism," BSOAS 32, 1969, pp. 69.

²⁰⁵ Avesta. Yasht. 10.104.

²⁰⁶ J. Kellens, "Trois réflexions sur la religion des Achéménides," Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik 2, 1976, pp. 113-32.

reflected in the sacrifice of bulls to Zeus and horses to the Sun reported by Xenophon (Cyropaedia 8.3.11-12), Zeus standing for Auramazda and the Sun for Mithra. However, Curtius Rufus (Historia Alexandri 4.13.12) has Darius III invoke the Sun, Mithra, and the Fire before the battle. It appears that in Achaemenid times there was no consistent identification of Mithra with the sun. The Mesopotamian sun-god SHamash, who was venerated as judge and lord of justice and righteousness, may have influenced the identification, although it is doubtful whether Mithra borrowed his position as divinity of the seventh month from SHamash, as Gnoli²⁰⁷ suggests, since the Vedic Mitra holds the same position.

Daena Mazdayasnish “Mazdayasnian Religion” paves the paths of Mithra’s chariot for good travel²⁰⁸. The paving of paths is actually the task of Razishta Cista, the goddess of the ways²⁰⁹, who in the Mihr Yasht is called the likeness or alter ego of the Mazdayasnian Religion²¹⁰. Kellens has pointed out similarities of Daena and Razishta Cista with the Ṛgvedic Uṣas “Dawn,” who also paves the ways. In Yasht²¹¹ the spreading of the Religion is synchronized with Mithra’s pacifying the countries. In Mithra’s soul there is a pledge to the Religion, according to which pledge the seed of the religion is distributed over all the seven climes²¹². This reminds one of the covenant of the Mazdayasnian Religion²¹³.

There are other minor deities in Mithra’s entourage: Parendi “Plenitude”²¹⁴, Haṃ.vareiti “Valor”²¹⁵, thβasha “Firmament”²¹⁶, the Frauushis²¹⁷, Arshtat “Justice”²¹⁸. Also the waters and the plants²¹⁹ fly all around him, which indicates that

²⁰⁷ Gh. Gnoli, “Sol Persice Mithra,” in U. Bianchi, ed., *Mysteria Mithrae*, Leiden, 1979, pp. 733.

²⁰⁸ Avesta.Yasht. 10.66.

²⁰⁹ Avesta.Yasht. 16.

²¹⁰ Avesta.Yasht. 10.126.

²¹¹ Avesta.Yasht. 13.94-95.

²¹² Avesta.Yasht. 10.64.

²¹³ Avesta.Yasht. 10.117, cf. Gershevitch, 1959, pp. 212 ff.

²¹⁴ Avesta.Yasht. 10.66.

²¹⁵ Avesta.Yasht. 10.66.

²¹⁶ Avesta.Yasht. 10.66.

²¹⁷ Avesta.Yasht. 10.66,100.

²¹⁸ Avesta.Yasht. 10.139.

²¹⁹ Avesta.Yasht. 10.100.

he has power over them, granting them or taking them away. Raman Xvastra “Peace providing good pasture” does not occur in the Mihr Yasht, but is elsewhere consistently mentioned after Mithra Vouru.gaoiiaoiti “Contract providing wide pasture,” obviously because of their identical function; the former seems to be a double or aspect of the latter.

The dual compound mithra ahura²²⁰ or ahura mithra²²¹ is generally understood as referring to Mithra and Ahura Mazda. Boyce (1975a, pp. 41 ff. and 1975c), however, has argued that here the Ahura is rather Apām Napāt “the child of the waters,” who in the Avesta is the only divinity to share the title Ahura with Mithra and Ahura Mazda and whom she takes as the counterpart of the Vedic Varuṇa. Since her arguments are summarized supra, they need not be discussed here. They remain controversial²²². Boyce later also interpreted payū(ca) thwōreshtara “the protector and the creator”²²³, which had previously been taken as Mithra and Ahura Mazda or as Mithra and Spenta Mainyu²²⁴.

Zaratushtra does not mention the god Mitra nor any other god of the “pagan” religion. It has been generally assumed that he repudiated them altogether. Lommel²²⁵ believed he had found the reason for Zarathushtra’s hate of Mithra in his bull-slaying, which we know only from the later Roman Mithras mysteries, but which Lommel tried to prove to be Indo-Iranian by adducing the Brahmana legend in which Soma (Avestan Haoma) in the form of a bull is killed by the gods, including the at first reluctant Mitra. His hypothesis was accepted by several specialists in the Mithraic mysteries²²⁶, but rejected by the Iranist Gershevitch²²⁷. More recently it was

²²⁰ Avesta.Yasht. 10.113, 145.

²²¹ Avesta.Yasna 1.11, 2.11.

²²² E. B. Findly, “The ‘Child of the Waters’: A Revaluation of the Vedic Apām Napāt,” *Numen* 26, 1979, pp. 167; J. Kellens, “Trois réflexions sur la religion des Achéménides,” *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 2, 1976, pp. 31.

²²³ Avesta.Yasna. 42.2, 57.2)

²²⁴ Gershevitch, 1959, pp.54 ff.), as Miθra and (*Vouruna) Apām Napāt (apud Kreyenbroek, 1985, p. 78.

²²⁵ H. Lommel, *Die Yäšt’s des Avesta*. Göttingen, 1927. P. 167.

²²⁶ M. J. Vermaseren, *Mithras, the Secret God*. London, 1963. P. 17. Merkelbach, *Mithras*. Königstein im Taunus, 1984. P. 13.

²²⁷ I. Gershevitch, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*. Cambridge, 1959. P. 64.

supported by B. Schlerath²²⁸ with rather strong arguments which are, however, valid only for the Indian evidence.

That Zarathushtra had a particular dislike for Mithra is, however, unlikely, because he once used the common noun²²⁹, which he could have avoided by using a quasi-synonym.

Zaehner, J. Duchesne-Guillemin, and Boyce have argued that Zarathushtra did not condemn blood sacrifices as a whole, but only particularly violent ones. Possibly these were of the type the Viiamburas practiced²³⁰.

G. Dumézil tried to interpret Zarathushtra's divine entities, the later Amesha Spentas, as substitutions for the pagan gods: Vohu Manah "Good Thinking" = Mitra, Asha "Truth" = Varuna, Xshathra "Rule" = Indra, Armaiti "Devotion" = Sarasvati, Hauruuatat and Ameretatat "Health and Immortality" = Aśvins (Nasatyas). This is fitted into Dumézil's trifunctional ideology: Varuṇa and Mitra represent mystical sovereignty, Indra combative power, Sarasvati and the Aśvins fecundity²³¹. Dumézil's interpretation has been accepted by several Iranists, in particular J. Duchesne-Guillemin²³² and G. Widengren²³³, but rejected or ignored by others.

Boyce argues that in the Indo-Iranian tradition a priest could address in his hymn a single deity, mentioning in it only those other gods closely associated with him, which did not imply the rejection of the other gods. Similarly Zarathushtra addressed his hymns to the great god Ahura Mazda, mentioning, besides him, only the entities closely associated with him. He did not repudiate the other gods. Later Boyce interpreted the Gathic *mazdāscā ahurāñhō* "Mazda and the (other) Ahuras"²³⁴ as referring to Ahura Mazda, Mithra, and Apām Napat, while generally it has been

²²⁸ B. Schlerath, "ráksate śiráḥ RV 9.68,4," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 13-14, 1987, pp. 195-201.

²²⁹ Avesta. Yasna. 46.5.

²³⁰ Avesta. Yasht. 14.57.

²³¹ G. Dumézil, *Naissance d'archanges*, Paris, 1945.

²³² J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La Religion de l'Iran Ancien*. Paris, 1962. P. 201.

²³³ G. Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans*. Stuttgart, 1963. P. 200.

²³⁴ Avesta. Yasna. 30.9, 31.4.

taken as Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas. It is true that the Amesha Spentas are never called Ahuras, but, if Boyce were right, a dual and not a plural would be expected.

Kellens offers a novel interpretation. According to him, in the Gathas of Zarathushtra all the supernatural entities who vie for the worship of men are subsumed under the term *hant* “being” (attested only in the gen. pl. *hatam*) and the relative phrase *yōi henti* “who are”. They are the Amesha Spentas, the gods (*baga*, a word not attested in the Gathas), and the false gods (*daeua*). Mithra would then be one of the gods who does not receive individual worship, but who is not repudiated.

Cyrus, the founder of the Achaemenid empire, was presumably a follower of the Zarathushtrian religion; at least circumstantial evidence shows that his actions were in agreement with it. Duchesne-Guillemin suggested that Cyrus adopted the great god of the Medes, Mithra. However we do not know that Mithra was the great god of the Medes. And the interpretation of the rosette on Cyrus’s tomb at Pasargadae as a symbol of Mithra on the basis of the comparison with the lotus on which Mithra stands on the Sasanian rock relief at Taq-e Bostan is hardly convincing. Boyce takes the rosette as a symbol for the Amesha Spenta Ameretatat “Immortality” and the immortality of the king’s soul. She also argues that there were no cults which exalted Mithra as supreme god.

Darius worshipped Auramazda together with all the other gods (*baga*), but did not name any of them. Mithra was apparently not individually worshipped, since he is absent in the Persepolis fortification tablets which know of local sacrifices to minor Iranian gods. With Artaxerxes II, Mithra and Anahita replace all the gods as companions of Auramazda. It can be argued that Darius’s devotion was still close to that of the followers of the Gathas of Zarathushtra, while Artaxerxes II followed the more popular trend, represented in the Yashts, which dedicated individual worship to the gods by addressing them by name. Artaxerxes III has, beside Auramazda, Mithra

Baga, generally translated “Mithra, the Baga,” but Boyce has “Mithra and the Baga = Apām Napat”.

ANAHID (Old Pers. Anahita, New Pers. Nāhīd, Armenian Anahit, Greek Anaitis), Mid. Pers. form of the name of the Iranian goddess Anahita. The subject will be treated in four sections:

Ardwisur Anahid, Middle Persian name of Aredvi Sura Anahita, a popular Zoroastrian yazata; she is celebrated in Yasht 5 (known as the Aban Yasht) which is one of the longest and best preserved of the Avestan hymns. Sura and Anahita are common adjectives, meaning respectively “strong, mighty” and “undefiled, immaculate.” Only arədvī (a word otherwise unknown) is special to this divinity, and on etymological grounds it too has been interpreted as a feminine adjective, meaning “moist, humid.” The proper name of the divinity in Indo-Iranian times, H. Lommel has argued, was Sarasvatī, “she who possesses waters” (“Anahita-Sarasvatī,” *Asiatica*, *Festschrift F. Weller*, Leipzig, 1954, pp. 405-13)²³⁵. She was still worshiped in Vedic India by this name, which was also given there to a small but very holy river in Madhyadeśa. In its Iranian form (Harahvati), her name was given to the region, rich in rivers, whose modern capital is Kandahar (Av. Haraxvaiti- Old Pers. Hara(h)uvati-, Greek Arachosia); originally Harahvati seems to have been the personification of a great mythical river which plunges down from Mt. Harā into the sea Vourukaša and is the source of all the waters of the world. It is thus that the yazatā is celebrated in Yasht 5 and in the Pahlavi books; but in time, it appears, her proper name fell into disuse in favor of her epithets Aredvi and Sura, which eventually coalesced to give her the Middle Iranian name of Ardwisur. In her hymn the river-goddess is described as a beautiful, strong maiden, clad in beaver-skins, who drives a chariot drawn by four horses: wind, rain, clouds, and sleet. As water-divinity she is worshiped as a bestower of fertility, who purifies the seed of all males, the wombs of all females, and makes the milk flow which nourishes their young.

²³⁵ H. Lommel, *Die Yāšt's des Awesta*, Göttingen and Leipzig, 1927, pp. 26-32.

Like the Indian Sarasvatī, she nurtures crops and herds; and she is hailed both as a divinity and as the mythical river which she personifies, “as great in bigness as all these waters which flow forth upon the earth”. There is a mantic link in many ancient cultures between water and wisdom, and priests and their pupils pray to Arədvī Sura for knowledge; while in India Sarasvati protects the study of the Vedas. As a water-divinity Aredvi Sura is linked with the Apas (Aban), and verses from her hymn form the greater part of the Aban Niyayesh. She is also associated with Apām Napāt (who, in the view of the present writer, represents the great ancient deity Vouruna, see Apām Napāt) and the rain-bringing Tishtrya.

It seems less in the character of a river-goddess that Aredvi Sura is also held to bestow upon her worshipers possessions such as chariots, arms, and household goods, as well as victory in battle and the destruction of foes. Some of the verses which indicate these aspects of her power correspond closely with others addressed to Ashi, yazatā of Fortune; and there seems to have been some blurring of identity between these two beautiful, chariot-driving goddesses. Linguistically Aredvi Sura’s hymn appears older than Ashi’s ²³⁶, which is short and badly preserved; and so it has been assumed that, where there are verses in common, it was Ashi who was the borrower. In a fluid, oral literature, however, such criteria cannot be relied on. Once Aredvi Sura gained greater popularity, her hymn would have been more often recited and so would be better preserved; there would be a tendency, moreover, for priests to seek to extend it in her honor. “Great-gifted Ashi” is a Gathic figure, worshiped of old; and it seems probable that, as she suffered gradual eclipse by Aredvi Sura, verses once addressed to her were transferred to her rival, so that gifts properly sought from the goddess of Fortune came to be asked of the river-goddess.

Aredvi Sura’s striking growth in popularity seems to have begun in Achaemenid times, through her identification with the Western Iranian divinity Anahiti, known from Greek sources as Anaitis. The Achaemenids’ devotion to this goddess evidently

²³⁶ Yt. 17

survived their conversion to Zoroastrianism, and they appear to have used royal influence to have her adopted into the Zoroastrian pantheon. The problem of how to offer veneration to a divinity unknown to the Avesta was solved by assimilating Anahiti to Harahvaitī Aredvi Sura Anahita, whose third epithet was very close to the western divinity's proper name, and indeed may already in late Old Persian have become identical with it, through the dropping of the final vowel in ordinary speech.

The first Achaemenid king known publicly to have acknowledged “Anahit(a)” —that is, the composite being born of the assimilation of Aredvi Sura Anahita and Anahiti—was Artaxerxes II (404-359 B.C.), who in inscriptions invoked her after Ahura Mazdā and Mithra, and who also set up cult-statues in her honor (see further under Anaitis); and it was presumably after this that verses were composed and incorporated in Yasht 5 which apparently describe a temple statue (see Aban Yasht). In these Aredvi Sura Anahita is invoked, not as the personification of a rushing river, but as a magnificently static being, richly arrayed in high-girt robe and jewel-encrusted mantle, with golden shoes and earrings, necklace, and crown. There is no similar description of any other Avestan divinity; and the contrast between it and the concept of Aredvi Sura in bold motion, drawn swiftly on by her four elemental steeds, suggests how uneasy in some ways was the reconciliation of Harahvaitī and Anaitis. In the Pahlavi books (some of which represent lost Avestan texts), the two are still sometimes treated as separate divinities, with Ardvisur as the personification of the mythical river, and Anahid, the fertility goddess, identified with the planet Venus. Thus the Greater Bundahishn, in describing the world's lakes and seas, says they all have their origin with “Ardvisur”; whereas, in a paragraph concerned with the stars and planets, there is mention of “Anahid ī Abāxtarī,” i.e., the planet Venus. In other chapters, however, the two divine beings are identified, e.g., “Ardvisur who is Anahid, the father and mother of the Waters” (Ardvisur ī Anahid, pid ud mad ī Aban). In the cult the two became indissolubly one. This is attested by her names in the Avesta; further, at a shrine in Asia Minor in Roman times “Anaitis”

was invoked with what seems to be an ancient epithet of Harahvati's, namely, "of high Hara"²³⁷, while in another Greek inscription there she is spoken of as "Anaitis of the sacred water"²³⁸.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that there were orthodox priests who put up what resistance they could to the royally favored syncretic cult, with its alien elements of temple- and image-worship. Thus, although Yasht 5 seems to have been adapted to incorporate the veneration of Anaitis, and although "Anahita" seems to have displaced Vouruna in the triad of high divinities worshipped by the Achaemenids, yet in the liturgy of the yasna²³⁹ it is still Vouruna, as Apām Napat, who is invoked with the Waters. Moreover, in the dedications of the days of the month (bestowed, it seems, in late Achaemenid times) a day is assigned to Ashi (Middle Persian Ard), but none to her rival Aredvi Sura Anahita. It also seems probable that the characteristic Zoroastrian temple-cult of fire developed at this same period in opposition to the image-cult of Anaitis. Despite this degree of priestly resistance, the cult of Aredvi Sura Anahita, uniting as it did those of water-goddess and mother-goddess, and being royally promoted, became widely popular. Worship was, in general, offered to the divinity under the name of Anahid (Anahit)/Anaitis, which suggests the strength of Achaemenid influence. The Arsacids followed the example set by their predecessors in venerating Aramazd-Mihr-Anahid as their chief helpers; and the woman's name Āb-Nāhīd ("Anahid of water") is first attested in the Parthian period²⁴⁰. The temples to Anāhīt founded by Artaxerxes II probably all survived Alexander's conquest and Seleucid domination, even though pillaged. Thus the one at Hamadān (Ecbatana) was twice plundered and was stripped of its gold and silver roof-tiles; but it was evidently restored, for Isidore of Charax (Parthian Stations 6) wrote of sacrifices being continually offered there in his day. A temple at

²³⁷ R. Schmitt, "Ein neues Anahita-Epitheton aus Kappadokien," ZVS 84, 1970, pp. 207-10; see, contra, S. Wikander, in *Acta Orientalia* 34, 1972, pp. 13-15.

²³⁸ L. Robert, "Monnaies grecques de l'époque impériale," *Revue numismatique*, 6th series, 18, 1976, pp. 45-46.

²³⁹ Avesta. Yasna. 2.5.

²⁴⁰ Faḡr-al-dīn As'ad Gorgānī, *Vīs o Rāmīn*, ed. M. Mīnovī, Tehran, 1314 Š./1935, section 9.5.

Kangavar was apparently also devoted to Anahid, if this place is indeed Isidore's Concohar (loc. cit.); for he said that a temple there was dedicated to Artemis, which was one of the Greek identifications of Anahid. Hellenic influence having given a new impetus to the cult of images in Iran, it may safely be assumed that Anahid's statues were still venerated during the Parthian period; and positive evidence for this comes from Armenia, then a Zoroastrian land. Here Anahid was much beloved, being invoked as "noble Lady... mother of all knowledge, daughter of the great and mighty Aramazd." There are references to offerings at her altars; and in 36 B.C. one of Mark Antony's soldiers carried off a famous statue to her in solid gold from the temple at Erez. A fine bronze head, like that of a Greek Aphrodite, has been found at Satala, which is thought to belong to a statue of Anahid. (All statues in Armenia, according to an old source, were made by Greek craftsmen.)

It is very likely that in the Parthian period, and probably even earlier, Ardwisur Anahid was also worshipped at many natural sanctuaries throughout the land, created by lake or mountain spring. One of these (which, to judge by its great sanctity, is probably old) was on a mountain with a spring at its foot, near the city of Ray. This shrine seems to have been devoted to Anahid as "the Lady of the Land" (Šahrbānū); and so great was the veneration in which it was held that, after the Arab conquest, it was rededicated to "Bibi Shahrbanu," held to be a daughter of the last Sasanian king and the widow of Ḥosayn, son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭaleb²⁴¹. Muslim prayers and sacrifices are accordingly offered there to this day. Worship of the divine beings in the presence of natural objects is more consonant with orthodox Zoroastrianism than is the veneration of man-made images; and it is probable that an iconoclastic spirit sprang into being among some groups of Zoroastrians at the moment when Artaxerxes II set up the first statues to Anahid. There are slight indications that this spirit began to find active expression towards the end of the Parthian period, as Hellenistic influences waned; and it is possible that some destruction of statues,

²⁴¹ M. Boyce, "Bibi Shahrbānū and the Lady of Pārs," BSOAS 30, 1967, pp. 30-44.

Anahid's among them, began then. At the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. the Persian Sasanians were, it seems, hereditary guardians of a temple dedicated to Anahid at Estakhr (probably one of the foundations of Artaxerxes II), which Ṭabarī describes as “the temple of the fire of Anahid”; the fact that Šāpūr I's queen of queens (his daughter-wife) was called Ādur-Anahid (“Anahid of the fire”) suggests that a sacred fire, consecrated to Anahid, had replaced her image in this temple before the princess was born—i.e., by the beginning of Sasanian ascendancy. Two reigns later, under Bahrām II, the high priest Kirdēr was honored with responsibility for two sacred fires at Estakr, one called “the Fire of Anahid the Lady,” the other “the Fire of Anahid-Ardašīr” (line eight of his Ka'ba-ye Zardošt inscription). The significance of the second dedication is uncertain.

Anahid was thus the patron divinity (under Ohrmazd) of the Sasanians, and her cult flourished during their rule as it had done during the two earlier empires, although she was now officially venerated, it seems, without statues. It has been suggested that a sunken temple made by Šāpūr I beside his palace at Bīšāpūr, whose stone-paved sanctuary could be flooded with water, was a temple to Anahid, where she could be worshiped in the presence of her natural icon, water²⁴². Sasanian iconoclasm was evidently directed only, however, at free-standing cult-images, and representations of Anahid survive in Sasanian art. In an investiture scene carved at Naqš-e Rostam, Narseh had himself represented receiving the diadem of kingship from the hand of a female divinity generally recognized as Anahid; late in the epoch Kōsrow Parvēz showed his fidelity to the family tradition by having Anahid present to support him at his investiture scene also, which was carved in the lake-side grotto of Ṭāq-e Bostān²⁴³. Here the divinity holds in one hand a tilted jug, from which water flows. There is little doubt that under the Sasanians Anahid overshadowed all other female divinities as far as private prayers and devotion were concerned, although in public worship the great Amešasponds, Spēndārmad, Hordād and Amurdād,

²⁴² R. Ghirshman, *Bichapour I*, Paris, 1971; idem, *Iran, Parthes et Sassanides*, Paris, 1962, p. 149.

²⁴³ G. Hermann, *The Iranian Revival*, Oxford, 1977, p. 103.

continued to be more honored, thanks evidently to the conservatism and orthodoxy of the priests. Even granted the widespread popularity of Anahid, however, it is doubtful whether the current tendency is justified whereby almost every isolated female figure in Sasanian art, whether sitting, standing or dancing, clothed or semi-naked, is hailed as her representation.

The dedication of her fire at Estakr shows that, to Persians as to Parthians, Anahid was known as “the Lady.” In his inscription at Paikuli (Pahlavi text, line 10), Narseh invokes “Ohrmazd and all the yazads, and Anahid who is called the Lady”; and a Sasanian gem bearing what is thought to be a representation of her has beneath it simply the identification “the Lady” (b’nwky). This usage influenced Zoroastrian priestly terminology in late Sasanian and Islamic times, and the yazata is spoken of then in religious works as “Ardwisur the Lady” and “Ardwisur, the Lady of the Waters”²⁴⁴. One of the most beloved mountain shrines of the Zoroastrians of Yazd, set beside a living spring and a great confluence of water-courses, is devoted to Bānū-Pārs, “The Lady of Persia.” This sanctuary appears to have been devoted originally to Anahid “the Lady”; being rededicated in Islamic times, like the shrine of Bībī Šahrbānū near Ray, to a legendary Sasanian princess. This and other new dedications appear to have led to the partial eclipse of Anahid herself in living Zoroastrianism, although the veneration of the waters continues as an important part of the cult. It may be suggested that most of the many places in Iran, in mountains and by springs, which are named for “the Maiden” (Dohtar) or “the Lady” (Bibi) were once sacred to Anahid. The Yazdi Zoroastrians still today often call their daughters by the name Āb-Nāhīd.

Anaitis is the Greek rendering of what appears to have been the name of the goddess of the planet Venus, who seems to have been worshiped by the Medes and Persians before they adopted Zoroastrianism. Her cult was apparently much influenced by that of Mesopotamian Ishtar, an enormously powerful divinity in the

²⁴⁴ M. Boyce, “Bibi Shahrībānū,” p. 37, nn. 27, 28.

first millennium B.C., whose worship had by then been adopted in a number of pantheons (including that of the Elamites) outside the Semitic world. Ishtar was venerated as goddess both of love and war, and this is thought to be because in earlier times the morning and evening appearances of the planet Venus (with whom she was linked) had been regarded as those of two different though related stars, with the divinity of the evening star being held to be female, that of the morning star male. By the first millennium the identity of the planet as seen at dawn and twilight had come to be accepted by Babylonian astronomers. It cannot be supposed that this identity had been perceived earlier by the Iranians; but it appears probable that they had long been accustomed to venerate the brilliant planet, either at its morning or its evening appearance, as the goddess Anahiti, the “Pure One.” This name is represented in its Old Persian form only by Greek Anaitis. The Middle and New Persian forms, Anahid, Nāhīd, have long internal “i”; and so it was assumed that Greek Anaitis was written by itacism for Anaeitis, with ei for OP ī, as elsewhere. It now seems more probable, however, that OP had an internal short “i” which became lengthened, regularly, in Mid. Pers. after the loss of the final syllable²⁴⁵. Anahiti can thus be understood as a regular feminine bahurvihi “having no stain, immaculate”²⁴⁶.

Presumably the ancient Persians, having settled in the land of the Elamites, there learned to worship their goddess Anahiti in connection with both appearances of the planet Venus, and to associate her with the powerful Ishtar, called “the Lady.” (“Lady” is a characteristic Mesopotamian invocation of a goddess.) Her cult gained accordingly in popularity, and evidently presented a problem for Zoroastrian orthodoxy, once the western Iranians had embraced the eastern faith. The difficulty of how to incorporate the cult of Anahiti into Zoroastrian worship was probably not solved until the reign of Darius II, whose son Artaxerxes II publicly invoked “Anahit(a)” in his inscriptions. Further, the Babylonian scholar-priest, Berossos (Book III, fragment 65) states that this king “was the first to set up statues of

²⁴⁵ M. Back, *Die sassanidischen Staatsinschriften*, Acta Iranica 18, Leiden, 1978, p. 70.

²⁴⁶ Lommel, *Die Yāšt's des Awesta*, Göttingen, 1927, p. 29.

Aphrodite Anaitis, at Babylon, Susa, Ecbatana, Persepolis, Bactra, Damascus, and Sardis, thus suggesting to those communities the duty of worshiping them.” The way in which it was made doctrinally possible for a Zoroastrian king thus to impose the veneration of a partly alien divinity on the community at large was through assimilating her cult to that of the Zoroastrian Yazata Aredvi Sura Anahita. Thereafter “the Lady” of the planet Venus was still popularly worshiped as Anahid i Banu, but was venerated in the Zoroastrian liturgies with the Avestan invocations proper to the river-yazata. On the fusion, only imperfect, of the conception of the two divinities see further under Ardwisur Anahid and Aban Yasht.

For a parallel instance of the influence of a Babylonian planetary cult on Iranian worship, see Tīr(i); and for the assimilation thereafter of Tīr(i)’s cult into Zoroastrianism see under Tishtrya. A further complexity in the cult of “Anahita” is the veneration also of the Mesopotamian goddess Nanā’ (q.v.), which seems to have entered Zoroastrian worship in association with that of Ishtar-Anahiti.

HAOMA, the Avestan name for a plant and its divinity, Midle Pers. hōm, Sogd. xwum, Pers. and other living Iranian languages hōm, hūm and related forms, Samsikrit. soma, living Indic languages som, soma²⁴⁷. This entry will be treated in two separate articles: Botany; and associated Rituals.

Haoma is the Avestan name for a plant and its divinity, Mid. Pers. hōm, Sogd. xwm, Pers. and other living Iranian languages hōm, hūm and related forms, Skt. soma, living Indic languages som, soma²⁴⁸.

²⁴⁷ David Stophlet Flattery and Martin Schwartz, *Haoma and Harmaline: The Botanical Identity of the Indo-Iranian Sacred Hallucinogen “Soma” and Its Legacy in Religion, Language, and Middle Eastern Folklore*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1989, p. 68 with Table 3; I. M. Steblin-Kamenskij, “Flora iranskoī prarodini (etimologiceskie zametki),” *Etimologiya*, Moscow, 1972, p. 138 ff.; Idem, *The History and Natural History of Ephedra as Soma*, Islamabad, 1987, p. 377; Walter Bruno Henning, *Zoroaster: Politician or Witch-Doctor?* Ratanbai Katrak Lectures 3, (1949), Oxford, 1951p. 85.

²⁴⁸ David Stophlet Flattery and Martin Schwartz, *Haoma and Harmaline: The Botanical Identity of the Indo-Iranian Sacred Hallucinogen “Soma” and Its Legacy in Religion, Language, and Middle Eastern Folklore*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1989, p. 68 with Table 3; I. M. Steblin-Kamenskij, “Flora iranskoī prarodini (etimologiceskie zametki),” *Etimologiya*, Moscow, 1972, p. 138 ff.; Idem, *The History and Natural History of Ephedra as Soma*,

Attempts to identify the proto-Indo-Iranian *sauma-* go back more than two centuries, when Western scholars became acquainted through texts with *haoma-/soma-*. The word denotes something like “that which is pressed, extract” (from Avesta. *hu-*, Sanskrit. *su-*, “press, pound”), and could be applied only by metonymy to a plant yielding that extract. Nor in theory would it necessarily have referred to only one plant, but might have been used for several similar, or even wholly different, plants²⁴⁹. However, if ²⁵⁰we reject the hypothesis that mythic characteristics of the divinity *Haoma/Soma* governed the choice of a representative plant²⁵¹, we can accept that striking correspondences in the technical terms and epithets used with reference to *haoma/soma* point to an extract from a specific plant having been ritually drunk by the common ancestors of the Old Iranian and Old Indian peoples. It is then the (psycho)pharmacological properties of that plant which must explain what is indicated of *haoma/soma* in the Avesta and Vedas.

The main Avestan source for such indications is the *Hōm Yasht*²⁵². Of the gifts prayed for there from *Haoma* by his worshippers, those which derive from pharmacological effects probably include healing²⁵³ and sexual excitation²⁵⁴, and certainly physical strengthening²⁵⁵, intellectual stimulation²⁵⁶ and “intoxication”²⁵⁷. The last word has regularly been used to render Avesta. *maḍa-*which, with Skt. *mada-*, has been a keyword for investigations; but neither the Avestan texts nor their Pahlavi renderings²⁵⁸, yield sufficient evidence for a certain definition of the term. In the *Hōm Yasht*, *themaḍa* of *haoma* is described as *fraša-* “brilliant, bright,”

Islamabad, 1987. p. 377; Walter Bruno Henning, *Zoroaster: Politician or Witch-Doctor?* Ratanbai Katrak Lectures 3, (1949), Oxford, 1951p. 85.

²⁴⁹ Avesta. *Yasna*. 10.12)

²⁵⁰ I. M. Steblin-Kamenskij, “Flora iranskoī prarodini (etimologičeskie zametki),” *Etimologiya*, Moscow, 1972, p. 377; H. Falk, “Soma I and II,” *BSOAS* 52, 1989, pp. 77.

²⁵¹ Gernot L. Windfuhr, “Haoma/Soma, the Plant,” in *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*, 2 vols., *Acta Iranica* 24-25, Leiden, 1985, I, pp. 699-726.

²⁵² Avesta. *Yasna*. 9-11.

²⁵³ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9.16, 17, 19; 10.8, 9.

²⁵⁴ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9.3-15, 22.

²⁵⁵ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9:17, 22, 27.

²⁵⁶ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9:17, 22.

²⁵⁷ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9:17; 10:8-cf. Y.17.6, 14, 19; 11.10.

²⁵⁸ Avesta. *Yasna*. 9:17; 10.18, 19; 10:14; 10:10.

varəziiaŋhuua- “life-invigorating”²⁵⁹, raoxšna- “light,” and rənjiia- “swift”²⁶⁰. Moreover, Haoma is called “the best for the soul’s journey”²⁶¹, and is invoked for the “best existence”²⁶². It is further said that “all other maḍa- are accompanied by Wrath (Aeshma, q.v.) of the bloody club, but Haoma’s maḍa- is accompanied by joyous Truth (Asha)”²⁶³.

Yet since in Nērangestān 12:2 (ed. Kotwal and Kreyenbroek) Av. maḍa- (occurring without reference to haoma) is rendered by Pahlavi md, that is, may, “wine,” and since wine and other alcoholic beverages have been widely used in religious rituals, during many researches (surveyed by O’Flaherty down to 1968) there was almost consensus that sauma was alcoholic, and this interpretation was maintained still by Vasiliĭ Abaev (1975) and Rausing (1987). But there is not enough time during the ritual preparation of haoma/soma for fermentation to take place (nor distillation, which would in any case be anachronistic), and there is no textual evidence for any such process. A case was then made, based on Rig Veda 10.119, for sauma having been a hallucinogen (but on this as a wrong interpretation of the text²⁶⁴). In 1921 B. L. Mukherjee proposed hemp, *Cannabis sativa/indica*, as sauma²⁶⁵. Henrik Samuel Nyberg²⁶⁶ independently gave support for this, but Walter Bruno Henning, rejecting his theory of Zoroaster’s use of hemp, voiced a modern Western aversion towards psychotropic substances as leading to “physical, mental and moral deterioration”²⁶⁷. This, however, ignored the importance of dosage²⁶⁸. In 1968 Wasson, who had worked on Meso-American psilocybine mushroom cults,

²⁵⁹ Almut Hinze, ed. and tr. with commentaries, *Zāmyād Yašt/Der Zam-yād-Yašt*, Wiesbaden, 1994. pp. 134-35

²⁶⁰ Avesta.Yasna. 10.14, 19.

²⁶¹ Avesta.Yasna. 9:16.

²⁶² Avesta.Yasna. 9.19; 11.10.

²⁶³ Avesta.Yasna. 10.8, Avesta.Yasht. 17.5.

²⁶⁴ H. Falk, “Soma I and II,” BSOAS 52, 1989, pp. 78-79..

²⁶⁵ W. D. O’Flaherty, “The Post-Vedic History of the Soma Plant,” in Robert Gordon Wasson, *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*, New York, 1968, pp. 128-129.

²⁶⁶ Henrik Samuel Nyberg, *Irans forntida religioner*, tr. Hans Heinrich Schaeder as *Die Religionen des Alten Iran*, *Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft* 43, Leipzig, 1938, repr. Osnabrück, 1966; tr. Sayf-al-Din Najmābādi as *Dinhā-ye Irān-e bāstān*, Tehran, 1360 Š./1981. pp. 177, 190, 290.

²⁶⁷ Walter Bruno Henning, *Zoroaster: Politician or Witch-Doctor?* Ratanbai Katrak Lectures 3, (1949), Oxford, 1951. p. 30)

²⁶⁸ Dieter Taillieu, “Old Iranian haoma-: A Note on Its Pharmacology,” *Acta Orientalia Belgica* 9, 1994 (pub. 1995), p. 191)

proposed another hallucinogen, the fly-agaric mushroom, *Amanita muscaria*. John Brough, again ignoring dosage, argued that the stupor occasionally induced by flyagaric disqualified it from being sauma, which stimulated warriors²⁶⁹. This point was virtually conceded by Wasson²⁷⁰, whereas Ilya Greshevitch²⁷¹ pointed out that in moderation this mushroom is a stimulant, and added some ingenious arguments in favor of the identification. Other proposals were for mandrake, *Mandragora turcomanica* (Khlopin) and ginseng, *Panax ginseng* (Windfuhr), but these rightly gained little if any support.

As for the plant yielding the extract in modern times, the Brahmans regularly used one of the *Sarcostemmas* (*Asclepiads*), which are evidently a substitute for ancient*sauma, since they are plants of warm climates. From the late 19th century it has been known (O’Flaherty, pp. 118, 122) that the Zoroastrians of Yazd use a variety of ephedra which they call huma, hum and which they supply to their coreligionists in India, where ephedras do not grow. The plants flourish, however, in Inner Asia, the Indo-Iranian borderlands and Persia. Gradually it was discovered that in a number of living Iranian languages and dialects ephedras are known as hōm or some similar term, and that in the Indic languages of Gilgit and Kāferestān (Nurestān) they are called som, soma. Together linguistic and ritual evidence seemed decisive.

In 1989 it was partially questioned, however, in a fully documented study by the botanist David S. Flattery, with linguistic support from Martin Schwartz. Flattery still held sauma to have been an hallucinogen, and argued that the effects attributed to haoma/soma in the texts did not correspond to those provoked by ephedrine alkaloids extracted from ephedra. Therefore, ephedra must have been mixed with

²⁶⁹ John Brough, “Soma and *Amanita muscaria*,” BSOAS 34, 1971, p. 360.

²⁷⁰ Robert Gordon Wasson, ed., *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*, Ethno-Mycological Studies 1, New York, 1968; reviewed by Franciscus B. J. Kuiper, in IJ12, 1970, pp. 297-85.

²⁷¹ Ilya Gershevitch, “An Iranist’s View of the Soma Controversy,” in Philippe Gignoux and Ahmad Tafazzoli, eds., *Mémorial Jean de Me-nasce*, Louvain, 1974, p. 50.

another psychotropic agent, one inducing visions. In Videvdad²⁷² it is indicated that haoma was pressed together with a plant called *haḍānaēpātā*, a word of disputed meaning. In the known Zoroastrian rite a pomegranate twig is used, but this must be a substitute for the original plant, which Flattery proposed to identify as harmel (mountain/wild rue), *Peganum harmala*. This is known in Iranian languages as *seband*, *esfand*, *sven*, forms all derived from Av. *spənta-* “holy.” It yields the β -carboline alkaloids harmaline and harmine, whose reported sleep-inducing (side) effect might, combined with ephedrine, have “facilitated the experience of visions”; and because of the holiness of harmel, he saw this as the essential haoma, that called *dūraoša*²⁷³ (q.v.; Flattery and Schwartz, pp. 63-64 and n. 28), with ephedra as the less effective ingredient. This hypothesis was open to strong objections, notably that no convincing reason can be found for an abandoning of the easily available harmel. Moreover, although Iranian Zoroastrians make much use of rue (now more often in the form of garden rue, *Rue graveolens*) they do not crush it or associate it in any way with haoma rituals.

In the same year (1989) Harry Falk in an important article argued that the essential effect sought from soma/haoma was not hallucinatory, but precisely that produced by ephedrine, namely inducing alertness and awareness. He cited as evidence the previously overlooked use of soma in the highly esteemed night-time *Atirātra* ritual as both a sleep-preventing drink for the priests and a stimulating offering to *Vṛtra*-fighting Indra. The alkaloid ephedrine is somewhat milder yet more prolonged in action than adrenaline, and may be changed to metamphetamin or an analeptic amine by elimination of the hydroxyl group on the side chain²⁷⁴. The basic alkaloid is water-soluble and, because of climactic conditions, its full effect could be enjoyed only in situ, i.e., in the mountainous borderlands between India and Greater Iran, where the ephedrine-yielding species of ephedra (*Ephedra gerardiana*, *procera*,

²⁷² Avesta. Videvdad. 14.4; Yasht. 68.1.

²⁷³ W. D. O’Flaherty, “The Post-Vedic History of the Soma Plant,” in Robert Gordon Wasson, *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*, New York, 1968, pp. 128-129.

²⁷⁴ G. Ito, “An Interpretation of Yasna 32:14,” *Orient* 25, 1989, pp. 43-50.

and intermedia) grow. This limited distribution of potent ephedra would explain the post-Vedic question put to the soma vendor, whether his merchandise was harvested on mount Mūjavat²⁷⁵. Interestingly, a side-effect of ephedrine, the hindering of urination, coincides with the priestly fear to die of urine-retention²⁷⁶.

There seems no doubt that the haoma depicted in the Hōm Yasht is a normal, chlorofyll-bearing plant: apart from its stock color epithet “yellow, golden, green” (Av. zairi- and zairi.gaona-, cf. Skt. hari-) this is suggested most strongly by the mention of “stems, shoots and branches” (Av. varəšajīš, frasparəγē, frauuāxšē, cf. Pahl. ēwan, spēg, tīg,²⁷⁷). Haoma is further called “having tender/pliantaṣu(s)” (Av. naṃyaṣu²⁷⁸), or “having tasty aṣu(s)” (Gershevitch, 1974, p. 48; pure soma, however, is not “sweet,” Skt. mādhu-, but “sharp, astringent,” Skt. tīvrā-, cf. Falk, 1989, p. 83). This aṣu- (cf. Skt. aṃśu-) is exclusively accorded tohaoma/soma and has therefore been taken for the actual name of the sauma-yielding plant, but more probably it denotes a “twig” (cf. Pahl. tīg in)²⁷⁹. In favor of the fly-agaric theory “stalk” (Wasson, 1968, pp. 44 f.) and “fibre”/“flesh” (Gershevitch, 1974, p. 48, 74-75; Windfuhr, p. 701) were proposed, but this ignores the expressed necessity of pounding the aṣu/aṃśu, which seems relevant only in the case of fibrous or hard plant material (twigs, roots, seed). Both haoma and soma are accorded fragrance (Avesta. hubaoiḍi²⁸⁰, cf. Skt. surabhintara-) and a mountainous location; the additional reference to river valleys in Yasna²⁸¹ is probably only a poetic way of saying “all haomas, wherever they may be”²⁸². Reality has been sought inhaoma’s epithet “tall” (Avesta bərəzant²⁸³) and in the anthropomorphic appearance of the

²⁷⁵ H. Falk, “Soma I and II,” BSOAS 52, 1989, p. 87.

²⁷⁶ H. Falk, “Soma I and II,” BSOAS 52, 1989, p. 83.

²⁷⁷ Avesta.Yasna. 10.5

²⁷⁸ Avesta.Yasna. 9.16

²⁷⁹ Avesta.Yasna. 10.2

²⁸⁰ Avesta.Yasna. 10.4,

²⁸¹ Avesta.Yasna. 10.17

²⁸² John Brough, “Soma and Amanita muscaria,” BSOAS 34, 1971, p. 343.

²⁸³ Avesta.Yasna. 10.21,

plant²⁸⁴. Such speculations and the overall unscientific character of the scriptural descriptions confine the contribution of descriptive features in a botanical identification of saoma to that of mere touchstones.

²⁸⁴ Gernot L. Windfuhr, "Haoma/Soma, the Plant," in *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*, 2 vols., *Acta Iranica* 24-25, Leiden, 1985, I, pp. 704, 712.

II.2. The iconography of zoroastrianism divinities.

This work is about zoroastrianism divinities' imageries. In general, The deities of imageries researching are difficult if you don't know representations in material or in written sources, also firstly we need to learn about iconography. Iconography is learned by a lot of scholars, for instance T. D. N. Mettinger defines aniconism as "cults where there is no iconic representation of the deity (anthropomorphic or theriomorphic) serving as the dominant or central cultic symbol. . . ." Further, he makes an important distinction between what he calls "material aniconism" and "empty-space aniconism"—aniconic symbolism or sacred emptiness, respectively, both of which replace a figural representation of the divinity. Michael Shenkar argue that examples of both "material aniconism" and "empty-space aniconism" may undoubtedly be found in the Iranian world together with additional categories of "semi-aniconism" and "elemental aniconism." It will be demonstrated that the "tension" between the material aniconic symbol and the mental anthropomorphic notion of a deity is a phenomenon widely encountered in pre-Islamic Iranian cults.

Often taken to allude Iranian and divinities and address some milestone in the emergence and development of anthropomorphic imagery in the pre-Islamic Iranian world. It is often stated that the anthropomorphic figuration of deities is not characteristic of Iranian culture.* Despite these claims, there were periods in which the principal Iranian deities were represented in a precise anthropomorphic form. This is probably true for the gods of the Scythians, various deities that appear on the Kushan coins, the original and eclectic gods of the Sogdians, the gods of the Zoroastrian Sasanian pantheon, and numerous representations of unknown deities, demons, and demi-gods that appear mainly in Sasanian and Sogdian art and are difficult to identify. When western Iran's culture remains compared with the evidence Near Eastern cultures.¹ It is also generally claimed that the roots of Iranian aniconism are evident in the earliest written sources describing Indo-Iranian cultic

practices and religious rites. Indeed, the Avesta, the sacred scriptures of Zoroastrianism our earliest literary sources on Indo-Iranian religion, make no mention of either idols or cultic statues; furthermore, they provide no detailed anthropomorphic descriptions of the deities of the Indo-Iranian pantheon. The Iranian goddess Anāhitā, whose appearance is described in the Avesta in vivid anthropomorphic terms, is usually cited as the sole exception that proves the rule.²⁸⁵ Nevertheless, careful reading of the Avesta provides unambiguous indications that some other divinities were also conceived anthropomorphically, including Mithra, Aši, Haoma, Vərəθraϥna, and Ahura Mazdā himself. As in the Avesta, the deity is usually described through one or two typical traits, *pars pro toto*, while his general appearance remains obscure. The aniconism of the Persians is a well-known *topos* in Greek and Latin sources, which make up the major part of the available literary evidence.²⁸⁶ Firstly, people were believed warrior-god because that period the war were a lot among the people, so warrior –gods reperesented on “material aniconism” among the Iranians is the worship of a warrior-god in the form of a sword thrust into the ground. Herodotus, writing about Scythian rituals, tells us that: “. . . their sacrifices to Ares are of this sort. Every district in each of the governments has a structure sacred to Ares; namely, a pile of bundles of sticks . . . On this sacred pile an ancient akinakes (short sword) of iron is set for each people: their image of Ares. They bring yearly sacrifice of sheep and goats and horses to this akinakes, offering to these symbols even more than they do to the other gods.”²⁸⁷ About this in Ammianus Marcellinus notes that “Among them no temple nor sanctuary is to be seen, not even a straw-roofed hut is visible anywhere; but according to a Barbarian custom, a naked sword is fixed in the ground and they respectfully worship it as god of war and protector of the regions through which they travel, even, it is found a number of warrior weapons in Scythian burial sites .” The old people were used various the iconagraphy of deties for example: zoomorphic so this is met in Avesta. For that

²⁸⁵ Yasht. 5.30.125–130. Grenet 2010, 87

²⁸⁶ A. De Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature*. Leiden.

²⁸⁷ Herodotus, *History* 4.62

reason, the common tendency to consider various animals appearing in Iranian and Central Asia art as allusions to deities.

But none of these animals, which are especially abundant in Sasanian art, is ever identified by an inscription, and none appear in any clear cultic context. In Avestan zoomorphic manifestations, they are readily interpreted as such, but when there is no appropriate Avestan explanation, they remain “just animals” and require no further interpretation. In Avesta, some animals were sacred but they were not deities, they probably used birds or animals drawings for divinities’ pictures. For example: on farahvar image ²⁸⁸ but not all, The interpretation of the animals in central Asia art as symbolic representations of divinities appears justified in only a few cases. For instance, a ram decorated with ribbons could indeed represent xvarənah, based on the evidence from Kār-nāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābagān . on other hand, it may be initial image of the goddess Nana in the Eastern Iranian and Central Asia world. On the coins issued by the Indo- Scythian rulers Sapadbizes and Agesiles (end of the first century b.c.e.), she is represented only by her animal, a lion, which is identified by the inscription NANAIA (fig. 2).²⁸⁹ It is worth noting that the first images of the god Oēšo (oṇṣo) on the early issues of the Kushan king Wima Kadphises are aniconic and represent the god by his most recognizable symbols, a trident combined with an axe and a bull. The anthropomorphic image of Oēšo was created during Wima Kadphises’ reign, most likely by incorporating features taken from the iconography of Poseidon, Zeus, and Heracles.²⁹⁰ it possibly connected with primitive conviction exactly totemism(magia). The kushans empire accepted some the cultural elements characteristic from old empire or tribes. Also, The interpretation of deities is represented on animal style as Scythian gods(issue), is obviously based on the Avesta, it is worth mentioning that the *Shāh-nāma* describes

²⁸⁸ Farahor motif - K.E.Edulji september 2013

²⁸⁹ On the cult of Nana see Tanabe 1995; Ambos 2003; Ghose 2006.

²⁹⁰ Giuliano 2004, 59

the banners of heroes as decorated with different beasts: elephants, lions, wolves, wild boars.²⁹¹ In central Asia and eastern Iran art is met empty- space aniconism, for instance: according to Curtius Rufus; that is, almost certainly, to the principal god of the Achaemenians, Ahura Mazdā. Xenophon also mentions two other chariots participating in the royal procession, one dedicated to the Sun (perhaps the *interpretatio graeca* of the Zoroastrianism's Mithra) and the second to some unnamed deity. And we say perhaps the most celebrated and frequently remarked upon stereotype regarding the Central Asia cults is the worship of fire. Zoroastrians respected fire as deities among, Sarriandiddin said "fire is the son of Akhura Mazda"²⁹², according to M. Boyce "the early Zoroastrianism had a great variety of religious dogma and numerous rites, but it also demanded a lot of material sacrifices on the part of its followers".²⁹³ So, Temple of Fire stood on the soil and consisted of a number of large rooms.²⁹⁴ The centre of the temple was occupied by a large sanctuary with its interior completely covered with white gypsum layer. In close vicinity to the sanctuary a long chain of four rectangular altars of fire was located. All of them were made in the virgin soil and covered inside with adobe. Thick layers of smoke residue on the walls prove that fire in the altars was burning almost constantly, a kind of an "**eternal flame**"²⁹⁵. The veneration of fire probably has its roots in the remote Indo-Iranian past.²⁹⁶ At last we seem to find archaeological facts that give basis to theoretical discussions of archaeologists and linguists on the problem of the existence of the cult of Fire. Thus, at North Gonur two types of altars were used in the proto-Zoroastrian period: 1) round altars for sacrifices to various gods of the Margiana pantheon and 2) rectangular ones with an "eternal flame" burning in them. M. Boyce wrote: "Offerings consisted of dry clean woods, incense

²⁹¹ Pugachenkova 1999, 207–8 with references

²⁹² Sarianidi - Zadolgo do zaratushtry - arheologicheskie dokaza

²⁹³ Boyce, 2003, p.104

²⁹⁴ Sarianidi, 2008, figs. 19-20

²⁹⁵ Sarianidi, 2008, figs. 19-20

²⁹⁶ Sarianidi, 2006

(dry leaves or herbs) and some animal fat <...>. The fat offering was probably done when they cooked meat – the fire in this way got its share. Fat made the fire burn brighter and the melted fat made the flame more strong” From the Achaemenian period, if not earlier, fire functioned as a visual manifestation of the divine. Achaemenian kings can be seen worshipping in front of the stepped fire-altar at Naqš-e Rostam, and similar altars are indeed attested in the archaeological record, the most famous being the two monumental plinths in the Sacred Precinct at Pasargadae. After the Achaemenians, the fire-altar appears on the coins of the *frataraka* rulers of Pars and their successor, Ardašīr I, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty.²⁹⁷(fig 3) On most coin types of Ardašīr I, the altar is depicted in combination with lion legs, which should be perhaps interpreted as a joint image of fire-altar and divine throne, thus emphasizing the fire-altar as the seat of an invisible, aniconic divinity. Ardašīr’s son Šāpūr I added two figures in royal attire flanking the altar, and this composition eventually became the most popular reverse design of the Sasanian coins. Early in the fourth century c.e. the Sasanian king Ōhrmazd II added a bust to the fire-altar on the reverse of his coins, a motif that continues under other Sasanian kings with two main variations (fig. 4).²⁹⁸ It is shown both *en face* and in profile and a similar bust also appears on two Sasanian seals (fig. 5).⁵³ Later, a curious design of a bust surrounded by a nimbus of flames is portrayed on coins of Xusrō II, this time without the altar (fig. 6).²⁹⁹ Under Kušānšāh Pērōz I, the image of a bust on the fire altar appears also in Eastern Iranian and central Asia world.(Cribb 1990, nos. 31–32) To be more precise, there are two busts, identified by the inscriptions as the goddess Nana, who was probably the head of the Kushan royal pantheon, and βαγο βορζαβο, “the exalted god” or “the god who possesses the heights,” known from the Kushan pantheon under the name Oēšo (figs. 7, 8). On the coins of Kušānšāh Ōhrmazd I,

²⁹⁷ 53–55 Boyce 1989

²⁹⁸ Gyselen 2000

²⁹⁹ Gyselen 2000

Nana disappears, but βαγο βορζαβο is now shown with the entire upper part of his body emerging from the altar, holding a long spear in his left hand and offering a diadem with his right (fig. 9).³⁰⁰ Mesopotamia have a lot of historical heritages we know elementary aniconism or antropomorphism, definite from in first millennium b.c.e. It is possible that central Asia aniconism and anthropomorphism or in general the interpretations of divine received with various culture contacts or through the conquests Mesopotamian heritage(?) It is a supposition, indeed, In ancient Mesopotamia, the deities were commonly perceived to have a human form and were represented anthropomorphically.³ about this T. Ornan puts it, “such an absence may indicate an inherent difficulty for Mesopotamians to giving concrete form through visual images to the conceptual image of a humanshaped god . . . while deities were conceived of as personified entities, they were not always thus represented.”³⁰¹ The most situation deities meet with winged disk for celebrated and common. It appears that there are not sufficient grounds for doubting that the figure in the winged disk does, in fact, represent Ahura Mazdā(farahvar), the highest god of the Achaemenian kings who is constantly invoked in their royal inscriptions. The addition of the human torso to the winged disk, which was a popular symbol of principal deities in the Near East, was apparently an Assyrian invention created to depict their national god Aššur and in some instances also Shamash.³⁰² Also, The winged disk without the human-shaped figure features frequently in Achaemenian glyptics.

Though, The Kushan kings and the Sogdian rulers in what is today parts of Afghanistan, Northern Pakistan, and mainly Uzbekistan and Tajikistan should be credited for the final anthropomorphization of most Iranian deities. Out of 26 divinities depicted on Kushan coins in full anthropomorphic shape, at least 18 definitely have an Iranian background. 80 Kushan temples also housed cultic images

³⁰⁰ Cribb 1990, nos. 24–27

³⁰¹ Ornan 2009, 94.

³⁰² Root 1979; Lukonin 1987; Panaino 2000. According to some, the Assyrian symbol could also be a representation of Shamash: Green 1995, 1838; Collon 2001)

of those deities, as is evident from the dedicatory inscriptions uncovered at the sites of two sanctuaries, at Surkh-Kotal and Rabatak.⁸¹ It is to this period, or slightly earlier, before the rise of the Kushan dynasty as the dominant force forging an empire out of the various principalities ruled by the nomadic clans, that the creation of the first anthropomorphic images of Buddha and Śiva (and other Indian deities) are also usually dated.³⁰³ It seems that the rich artistic heritage of Hellenistic Bactria that was absorbed by Kushan dynastic art, as well as the influence of contemporary Roman art, determined the appearance of human-shaped Iranian and Central Asia gods and goddesses. The Sogdians went even further in combining Hellenistic and Kushan legacies with Sasanian and Indian influences, creating the most complete series of divine personages in Central Asia. Unfortunately, unlike the Kushan gods in Iranian, the Sogdian images are not labeled and are therefore difficult to identify.³⁰⁴

The Babylonian priest Berossus, writing in Greek in the Hellenistic period, credited Artaxerxes II with the introduction of statues of Anāhitā into several temples in the cities of the Empire.³⁰⁵ So, Nowadays, the interpretations of Nana is issue (exactly, when and why the worship of *Inanlla* spread to Central Asia) among scholars in the Central Asia, For some last period most scholars who have written on the Central Asian Nana or Nanaia have assumed that she was a late incarnation of the Sumerian goddess *Illanna*. Rtveladze, for examples, writes, 'It is interesting that the rulers of western Bactria chose as their patron deity the Goddess Nana whose cult originally began in ancient Mesopotamia. The name of the Goddess Nana (Inana-Ishtar-Lady of Heaven) is found in early Mesopotamian liturgical texts. In sculpture and glyptics she was depicted as a woman, standing on a lion or lions and holding in her hand arrows and wand, or flowers and sceptre'). The belief that the Bactrian Nana = Inannallshtar of the famous cult center Eanna at Uruk in southern Mesopotamia can traced back at least as far as 1876 when the French orientalist Franrois Lenormant published one of

³⁰³ Giuliano 2004. For the genesis of figural representations of the Buddha and Buddhist aniconism see Seckel 2004

³⁰⁴ The only exception is Wēšparkar from Panjikent XXII/1: Grenet 2010, p. 92, fig. 14.

³⁰⁵ Cl. Alex., Protepticus 5.65.3

the first serious inquiries into the goddess') Subsequently we find it in late 19th century dictionaries of mythology and religion') It is repeated in 1. Rosenfield's 1967 study of Kushan art where we read, 'NANA ...apparently developed out of the ancient Mesopotamian cult of the Lady of Heaven (Inanna-Ishatar) Recently, Grenet and Marshak have suggested that the while characteristics of Nana were transferred to Anahita in the late Achaemenid period, the Sasanians sought to transform Nana into Anahita after their conquest of the Kushans. In the Kushan world, Nana also figures in the Hindu cult of Siva, specifically as Siva's spouse, Durga. And of course, as noted above, we find the same sentiment in Rostovtzev's recent contribution to this journal.³⁰⁶ Again one testimony to the existence of cultic statues among Iranian and central Asia is the evidence of Strabo regarding the image of the god Ōmanos that was carried in religious processions by Magi in Cappadocia.³⁰⁷ Ōmanos is most probably the Greek rendering of the OP form *Va(h)u-manah-, Vohu Manah, "Good Thought," one of the *Aməša Spənta*, "Bounteous Immortals," the beneficent divinities of Zoroastrianism.() The existence of a cultic statue of Vohu Manah is all the more significant, as it indicates not only that gods could be easily identified with other Near Eastern and Greek divinities but also that a typically Avestan abstract personification could be represented anthropomorphically.³⁰⁸ In the West, Sasanian art generated only a few anthropomorphic images of deities: Ahura Mazdā, the goddess Anāhitā, ^{Mithra}, Māh, and perhaps also Ātar and Vərəθraγna. This is considerably less than the pantheons of the Kushans and Sogdians, their contemporaries in Eastern Iran (central Asia and close territory) world, but it far exceeds all known representations of Iranian deities from the previous periods in Western Iranian world. Thus it should be noted that the five-hundred-year rule of Parthian kings produced only one unquestionable³⁰⁹ pictorial representation of an

³⁰⁶ D. T. Potts 2001 *Silk Road Art Archaeology* "Nana in Bactria"

³⁰⁷ Str. 15.3.15. See the commentary on this passage by De Jong 1997, 150–56

³⁰⁸ On Vohu Manah see Narten 1989; Gignoux 1989. so Yasna

³⁰⁹ Bernard 1990, 23.

Iranian divinity—the bronze statue of Heracles-Vərəθrayna from Mesene which dates from the 150–151 c.e. Otherwise, we can also single out symbolic representations of the divine chariots of Mithra, Māh, and other unidentified deities on Sasanian seals and sealings (figs. 13, 14) Zoroastrian scriptures divided *menog* and *getig*.³¹⁰ *Gētīg* stands for “the material, earthly (world), that which can be apprehended through the senses” while *mēnōg* is best described as “that which is non-material, non-sensual, intelligible, incorporeal and unperceived by the senses.”³¹¹ The principal distinction is usually made between the visible and material characteristics of *gētīg* and the invisible and non-material ones of *mēnōg*.³¹²

In a passage from the Avesta and , Ahura Mazdā is described as having a fully anthropomorphic appearance. It is revealed by a passage of the Avesta that Zardušt was seated before Ohrmazd and was learning his word by heart and he spoke to Ohrmazd, saying “Your head and hands and feet and hair and face and tongue (are) visible to me even as those of my own, and you have such clothes as men have. Give me (your) hand, so that I may take hold of your hand.” Ohrmazd said “I am an intangible spirit; it is not possible to take hold of my hand.” Zardušt said “You (are) intangible, and Wahman and Ardwahišt and Šahrewar and Spandarmad and Hordad and Amurdad (are) intangible; and when I depart from before you, and do not see you and them also when I see that person and worship him, there is something (perceptible) of him should you and those seven Amahraspand’s be worshipped likewise or not?” Ohrmazd said “Listen. I say to you, oh Spitamān Zardušt! Each one of us has given to the material world (*gētīg*) a foster-mother of his own, where by the proper duty which he makes in the spiritual world (*mēnōg*) is made current in the material world.. (In) that material world of Mine,

I, who am Ohrmazd, (preside over) the just man, and Wahman over cattle, and Ardwahišt over fire, and Šahrewar over metals, and Spandarmad over earth and

³¹⁰ Shaked 1971; Shaked 2001

³¹¹ Shaked 1971, 60

³¹² Shaked 1971, 63

virtuous woman, and Hordad over waters, and Amurdad over plants.”³¹³

Unequivocal allusions to the anthropomorphic shape of Ahura Mazdā and the Aməša Spənta are found in Middle Persian literature also. In the *Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādestān ī dēnīg*, Ōhrmazd and Spandarmad are described as an affectionate, embracing couple. When Zoroaster sat before Ohrmazd, and Wahman and Ardwahišt and Šahrewar and Hordād and Amurdād and Spandarmad are sitting around Ohrmazd, Spandarmad sits at his side, and she brought her hand (to be placed) on (his) neck. Zoroaster asked Ohrmazd: “Who (is) this who is sitting at your side to whom you are so friendly, and she is also friendly to you in such a manner? Neither do you, who are Ohrmazd, turn your eyes from her, nor does she turn (hers) from you; Neither do you, who are Ohrmazd, let her from (your) hand, nor does she let you from (her) hand.” And Ohrmazd said: “This (is) Spandarmad, who (is) my daughter and the lady in charge of my Paradise, and the mother of the creatures.”³¹⁴

In the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* itself, we find the notion that it is possible to see Ōhrmazd in *mēnōg* “through wisdom and the power of similitude.” The eighteenth question: when the soul of the righteous and that of the wicked go to the spiritual world, is it possible for them to see Ohrmazd and Ahriman or not? The reply is this: it has been said of Ahriman that he has no material existence. Ohrmazd is indeed a spirit among the spiritual beings and deserves propitiation in the material as well as in the spiritual world. His form is not completely visible, but he is seen through wisdom and the power of similitude. In a passage by Al-Jayhānī quoted by Shahrastānī (d. 1153 c.e.), Ōhrmazd is said to have created the world in the following manner: “I created the whole of this world from myself. I created the souls of the righteous from the hair of my head; the sky from my brain; nails and arms (?) from my forehead; the sun from my eye; the moon from my nose; the stars from my tongue; Srōš and the rest of the

³¹³ Šāyast nē-Šāyast 15.1–5, ed. and trans. Kotval 1969

³¹⁴ (The Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādestānī Dēnīg 8.2–5, ed. and trans. Williams 1990)

angels from my ear; the earth from the tendon of my foot.”³¹⁵ What is evident from these texts, and also from several other places in Pahlavi literature, is that the gods were basically perceived as having human form in *mēnōg*, but their manifestations in the visible world, *gētīg*, usually assumed symbolic, metaphoric, elemental, and aniconic shape. The idea that the deities do not have an anthropomorphic representation in the physical plane, which is visible to ordinary people, may have been one of the main theoretical concepts behind the Iranian (central Asia) inclination to represent their divinities in anthropomorphic form. It is also clear that human-shaped images existed during certain periods in some Iranian religions, but there is usually no way of knowing whether this reflects nuances in cult or even religious beliefs. The idea of aniconism as a “primitive” and “ancient” form of worship that preceded figural representation can be definitely put to rest. It is clear that in most cultures, cultic statues coexisted with non-figural symbols, and aniconism was just “another way to visualize the divine.”³¹⁶ The Central Asian type of Mithra as charioteer deeply influenced the iconography of the Indian Sūrya, including the costume. On the other hand, syncretic developments with Hindu or local cults, already attested at the official level with the Kushano-Sasanian *burz’awand yazad*, continued in Bactria and in the neighboring regions. The main witness is the cave painting at Doktar-e Nošervān, to the north of Bamian, probably dating from the 7th century: the god seated on a throne resting on the foreparts of two horses, with his sword between his legs, conforms to the type of Mithra. This filiation is confirmed by the mask of a horned lion above the wings of his crown, a cluster of animal symbols also found on some Sasanian seals and which appears to allude to the coming of the Sun into Aries, when a festival to the Sun was celebrated. The eight animal heads protruding from his halo can be viewed as symbols of the directions of space (rather than planets)³¹⁷. The Bactrian archives from this valley, however, indicate that the

³¹⁵ Shaked 1994, 67. A similar account although with some differences is found also in Pahlavi Rivāyat, chap. 46

³¹⁶ Mylonopoulos 2010, 10; see also Gaifman 2008

³¹⁷ in Grenet, 1995

local high god was Žun (Zurwaan), whose regional importance all along the Indo-Iranian border is also attested by the Chinese traveler Xuanzang, so it appears plausible that at Dokotar-e Noæervaan attributes once proper to Mithra have been reused for an even more encompassing religious figure.

Conclusion

Zoroastrianism - the Eurasian territory from the consciousness and religion. Founder of the name of their religion, the religion of Zoroastrianism, prophet Zaradushtra (Greek Zoroaster) on behalf of the oligopoly. Zoroaster's fundamentals remain partly down to teaching religion's holy book "Avesta". Several times during its long-term Zoroastrianism has undergone major reforms. Zoroastrianism certain stage of development is very broad in common though, is currently too small religious community.

Multi-religion, Zoroastrianism, such as teaching a kind of religious terminology. The purpose of this study stated that the primary principles of Zoroastrianism doctrine.

In fact, the prophet of Zoroastrianism in Zoroastrian centuries later expanded its territory for centuries after his death, some changes have occurred as a result of the impact. At different times in different regions of the circle There are a variety of most faiths their roots back to the doctrine of Zoroastrian. A group of historians and religious beliefs common name - Zoroastrianism means of expressing (author supports this idea). It is also frequently cited as necessary to "Zoroastrianism" in the role of a number of synonyms: "mazdaism," "worshipping" and "partial (parsizm)" is applied. Especially "Zoroastrianism" and "mazdaism (mazdaizm - the word comes from the name of the god Ahura Mazda.)" The relationship between the terms is very important.

The opinions expressed in the results of the research allows us to some conclusions. Zoroaster's god conclusions about the solution of problems related to a number of routes to be targeted location. Indeed, many among the first scientists to discuss this problem, which the prophet of Zoroastrism country and related to the personality of the subject. In this direction, first of all it is necessary to study the roots of which religion is the foundation for spiritual education.

-Zoroastrianism, relying on research, we can say that God is functional and analysis of sources spirit has proved to be the territory of Central Asia.

- Affect the holy book "Avesta" in the linguistic analysis of its oldest evidence of belonging to the people of Central Asia.

- Zoroaster gods study shows prophet Zoroaster's religious reform as well as the Central Asian population of consciousness and religion gods. However, this is the only religious system without certain specific region or tribe Divine.

- The prophet Zoroaster tribal conflict, in order to ensure social stability, the region's tribal and ethnic gods attach a single religious system. It is the purpose of all religions is the only aimed at propaganda.

- Zoroaster from the time of its synagogues are not a sign of divine images were not material. This is the first time in Central Asia and the god of Zoroastrianism wall as a natural aspect of the present invention should be noted that this may be the birthplace of the religion of the region, leaving in doubt the idea.

-Zoroaster was a long historical period, and includes the area. That is why God is described in the functional and appearance changes have occurred.

- Zoroaster gods described differences depending on the historical periods, but also embodies the combination of local properties. For instance, the image of the gods Zoroastrianism spread in the region can be considered uniform. Through the study of the images of the divine circle of elements affect this evidence and theology, which in practice.

- Zoroaster gods appearance and functional properties changing course the states of the former East are not free from the requirements of power and influence, that is for each government to create the inviolability of its divine power to carry out a number of activities.

As a final conclusion, we can say that Zoroaster doctrine imagination of the ancient peoples of Central Asia even though the population of the region adjacent to the ancient East influence felt on the floor. Zoroaster's theology aware of the thinking of the ancient peoples of Central Asia through research on the , but also integration

with other parts of the ancestors informed. We believe that the image of the divine source of both written and Zoroastrianism, which for the period and the kind of continents.

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