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SONGS OF ZARATHUSHTRA THE GATHAS

TRANSLATED FROM THE AVESTA

by

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RADHAKRISHNAN

LONDON

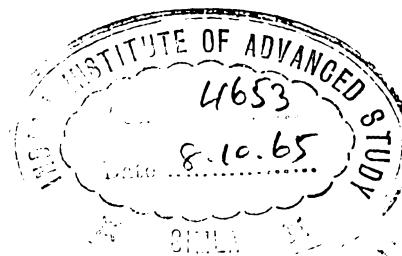
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

As a result of two Wars that have devastated the world men and women everywhere feel a twofold need. We need a deeper understanding and appreciation of other peoples and their civilizations, especially their moral and spiritual achievements. And we need a new vision of the Universe, a clearer insight into the fundamentals of ethics and religion. How ought men to behave? How ought nations? Does God exist? What is His Nature? How is He related to His creation? Especially, how can man approach Him? In other words, there is a general desire to know what the greatest minds, whether of East or West, have thought and said about the Truth of God and of the beings who (as most of them hold) have sprung from Him, live by Him, and return to Him.

It is the object of this Series, which originated among a group of Oxford men and their friends, to place the chief ethical and religious masterpieces of the world, both Christian and non-Christian, within easy reach of the intelligent reader who is not an expert—the undergraduate, the ex-Service man who is interested in the East, the Adult Student, the intelligent public generally. The Series will contain books of three kinds: translations, reproductions of ethical and religious art, and Background Books showing the surroundings in which the literature and art arose and developed. These books overlap each other. Religious art, both in East and West, often illustrates

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

a religious text, and in suitable cases the text and pictures will be printed together to complete each other. The Background Books will often consist largely of translations. The volumes will be prepared by scholars of distinction, who will try to make them, not only scholarly, but intelligible and enjoyable.

Their contents will also be very varied—ethical and social, biographical, devotional, philosophic and mystical, whether in poetry, in pictures or in prose. There is a great wealth of material. Confucius lived in a time much like our own, when State was at war with State and the people suffering and disillusioned; and the “Classics” he preserved or inspired show the social virtues that may unite families, classes and States into one great family, in obedience to the Will of Heaven. Asoka and Akbar (both of them great patrons of art) ruled a vast Empire on the principles of religious faith. There are the moral anecdotes and moral maxims of the Jewish and Muslim writers of the Middle Ages. There are the beautiful tales of courage, love and fidelity in the Indian and Persian epics. Shakespeare’s plays show that he thought the true relation between man and man is love. Here and there a volume will illustrate the unethical or less ethical man and the difficulties that beset him.

Then there are the devotional and philosophic works. The lives and legends (legends often express religious truth with clarity and beauty) of the Buddha, of the parents of Mary, of Francis of Assisi, and the exquisite sculptures and paintings that illustrate them. Indian and Christian religious music, and the words of prayer and praise which the music intensifies. There are the Prophets and Apocalyptic writers, Zarathustrian and Hebrew; the Greek philosophers

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

and the Christian thinkers—Greek, Latin, Medieval and Modern—whom they so deeply influenced. There is too the Hindu, Buddhist and Christian teaching expressed in such great monuments as the Indian temples, Barabudur (the Chartres of Asia), and Ajanta, Chartres itself and the Sistine Chapel.

Finally there are the mystics of feeling, and the mystical philosophers. In God-loving India the poets, musicians, sculptors and painters inspired by the spiritual worship of Krishna and Rama, as well as the philosophic mystics from the Upanishads onward. The two great Taoists, Lao-tze and Chuang-tze and the Sung mystical painters in China, Rūmī and other Sufis in Islam, Plato and Plotinus, followed by “Dionysius,” Dante, Eckhart, Teresa and other great mystics and mystical painters in many Christian lands.

Mankind is hungry, but the feast is there, though it is locked up and hidden away. It is the aim of this Series to put it within reach, so that, like the heroes of Homer, we may stretch out our hands to the good cheer laid before us.

No doubt the great religions differ in fundamental respects. But they are not nearly so far from one another as they seem. We think they are further off than they are largely because we so often misunderstand and misrepresent them. Those whose own religion is dogmatic have often been as ready to learn from other teachings as those who are liberals in religion. Above all there is an enormous amount of common ground in the great religions, concerning too the most fundamental matters. There is frequent agreement on the Divine Nature; God is the One, Self-Subsisting Reality, knowing Himself, and therefore loving and rejoicing in Himself. Nature and finite spirits are in

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some way subordinate kinds of Being, or merely appearances of the Divine, the One. The Way of man's approach or return to God is in essence the same, in Christian and in non-Christian teaching. It has three stages: an ethical stage, then one of knowledge and love, leading to the mystical Union of the soul with God. Each stage will be illustrated in these volumes.

Something of all this may (it is hoped) be learnt from these books and pictures in this Series. Read and pondered with a desire to learn, they will help men and women to find "fullness of life," and peoples to live together in greater understanding and harmony. To-day the earth is beautiful, but men are disillusioned and afraid. But there will come a day, perhaps not a distant day, when there will be a Renaissance of man's spirit: when men will be innocent and happy amid the beauty of the world. For their eyes will be opened to see that egoism and strife are folly, that the Universe is Spiritual, and that men are the sons of God.

They shall not hurt nor destroy
In all my holy mountain:
For all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of
the Lord
As the waters cover the sea.

FOREWORD BY RADHAKRISHNAN

I do not think that this beautiful work, edited with an excellent introduction by Dastur F. A. Bode and Miss Piloo Nanavutty, needs any commendation from me. The work is another illustration of the truth of St. Ambrose's saying (Gloss. on I Corinthians, xii, 3) that all truth, by whomsoever it be spoken, is of the Holy Spirit of God. There is an "International of the Spirit" whose members are to be found in all nations and classes and all through the ages. They represent the human tradition, the tradition of civilisation which works for the conquest of cruelty and chaos. The *Gathas* here brought together belong to that tradition. They give us glimpses of Zarathushtra's mystic enlightenment and missionary labours. They give us hope that, if we follow the divine light, the darkness that troubles and degrades us may gradually disappear. It is comforting to read the *Gathas* at a time when we are all rattled and afraid of the future.

The religion of Zarathushtra influenced Jewish and Christian thought as well as the Gnostic creeds. For us in India it is a matter of pride that the followers of this faith, which has much in common with the Vedic religion, have made India their home and have contributed effectively to her material and spiritual welfare.

S.R.

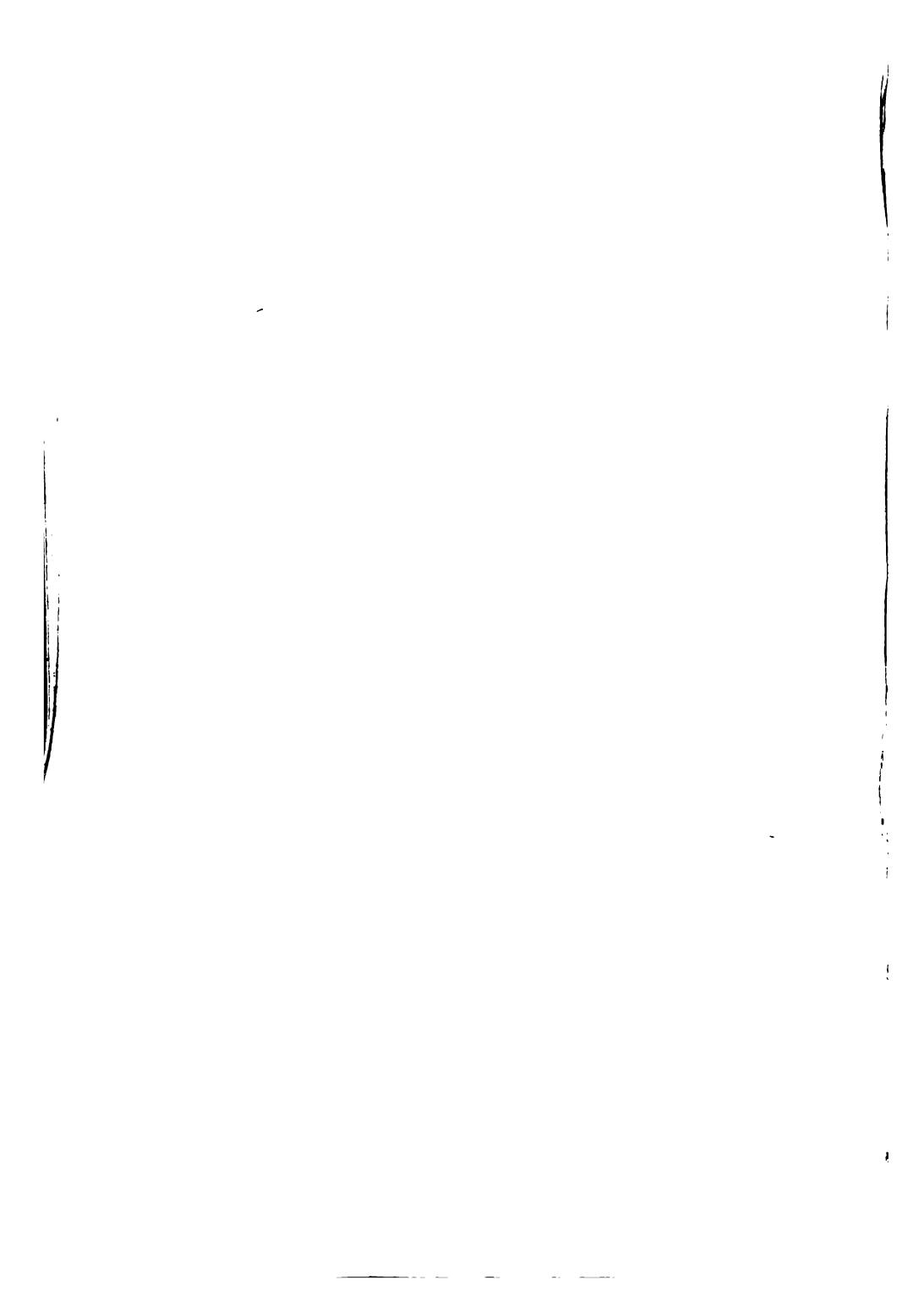
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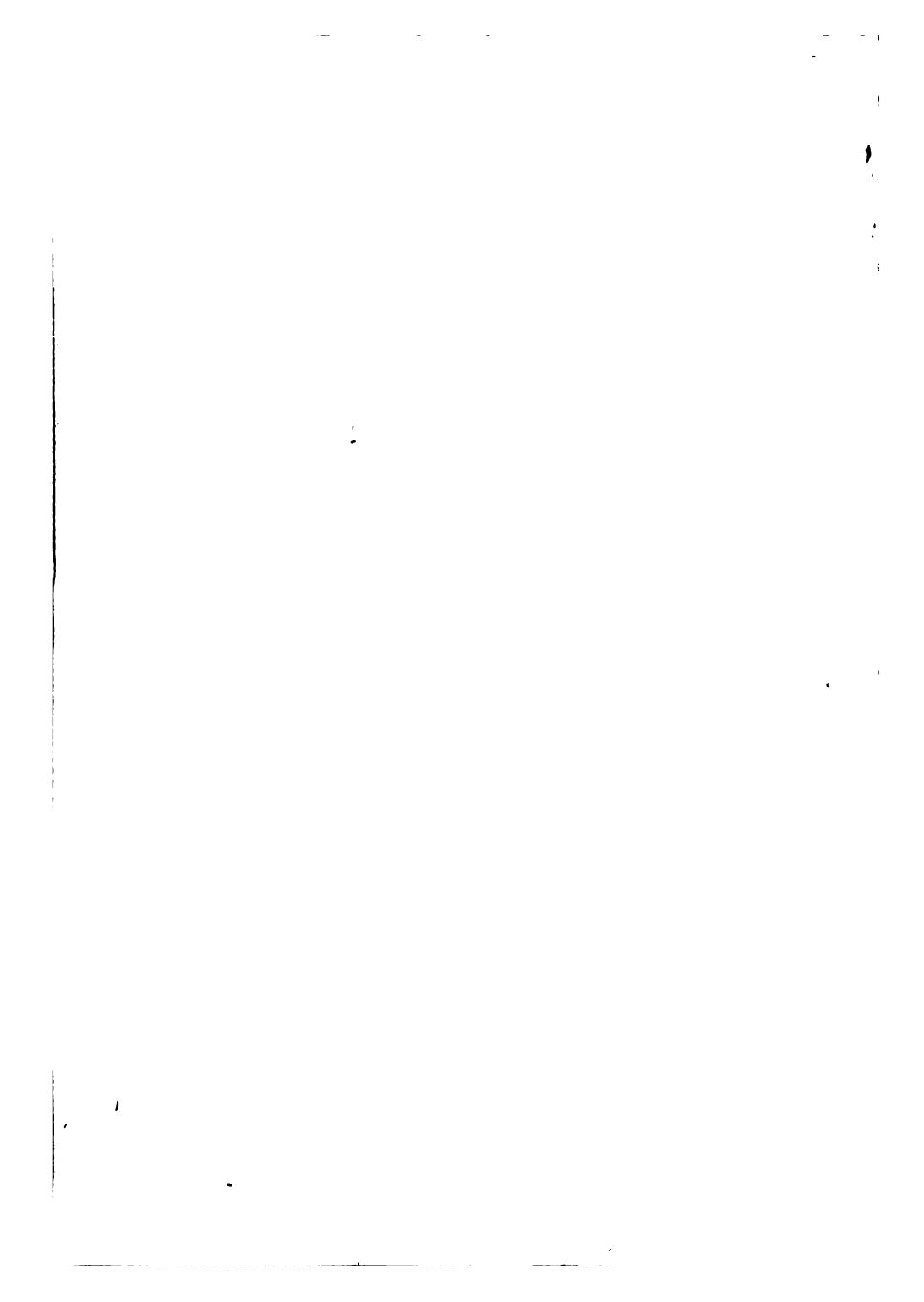
EDITOR'S NOTE

Scholars are still much divided upon the interpretation of the Gathas. The present volume contains a version of their meaning as understood by two Parsi students of the Avesta.



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INTRODUCTION

“Ahura Mazda’s Body is Light, and His Spirit Truth.”¹

Thus, in the third century A.D., the Greek philosopher, Porphyry, summed up the very core of Zarathushtian belief regarding God. The conception of Ahura Mazda as the Lord of Life and Wisdom, as the Light and the Truth, was first taught to the ancient Iranians by their prophet, Zarathushtra, or Zoroaster as the Greeks named him. This view of the Godhead prevails among the Parsis, a community of about a hundred and twenty thousand people in the whole world congregated chiefly in Bombay and its environs, who are the last of the followers of Zarathushtra’s doctrines, and for whom *Lux et Veritas* might well be the Zarathushtian motto.

Of the life and times of the founder himself, however, very little is known. In spite of painstaking research in the fields of Iranian religious literature, archaeology, ethnology, philology and history, the statement made by Dastur Dr. Dhalla, High Priest of the Parsis in Karachi, is substantially true :

“ We know everything of the life of Mohammed ; we know something of the lives of Buddha and Jesus ; we know practically nothing of the life of Zoroaster.”²

Yet it has long been recognised that Zarathushtra and his teaching exerted a profound influence on the

¹ Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras*, 41. See F. Cumont & J. Bidez, *Les Mages Hellénisés*, Paris, 1938, Vol. II, p. 73.

² M. N. Dhalla, *History of Zoroastrianism*, New York, 1938, p. 310.

INTRODUCTION

development of religious thought. In their purest form, his tenets have survived in the *Gathas* or *Divine Songs*, composed, in the main, by him with occasional verses by his disciples.¹

In the *Gathas*, Zarathushtra is concerned with such problems as the creation of the world and of man, the origin of evil, the salvation and regeneration of the individual, the consequences of good and evil deeds, rewards and punishments, a last judgment and a spiritual renewal of all things, the nature of Ahura Mazda and His Powers, and finally, how the soul of man is to attain union with God while still in this world. Practical precepts on active good works are combined with ecstatic hymns which describe the intimate communings of the soul with God.

The prime importance of the *Gathas*, therefore, lies in the ethical and religious values they propound. Literal translations of these *Songs*, together with learned commentaries, exist in English,² but they do not seem

¹ The *Gathas* are the most ancient of the sacred writings collectively named the *Avesta* (Foundation Text). The *Avesta* consists of lengthy compilations such as the *Yasna*, the *Visperad*, the *Vendidad*, etc., and shorter prayers like the *Nyaeshes* and *Yashts*. Of a vast literature which once existed under the heading of the *Avesta* only a small proportion survives today. The earliest portions of the *Avesta* were composed much before the reign of Darius (521-485 B.C.), the later portions in the succeeding centuries. The *Pahlavi Texts* were composed and written under the Sasanians (226-651 A.D.) and after. The resuscitation of the *Avesta*, according to Pahlavi tradition, was begun under a certain Valkhash, in Parthian times, i.e. in the first century A.D. The redactions of the texts were made under the Sasanians and completed, in their present form, possibly in the sixth century A.D.

² L. H. Mills, *The Zend Avesta, Part III*, S.B.E., Vol. XXXI, Oxford, 1887; J. H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, being the Hibbert Lectures for 1912, London, 1913; Maria Wilkins Smith, *Studies in the Syntax of the Gathas, together with text, translation and notes*, Language Dissertations of the Linguistic Society of America, 1929.

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as yet to have been translated with the aim of bringing out their spiritual significance. This is what the present translation attempts to do.

Although the *Gathas* are the only authentic documents on the life of Zarathushtra, Iranian tradition gives many details not found in the text.

According to this tradition, Zarathushtra began his life's work at the age of thirty, was successful at the age of forty-two in converting King Vishtaspa and his court in Bactria, a small province in Eastern Iran, propagated the faith far and wide, and died at the age of seventy-seven. The same tradition asserts that Zarathushtra lived 258 years before Alexander which is calculated by West as being 660-583 B.C.;¹ by the Swedish scholar, Nyberg, as "before 485 B.C.,"² and by the Iranian archaeologist, the late Ernst Herzfeld, as 570-550 B.C.³ It is interesting to note that, nearly two hundred years earlier, Anquetil du Perron, in his *Zend Avesta*, relying on the same tradition, had calculated Zarathushtra's era as 589-512 B.C.⁴ Besides the traditional date, there are many other important references which place Zarathushtra several centuries before 600 B.C.⁵

Tradition also assigns Zarathushtra's birthplace to Adarbaijan, west of Media. His father, Pourushaspa,

¹ E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, Part V, S.B.E., Oxford, 1897, Vol. XLVII, p. xxvii seq.

² H. S. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran*, German trans. H. H. Schaeder, Leipzig, 1938, pp. 34-45.

³ E. Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and his World*, Princeton, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 1-30. Cf. W. B. Henning, *Zoroaster*, Oxford, 1951, p. 41.

⁴ Anquetil du Perron, *Zend Avesta*, Paris, 1771, Vol. I, Part 2, p. 6.

⁵ Pour-e-Davoud, "The Age of Zarathushtra," in the *Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute*, No. 28, *Bombay*, 1935. Cf. *JRAS*, 1947, pp. 33-40.

INTRODUCTION

came from the family of the Spitamas, his mother, Dughdhova, from the clan of the Hvogvas. The Arab writer, Shahrestani (1086-1153 A.D.) gives the additional information that Zarathushtra's father came from Adarbajian and his mother from Rai or Ragha, in Media. Of Dughdhova it is said that the Glory of Ahura Mazda, together with the eternal spirit and material substance of Zarathushtra, entered into her womb, so that she conceived and gave virgin birth to the Prophet at the age of fifteen. Yet, as a girl, the Glory had so transfigured her that her father thought she was bewitched, and drove her out of his home. She thereupon took refuge with the Spitamas, in the district of Alak or Arak, and settled in the village where dwelt Paitiraspa, the father of her future husband, Pourushaspa. Tradition also maintains that Zarathushtra had several sons and daughters. In the *Gathas*, however, mention is made only of three of the Prophet's relatives : Haechataspan Spitama, Haechataspa being the fourth and Spitama the ninth ancestor of Zarathushtra according to Pahlavi tradition; his daughter, Paoruchista, whose marriage is celebrated in the last *Gatha*; and his first cousin and first disciple, Maidhyomaongha the Spitama.

Miracles abound in the traditional accounts of the Prophet's infancy and later life. He is the only child of whom it is said that he laughed aloud when he was born. Pliny adds that the vibrations of the child's brain were so fierce as to repel the hand laid upon it. His first vision of Ahura Mazda was received when he was thirty. Seven other visions, six conferences with the Amesha Spenta (Immortal, Shining Ones) and a

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homiletic dialogue with Ahura Mazda, all follow the first vision over a period of years. His missionary labours led him as far afield as China, and after the conversion of King Vishtaspa and his court in Bactria, Zarathushtra is said to have organised campaign upon campaign in proselytising. All this, and much else, is faithfully recorded by A. V. W. Jackson in his standard life of the Prophet.¹ According to tradition, Zarathushtra died a violent death while praying in the Fire Temple at Balkh. Later Zarathushtian tradition adds the picturesque touch that as the assailant thrust his javelin into Zarathushtra, the latter flung his amber prayer beads over the murderer's head saying,

“ May Ahura forgive you even as I do.”

That very instant, the assassin also was struck dead.

The trend in modern western scholarship as regards Zarathushtra can best be exemplified by Herzfeld's latest publication, *Zoroaster and his World*. According to Herzfeld, the Spitama are a Median family who figure in the fifth century B.C. in the business documents of Murashu, sons of Nippur, bankers of Darius II and Parysatis. At the same time, the family is mentioned by Ctesias. The chief of the clan had married the daughter of the last Median king, Astygates. Their son, Spitakes, the “ young Spitama,” is considered by Herzfeld to be Zarathushtra. After the conquest of Agbatana (Hamadan), by Cyrus in 550 B.C., the heiress of the Spitama family married Cyrus. Their daughter,

¹ A. V. W. Jackson, *Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, New York, 1919, 3rd ed.

INTRODUCTION

Atossa, would be the half sister of Zarathushtra.¹ Herzfeld emphasizes the royal descent of the Prophet by arguing that the language of the *Gathas* is no popular dialect, but, like Homeric Greek, that of a traditional poetry, highly metaphorical and courtly.²

It is refreshing to turn from the elusive Zarathushtra of tradition and the pasteboard figure of recent research to the flesh and blood reality of the man depicted in the *Gathas*. A prophet without a mission and without zeal is no prophet. As the late Professor J. H. Moulton so finely remarked,

“No one could read the *Gathas* without carrying away before everything else the impression of a man who is spending and being spent for the blessing of other men.”³

When Zarathushtra started to propagate the faith, he found a society divided into distinct groups, the “home,” the “town,” the “province,” and the “country,” each with its specific “chief.”⁴ These were, so to speak, the Lords Temporal of the realm. The Lords Spiritual were the Magas or Magi, master adepts in the things of the spirit. Above both groups stood the Zarathushtrôtémā, the Supreme head of Religion. The Magas, as Nyberg points out,⁵ were most probably the Judges at the Trial by Ordeal of fire and molten metal.

Zarathushtra preached not only before the courtly circle of King Vishtaspa and his ministers, Frash-

¹ Herzfeld, *op. cit.* Vol. I, pp. 48-56. Cf. Henning, *op. cit.* pp. 24-29.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 238-257. Cf. Henning, *op. cit.* pp. 24-29.

³ J. H. Moulton, *The Treasure of the Magi*, Oxford, 1917, p. 45.

⁴ See p. 55, n. 1.

⁵ Nyberg, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

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aoshtra and Jamaspa mentioned in the *Gathas*, but also to the bulk of the peasantry. These consisted of settled agriculturists and marauding border tribes such as the Bendva. At periodic intervals, the nomadic tribes descended upon the peaceful cultivators, killed all the menfolk in the village and carried away their women and children together with their cattle and grain. Both courtier and peasant were polytheists and believed in magical practices. The most distinctive feature of their religion was the wholesale slaughter of cattle as propitiation to their gods.

Against this pantheon of deities, some benevolent, others malevolent, Zarathushtra taught the conception of the one God, Ahura Mazda, who is to be grasped "in purest essence and in vision" (Y.33.7). In opposition to orgiastic sacrifices, he preached the dedication of the self to Asha, the Ahuric Law of Righteousness and Truth. His aim was to establish upon earth God's Divine Law, and Order, His Sovereign Immortality and His Kingdom of Perfection.

To achieve his mission, he formed the Circle of Contemplative Thought. Although the Circle is not thus mentioned by name, there is abundant evidence in the *Gathas* that it existed. It was in this Circle of the "faithful" that the Divine Powers entered, so that men spoke "with the words and tongue of the Good Mind" (Y.47.2 ; 51.3). A state of ecstasy was induced through singing hymns in praise of Ahura so that each man beheld Him in His Majesty, and saw "Aramaiti clasp Asha," i.e. Perfect Devotion blend with Truth, and discovered "the desirable kingdom of the Good Mind," and met the Lord of Life and



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Wisdom in the Heaven of His Choice (Y.46.16).

Since ecstatic communion with Ahura and His Powers was induced through the chanting of hymns, such technical terms as "the path of the tongue of wisdom" came into existence (Y.50.6). Ahura, described as Hu-dao, Giver of all Good, Himself descended into the Circle of Contemplative Thought of His worshippers and taught them the Sacred Doctrines through Asha, while His blessed saints and seers had full knowledge of "the secret mysteries" (Y.48.3). Unfortunately, the text offers no elucidation as to what these secret mysteries were, nor does it explain the technical terms used. The elaborate theories on the technique of the Zarathushtrian Mysteries so plausibly set forth by a scholar like Nyberg, must therefore, be accepted with caution.¹ What the *Gathas* do make clear is that the Circle of Contemplative Thought was at once a centre for ecstatic communion and a storehouse of divine energy. There the exhausted disciples replenished themselves only to spend that very energy in the service of humanity. Zarathushtra reiterates that without good works divine communion itself is incomplete.

One of the main functions of the Circle of Contemplative Thought was to make each member experience a personal appropriation of Ahura. But such a realisation can only be achieved through the exercise of free will. Freedom of choice, therefore, is a fundamental doctrine with Zarathushtra who emphasized that no intelligent being may evade moral responsibility to himself, his fellow men and the universe.

¹ Nyberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 165ff; 185-186.

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Side by side with the doctrine of free will, Zarathushtra taught that the good is its own reward, for “whoever toils with word or thought or the actions of both hands to drive out evil from the Follower of the Lie, or directs his fellow man towards the good, such accomplish the Divine Will (out of love for the living God of Life and Wisdom” (Y.33.2), and “dwell in the green pastures of the Divine Law and the Good Mind” (Y.33.3).

Happiness and misery are the alternate outcome of a man’s good and evil deeds, but when all things have been fulfilled, “eternal joy shall reign everywhere” (Y.30.11).

Heaven is Garô-Démâna, the House of Heavenly Song, where the souls of the righteous remain. It is the abode of Ahura and of the Maga Brotherhood, master adepts in the things of the spirit, and is synonymous with the kingdom of Light into which Ahura leads His worshippers through His Divine Law (Y.28.2).

Hell is Drujô Démâna, the House of the Lie, where the wicked dwell in “a murky glow and woeful wailings” where their own evil conscience and evil deeds, born of the Evil Mind, will lead them (Y.31.20 ; 47.5). Zarathushtra realised, however, that the good and the evil were often mixed in equal proportions in a man. The fate of such an individual is not pursued, for Zarathushtra is not primarily concerned with metaphysical speculation but with the practical problem of turning the Dregvants, Followers of the Lie, into Ashavants, Followers of the Truth.

Hence, Chinvat, the Bridge of Judgment, is in-

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troduced as “Chinvatô pérétū,” the Bridge of the Separator, or the Bridge of discriminative choice between good and evil. Moreover, as Ahura is the one eternal God of absolute justice and love, there will be a Last Judgment when all mankind will be called to account. There will be a spiritual renewal too, but whether of the body as well as the spirit is not made clear in the *Gathas*.¹ Later Zoroastrianism contains the belief in a bodily resurrection. The peculiar characteristic of Zarathushtra’s doctrine of redemption is to make the regeneration of Geush Urva, the Soul of Creation, i.e., the entire universe, dependent upon the salvation of the individual human being. Hence the Prophet’s tireless pursuit in delivering the Lie into the hands of Truth (Y.30.8).

Against this background of fundamental beliefs, the personality of Zarathushtra is vividly presented in the *Gathas*. Every phase of his life is firmly outlined : his solemn dedication to his mission, his preaching on the origin of evil and the perfection of the spirit, his struggle against unbelievers and barbarians, his despair at being deserted by kindred and “Fellow-worker,” his passionate realisation of Ahura, the triumph of the new faith testified to by his disciples and even by his enemies, and finally, his ecstatic communings with Ahura and His Powers.

* * * * *

On turning to the text itself, it will be seen that there are five *Gathas* in all. In their present form they have come down as part of the *Yasna*, or *Book of Worship*,

¹ See p. 65, n. 2.

INTRODUCTION

an enormous compilation of miscellaneous material written by various hands and dating from many ages.

Of the 72 chapters into which the *Yasna* is divided, the following go to make up the *Gathas* : chapters 28-34 form the *Ahunavaiti Gatha* ; 43-46 the *Ushtavaiti Gatha* ; 47-50 the *Spenta Mainyu Gatha* ; chapter 51 the *Vohu Xshathra Gatha* ; and chapter 53 the *Vahistoishti Gatha*. Each *Gatha* has its own particular metre, and the *Gathas* are arranged mechanically, according to the length of the verses, the longest coming first. Thus the *Ahunavaiti Gatha* has verses of 7 plus 9 syllables ; the *Ushtavaiti* verses of 4 plus 7 syllables ; the *Spenta Mainyu* verses of 4 plus 7 syllables ; the *Vohu Xshathra* is in verse of 7 plus 7 syllables ; and the *Vahistoishti* in verses of 7 plus 5 syllables, and in 7 plus 7 plus 5. This rigid, mechanical arrangement makes many of the Gathic chapters appear disjointed. The three sermons, On the Origin of Evil, On the Manthra, the Holy Word, and On Spenta Mainyu, the Holy Spirit, are widely separated, though together they form a coherent whole. The historical passages which have a bearing upon one another are scattered throughout the five *Gathas*.

A rearrangement of the text, however, would require a radical breaking up of all the five *Gathas* and an arbitrary juxtaposition of the verses according to the judgment of the translators. Whether such a rearrangement would be considered justifiable in the eyes of a critical public is open to question.¹

¹ A spirited attempt to rearrange the text has recently been made by the Belgian scholar, Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, in *Zoroastre, étude critique avec une traduction commentée des Gâthâ*, Paris, 1948. It aroused severe criticism in the *Times Literary Supplement*.

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In the present translation, therefore, the traditional arrangement of the text has been kept for the sake of ready reference to the original.

Linguistically, and in other ways, the *Gathas* are closely linked with the earliest portions of the *Rig-Veda*. Both Gathic Avestan and Rig-Vedic Sanskrit are descended from a common parental language now lost. According to Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala, it is possible to transpose a Gathic stanza into Rig-Vedic Sanskrit with only slight modifications. He has also shown the remarkable resemblance between the metre of the *Ahunavaiti Gatha* and the *Gayatri* metre well known to students of the *Vedas*.¹

In technical terminology as well, there are parallels in both texts. Thus, Gathic *Haurvatat*, signifying perfection, wholeness, wellbeing, is equivalent to Vedic *Sarvatat*, completeness, wellbeing, perfection. Gathic *Ameretatat*, immortality, is parallel to Vedic *Amrutatat*, immortality, Amrut being the nectar of the gods which bestowed immortality on man if he drank it. *Haoma*, the juice of the Haoma plant used in Zarathushtian ritual to this day, is equated with the Vedic *Soma*, an intoxicating drink used in Vedic ritual. Fundamental concepts like *Asha* or Divine Law and Order, Rectitude, Righteousness, have their counterparts in the *Vedas*, *Asha* being derived from the same root as the Vedic *Rta*, Absolute Righteousness. Gathic *Xshathra*, Power, Kingdom, is the same as the Vedic *Xshatra*, Power, Force.

¹ Irach J. S. Taraporewala, "Gaθa Metre and Chanting," paper delivered before the Eleventh All India Oriental Conference, December 1941, and printed in the *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. III, pp. 219-224.

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Mainyu, in the *Gathas*, is Spirit or Psychic Force. *Mainyu*, in the *Vedas*, is any impetuous force, ardour, zeal, intensity.

Certain historical references in the *Gathas* also have their background in the *Vedas*. Thus, *Vivanghvant*, father of *Yima* (Jamshid), in the *Gathas*, has been compared to the Vedic *Vivasvat*, father of *Yama*, the King of the Dead. *Yima* was said to marry his sister, *Yimak*, and the first mortal pair were born from them. *Yama*, in Vedic legend, was the first man as well as King of the Dead. The tribe of *Usikhsh*, mentioned in one Gathic verse, Y.44.20, and nowhere else in the entire *Avesta*, is equated with the Vedic *Usigs*, a family of priests who sacrificed to *Agni*, fire, and were believed to be the first to do so.¹

The *Gatha* community, however, broke away from the varied polytheism of their Vedic brothers. Thus *Ahura*, who was one of the *Asuras*, a group of benevolent deities in the *Vedas*, was detached from the original historical background and given a new and vital content. It was the Prophet's genius which made him choose *Ahura*, Lord of Life, and combine this deity with *Mazda*, Lord of Wisdom, and make the people realise that *Ahura-Mazda*, Lord of Life and Wisdom, is the One Eternal God, Creator of the universe, a God of Righteousness and Truth who is to be grasped "in purest essence and in vision" (Y.33.7), a God of Mercy and of Love whose Divine Powers teach penitent sinners "to deliver the Lie into the hands of Truth" (Y.30.8). Again, the word *Daeva*, in the *Vedas*, means "Shining One," and to this day is used

¹ See p. 79, n. 2.

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as a reverential term for their gods by the Hindus. In the *Gathas*, however, the term is used in an odious sense, being applied to black magicians, devil-worshippers, polytheists and wicked men in general who opposed Zarathushtra's teaching.

Textually, the *Gathas* present some insoluble problems. The last *Gatha*, *Yasna* 53, for instance, is corrupt in many passages, and there are marked hiatuses between the stanzas. These nine verses appear to be the surviving fragment of a larger and more coherent whole, though the opinion of Avesta scholars is divided on this point, many considering that the entire *Gatha* was composed after Zarathushtra's death. Other corrupt passages are remarkably few.

As the *Gathas* form the central and most important portion of the *Yasna*, the oldest manuscripts of the *Gathas* are also the oldest manuscripts of the *Yasna*. These have been divided into two categories, the Indian and the Iranian. The former are based on their Iranian originals, the earliest dating back to the beginning of the 14th century A.D. The Iranian manuscripts do not go further back than the 17th century A.D. The largest and finest collection of Avesta manuscripts in Europe is at the University Library, Copenhagen. The next best is at the India Office in London. The K.R. Cama Oriental Institute and the Mulla Feroze Library in Bombay contain the largest collection in India. By courtesy of the Danish authorities at Copenhagen, the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute of Bombay now possesses photostat copies of some important manuscripts at Copenhagen. The three most reliable *Yasna* manu-

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scripts, among the many that exist, are *Yasna* MSS. S.1, K.5, and J.2. S.1 was formerly in the possession of Mobed Mancherji Barzorji Pavri of Surat, and is described by Geldner as a good old MS. of considerable independence.¹ K.5 is in the University Library, Copenhagen, and J.2, originally in the possession of Dastur Dr. Jāmāsp Minochēr Jāmāsp Asana of Bombay, is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. MSS. K.5, and J.2, contain transcripts of the *Gathas* together with Pahlavi translations done by the same copyist, Herbad Mitrō-āpān-î-Kāi-Khusrov-î-Mitrō-āpān-î-Spendad-î-Mitrō-āpān-î-Murzapan-î-Behram. J.2 was finished on the 26th January, 1323, while K.5 was completed at Cambay on the 17th November of the same year from a manuscript of Herbad Mitrō-āpān's great, great uncle, Herbad Rustom-î-Mi-trō-āpān who copied the *Arda Virāf*, a late Pahlavi work, in 1269 A.D. in Iran.²

The first critical, collated edition of the *Avesta* was brought out by N. L. Westergard in 1854. A revised edition by Karl F. Geldner appeared in 1886. These two monumental works still form the standard text of the *Avesta*. The *Ur-text* of Andreas and Wackernagel contains a novel text for the *Ahunavaiti Gatha*, but is based on linguistic theories which have not yet found complete acceptance among *Avesta* scholars, though

¹ K. F. Geldner, *Avesta* (Texts), Prolegomena.

² For a fuller account of the various *Avesta* MSS. see Karl F. Geldner's "Avesta Literature," originally printed in *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*, translated from the German into English by Dr. D. Mackichan in *Avesta, Pahlavi and Ancient Persian Studies*, in honour of the late Shams-ul-Ulema Dastur Peshotanji Behramji Sanjana, Leipzig and Strassburg, 1904, pp. 1-82.

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Dr. Paul Tedesco, Ernst Herzfeld and Émile Benveniste favour these theories.

The text used in the present translation is the standard text of Geldner with minor emendations by the late Behramgore Tehmuras Anklesaria as edited in the *Gatha Society Publications*, No. 7, (Bombay, 1933). Occasionally, a reading from the *Ur-text* of Andreas has been adopted with acknowledgement.

* * * * *

An analysis of their contents shows that four major themes are dealt with in the *Gathas* : the Creation, the Origin of Evil, the Regeneration of Man and the Universe, and the Nature of Ahura and His Powers.

According to the *Gathas*, Creation took place when Ahura Mazda through His Holy Word, the Manthra, first thought: "Let the blessed expanses of the starry heavens be filled with Light." He, in His Wisdom, next created Asha, the Divine Law, through whom He upholds Vahishta Mana, His Sovereign Mind, (Y.31.7). From the beginning He fashioned for man "physical bodies, discerning souls, and directive intelligences" through His own Mind. He then infused "life-breath into mortal bones," and granted to all men "capacities to act and true doctrines to guide so that one could choose beliefs at will" (Y.31.11). To Geush Urva, the Soul of Creation, He also gave "the choice of a way, either to abide with the good shepherd, the deliverer, or with him who never was one" (Y.31.9). The Soul of Creation, oppressed by Wrath, Rapine, Insolence, Aggression and Violence, complained to

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Ahura petitioning Him to reveal to her “ the good shepherd, the deliverer ” (Y.29.1). When, however, Zarathushtra was shown to her as the Ratu or Prophet who will save all mankind from evil, she rejected him bitterly, demanding a “ mighty Ruler ” who would “ succour her with the might of his hands ” (Y.29.9). In the end, when Zarathushtra’s power and mission were fully revealed to her, she was content (Y.29.10).

The Gathic view of Creation, with its emphasis on free will, is closely linked with Zarathushtra’s explanation of the Origin of Evil, a subject he deals with fully in his first sermon (Y.30.1-11), using, as illustration, the parable of the Twin Mainyu or Twin Mentalities. These Twin Spirits or Mentalities are described as “ *vahyo* ” the “ better ” and “ *akem* ” the “ bad ”. They represent the condition of comparative goodness and the condition of evil in human nature. Hence, as S. N. Kanga points out, they are the twin aspects of the human mind, and have no meaning apart from its workings and the moral choice of the individual.¹ When a man exercises his “ better ” mind, he creates “ *gaya* ” or life, and attracts to himself Ahura and His Powers. When he exercises his evil mind, he generates “ *ajyaiti* ” or the absence of life, that is, death. He therefore draws down upon himself Aeshma, Demon of Wrath and Bloodthirstiness, making “ the spiritual life of man diseased ” (Y.30.6). Mankind is thus divided into two opposing parties,

¹ S. N. Kanga, *A New Interpretation of the Spenta Mainyu of the Gathas*, Gatha Society Publications, No. IX, Fort Printing Press, Bombay, 1933, pp. 17-36.

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the Ashavants or Followers of Truth, who are the just and the God-fearing, and the Dregvants or Followers of Untruth, among whom are classed “evil rulers, evildoers, evil speakers, those of evil conscience, and evil thinkers” (Y.49.11). The wicked, however, are not abandoned by Ahura, for when “retribution” overtakes them, then the Lord’s Might and Majesty is revealed to them through the Good Mind who teaches such sinners “to deliver the Lie into the hands of Truth” (Y.30.8).

It could now be asked, why did Ahura create the potentiality for evil in so frail a creature as man? The answer is again to be sought in that insistence on freedom of choice which is so marked a characteristic of the *Gathas*. This freedom is of the very essence of His scheme. Nature, as personified in Geush Urva, the Soul of Creation, is qualitatively different from Ahura, and necessarily imperfect, even as man is, so that both may come to realise the highest truth and highest beauty of the spirit, annihilating all imperfections in the ecstatic beholding of Ahura “in purest essence and in vision” (Y.33.7). But such a beholding can never be forced, for Ahura, who is pure Spirit, desires His creatures to come to Him of their own free will, in knowledge and love.

“Give ear to the Highest. Look within with enlightened mind at the faith of your own selection man by man, each one for his own self. Awake, to proclaim this, our Truth, before the great and Final Consummation is upon you” (Y.30.2).

Before the individual can attain and dwell in the spirit, he must understand the nature of Ahura and

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His Powers. The kernel of Zarathushtra's teaching is found here.

Ahura, in the *Gathas*, is "the First and also the Last for all eternity," the "Father of Vohu Mana, the Good Mind, the true Creator of Asha, the Divine Law, and Lord over the actions of life" (Y.31.8). His daughter is Aramaiti, Divine Devotion, full of good deeds (Y.45.4). He is "Vispanam Datarem," Creator of all things (Y.44.7), "Hu-dao", Giver of all Good (Y.48.3), and "Data Angheush," the Giver of Life (Y.50.11). He is "Spenishta Mainyu Mazda," Gloriously radiant Spirit, Mazda, (Y.33.12 ; 43.2 ; 51.7), "most worthy to be loved, radiant in action, Lord of Life and Truth," (Y.46.9), supremely just, eternally the same, "the Mighty and Most Bountiful One" (Y.43.4), "Who pours out His Holy Wisdom on every thing that lives (Y.45.6). At the Final Consumption, "the last turning point of life," He will come with His Powers to judge the quick and the dead (Y.43.6).

There is nothing He has left undone for our good. He gives to us *Manangha*, His Pure Mind, and *Atar*, His Flaming Fire of Thought, that we may exercise our free will intelligently (Y.46.7). He has placed the "throne of *Sraosha*," Divine Obedience, (Y.28.5), in the heart of every man so that those who believe in Him and those who do not may yet possess an equal opportunity to hear His Voice and be saved (Y.43.12). He bestows upon us *Daena*, His Divine Revelation, that we may behold Him "in purest essence and in vision" (Y.33.7), and understand His Ways (Y.48.8-11). He has created for our salvation and that of the

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Soul of Creation, the *Manthra*, the Holy Word,¹ and the *Sengha*, Divine Teachings,² that we may know the purpose of human existence and the part we are expected to play in its fulfilment. He grants us *Chisti*, that Ray of Perceptive Wisdom which illumines the whole mind,³ that we may turn to Him in fullness of knowledge surpassing human endeavour. Deep within us He has planted *Tevishi*, the Desire for Perfection, and *Utayuiti*, the Desire for Immortality, that we may strive to attain the twin rewards of spiritual life, *Haurvatat*, Perfection; and *Ameretatat*, Immortality.⁴ Nor has He withheld from us His two most intimate Powers, *Vahishta Mana*, His Sovereign Mind, and *Spenta Mainyu*, His Holy Spirit.⁵ As a token of His Love, He surrounds the just with *Asha*, His Divine Law, His Righteousness and Truth; with *Vohu Mana*, His Good Mind; with *Xshathra*, His Might and Majesty, His Kingdom and Power; and with *Aramaiti*, His Divine Devotion. They are the righteous man's constant companions through life (Y.30.7).

These Divine Powers are represented in the *Gathas* as creative intelligences. They are sentient, reflective and discriminating and radiate from the Godhead in the form of dispassionate energies. Each Power is essential to the fulfilling of Ahura's Divine Purpose for His Creation. Hence, each works in close collaboration with the others, the two most frequently

¹ See Y.28.5, 7; 29.7; 31.6, 7; 44.17; 45.3; 50.6; 51.8.

² See Y.44.14, 16; 46.3; 48.3, 12; 51.7.

³ See Y.30.9; 34.14; 44.10; 46.4; 47.2; 48.5; 51.5; 16, 18, 21.

⁴ See Y.31.21; 33.8, 9, 12; 34.11; 43.1; 44.17, 18; 45.5, 7, 10; 47.1; 48.6; 51.7.

⁵ See Y.31.4, 7; 32.6, 11; 43.6; 45.6; 47.1-6; 50.1, 4; 51.4, 5.

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mentioned being Asha and Vohu Mana. The function of these Powers is to remould man and the universe to their destined end without in any way interfering with their free will. They dwell in man and are revealed partially or in full according as he centres his free will completely or in part in the Will of Ahura. Behind natural phenomena too, they are to be found manifesting themselves in full splendour or in bedimmed glory according as the Soul of Creation accepts wholly or in part the Manthra, the Holy Word of Salvation (Y.29.7; 44.1-20). Both Man and Nature must be redeemed by receiving enlightenment of their own free will so as to comprehend these Powers and their workings and embody Ahura Himself in their manifold existence.

* * * * *

The influence of the *Gathas* on religious thought in general and on Later Zoroastrianism in particular, is too big a question to be discussed here. Yet some indication may be given as to the direction which this influence took.

Historically, the *Gathas* were submerged very soon after the death of Zarathushtra. Even under the Achaemenians (550-330 B.C.), as Dr. W. B. Henning remarks, “the more important forms of Iranian belief were blended into a single syncretistic religion, and the Zoroastrian priests were compelled to accept a number of heathenish deities.”¹ After the fall of the Iranian Empire under Alexander in 330 B.C. and the succession

¹ W. B. Henning, “Zoroastrianism,” in S. G. Champion, *The Eleven Religions and their Proverbial Lore*, London, 1944, p. 294.

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of the Parthian Arsacids (250 B.C.-224 A.D.), the syncretism in the Zoroastrian Scriptures is even more marked. A revival of Zarathushtra's teaching only took place with the re-establishment of the Iranian states under the Sasanians (226-651 A.D.). Once again the *Gathas* came into their own when the Sasanian Avesta Canon was being formed.¹

The syncretism and submergence, referred to above, made it easy for Gathic ideas to pass into the thought of other communities. It is therefore not surprising to find concepts very similar to Gathic ones in Jewish and Christian Apocryphal writings, and in the philosophical speculations of the Gnostics, heretics of the first to the third centuries of the Christian era. Bousset and others have analysed the Zarathushtrian elements in Gnostic Schools of Thought. Thus, it has often been pointed out that the Valentinian Pleroma, or Fullness of Spiritual Living, which contains thirty Aeons or Divine Beings, is derived from the Gathic conception of Ahura and His Powers. In Later Zoroastrianism, the Gathic Divine Powers became the Amesha Spenta, the Immortal Shining Ones or Blessed Immortals, and these with other Creations, Powers and Virtues became the thirty Yazatas who gave their names to the thirty days of the month of the Zarathushtrian calendar which is based on the Solar tropical year of 365½ days.

Furthermore, there are marked affinities between certain aspects of the *Gathas* and the earliest form of Jewish Mysticism, the Merkabah or Throne Mysticism.²

¹ See above, p. 16, n. 1.

² G. G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, Jerusalem, 1941, pp. 39-78.

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For instance, Sraosha in the *Gathas* is the Faculty of Divine Obedience. The word is derived from the root “sru” to hear with the inward ear. Hence, Sroasha would be Divine Hearing or Divine Intuition leading to implicit obedience to the Will of God. Zarathushtra describes this Power as “the most majestic of all” and invokes it for “the final goal” which he desires to attain (Y.33.5), for it is Sraosha who comes, accompanied “by the blessing of a mighty glory” to dispel all darkness in the hearts of believers and unbelievers alike for their mutual salvation (Y.44.12). It is through Sraosha that Ahura reveals the hidden things of the spirit to Zarathushtra (Y.44.12). The “throne of Sraosha” is also the throne of the “Lord God Almighty” (Y.28.5), and is planted in the heart of every man to enable him to hear the Voice of God. The “Throne of the Holy One” in Merkabah Mysticism is also said to have its replica in the heart of every man, while Metatron, the Angel of the Divine Presence, who is always surrounded by light, like Sraosha, and who reveals the hidden things of the spirit to the soul seeking Jahveh, has obvious resemblances with the Gathic Power. On the other hand, J. C. Coyajee shows that the Sraosha concept is found in the Taoist Philosophy of China¹ and in the doctrines of the Sufis, Persian Mystics of the Middle Ages who were the founders of Islamic Mysticism.² Both Taoists and Sufis compare Sraosha to the Pole Star. This

¹ The dates usually assigned to Lao-tze are 544-463 B.C., though the Taoist philosophy he founded is not referred to in Chinese Literature before 240 B.C.

² J. C. Coyajee, *Cults and Legends of Ancient Iran and China*, Bombay, 1936, pp. 161-183.

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makes Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala interpret Sraosha in the *Gathas* as “ the Pole Star of all spiritual endeavour ” pointing “ steadfast and unerring to the final goal.”¹

There are also close analogies between the ecstatic hymns chanted by Zarathushtra in praise of Ahura, and the *Qadosh*, that portion of the Merkabah Hymns which deals with the praise and invocation of Jahveh in a magnificent crescendo of hyperbole. The aim both of the *Gatha* and the *Qadosh* is to induce a state of ecstasy in those who chant and in those who listen. Merkabah Hymns date back to the fifth century A.D., being widely composed in the seventh.²

It would seem, therefore, that the influence of the *Gathas* on the development of religious thought in the West is to be sought in the mystical aspects of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. A critical study of Gathic concepts in relation to Jewish, Christian and Islamic mysticism would yield some interesting results. Until such a study is published, it would be premature to make dogmatic pronouncements on the influence of the *Gathas* on later religions.

Among the Parsis today, this text is loved and revered as their most precious possession. Its doctrines are taught to the young, and its ethical teaching is at the foundation of all the philanthropic enterprise undertaken by members of this small community. Although much of modern Zoroastrianism consists of intricate and symbolic ceremonial meant to lead

¹ I. J. S. Taraporewala, *Gatha Ahunavaiti*, Text with a Free English translation, Bombay, 1944, p. 85, n. 1.

² Scholem, *op. cit.*, p. 60-61.

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the worshipper to a contemplation of the divine, the recitation of the *Gathas* forms a vital part of that ritual. This in itself has the salutary effect of making the text familiar to all believers, and its contents unconsciously absorbed into the daily lives of learned and unlearned alike. In times of stress, and at the death of a loved one, the *Gathas* are turned to instinctively for spiritual consolation. When recited over the dead body from the still hours of midnight to early dawn, they bring so great a peace and tranquillity to the grieving hearts of the bereaved that sorrow is lost sight of in the high exaltation of communion with Ahura and His Powers.

Although Zarathushtra had taught that “silent meditation is the best for attaining spiritual enlightenment” (Y.43.15), there is no modern equivalent to the Circle of Contemplative Thought which must have existed in the Gatha community. Yet the devout Parsi, by studying this text for himself, strives to live the good life as Zarathushtra proclaimed it. Like the Prophet, he desires to reach Ahura “in fullness of knowledge through the Good Mind” and be graced in the dual life of his body and mind with the blessings which come from following Asha, the Ahuric Law of Righteousness and Truth, through whom Mazda leads all seekers after Him into the Light (Y.28.2). He prays for the life of the flesh to be “vitalized by Asha” (Y.43.16), and looks upon this Power as “the heritage of all, the guardian in spirit, the physician of life, the friend” of man (Y.44.2). Like Maidhyomaongha, the Prophet’s first disciple, he “aspires after the highest life of the spirit” and yearns to pro-

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claim “ the Laws of Mazda having bettered material existence through his deeds ” (Y.51.19). With the help of the Divine Law and the Good Mind, he protects the Drighu, the poor in spirit and the meek and lowly of heart, who belong to Ahura alone, and to whom He gives the “ greater glory ” when He sits in judgment upon mankind (Y.34.5 ; 53.9.) Above all, the devout Parsi turns to Ahura with a passionate adoration, knowing that no song of devotion offered to Him in love is ever lost (Y.28.10). At the end of a long life spent in the service of Mazda, he trusts he has earned the twin rewards of spiritual living, the power and glory of Ahura’s Sovereign Immortality and the Cup of all Perfection (Y.33.8).

* * * * *

INTRODUCTORY VERSE¹

Inspired is the thought, inspired the word, inspired the deed of the holy Zarathushtra. May the Blessed Immortals² accept the Gathas. Homage to you, O sacred Gathas.

¹ Added by pious souls long after Zarathushtra's death.

² Amesha Spenta, the Immortal Shining Ones or the Blessed Immortals, referring to Ahura and His Divine Powers, in the following order : Vohu Mana, the Good Mind ; Asha, the Divine Law ; Xshathra, the Lord's Might and Majesty ; Aramaiti, Divine Devotion ; Haurvatat, Perfection ; and Ameretat, Immortality. Ahura Mazda embodies these six Powers in Himself and is placed at the head of them all. The phrase, Amesha Spenta, does not occur in the *Gathas*.

GATHA AHUNAVAITI

THE PROPHET AT HIS DEVOTIONS

YASNA, 28. vv. 1-11

(1) With uplifted hands and deep humility, I beseech, O Mazda, first and foremost, this, the abiding joy of Spenta Mainyu, Thy Holy Spirit. Grant that I perform all actions in harmony with Asha, Thy Divine Law, and acquire the wisdom of Vohu Mana, the Good Mind, so that I may illumine the very Soul of Creation.¹

(2) O Lord of Life and Wisdom, may I reach Thee in fullness of knowledge through Vohu Mana, to be graced in the dual life of my body and mind with the blessings which come from following Thy Divine Law through whom Thou dost lead all seekers after Thee into the Light.

(3) I shall weave songs of praise as was never done before for you, O Asha, and for you, O Vohu Mana, and for you, O Mazda Ahura, for through them flourish

¹ *Geush Urva*, usually translated Ox-Soul or the Soul of the Kine. To the cattle-breeding peasants of ancient Iran, their oxen were their most precious possession. Hence, *Geush Urva* became the symbol for the whole of Creation and all living things. The Aryan image survived as late as the tenth century A.D., and occurs in the *Srimad-Bhagwata Purana* (X. 1, 17-18), where the Earth, "wearing the shape of cow" and with tears streaming down her face, goes before Indra, the chief of the gods, and complains of her sufferings. The Hindus believe that in answer to her prayer Lord Krishna was born (Irach J. S. Taraporewala, *The Gathas of Zarathushtra*, Text with a free English Translation, Bombay, 1947, pp. 7-8). See also p. 46, n. 1.

Aramaiti, Divine Devotion, and the immeasurable Xshathra, the Lord's Might and Majesty. So descend, O Powers, in answer to these invocations for my joy and my delight.

(4) In truth, when singing Thy praises, I shall attune my soul to Vohu Mana and be aware of the blessings which flow from holy deeds undertaken for Mazda Ahura's sake. As long as I have the will and strength, so long will I preach, [awakening in men's hearts] the desire for Asha.

(5) When shall I see thee, O Asha, and Vohu Mana ripe in wisdom, and the throne of Sraosha, Divine Obedience, of the Lord God Almighty? May our tongues reveal the all-powerful, Holy Word, the Manthra, through which we may lead the wicked to believe in the true faith.

(6) Come unto us, O God, with the Good Mind and bless us with the everlasting gifts of the Law. Thy sublime utterances, O Lord of Wisdom, bring intense joy to Zarathushtra and to us, [his disciples]. O living God, bestow upon us that by which we may overcome the hatred of our oppressors.

(7) Grant, O Asha, that blessing which is the reward of the Good Mind. Grant thou, O Aramaiti, strength to Vishtaspa the King,¹ and to me. And Thou, O Mazda, give sovereign power that we Thy devotees may spread abroad Thy Holy Word.

¹ King of Bactria and patron of Zarathushtra's doctrines. In the Pahlavi writings he is described as "the arm and support of the Law of Ahura," as the "good companion" and "pure friend," helping the downtrodden through Vohu Mana, and developing the "material world of righteousness" (S.B.E., Vols. XXIII, pp. 204-5; 306; XXXVII, pp. xxxi, 280-1, 397; XXI, pp. 117, 185).

THE PROPHET AT HIS DEVOTIONS

(8) O living God, the greatest among the great, and of one accord with Thy Supreme Law, I entreat Thee, as a lover, bestow upon the manly Frashaoshtra,¹ my kinsman, and upon me, and even on these others, the rest of my followers, the possession of the Good Mind for all time.

(9) O Lord of Life and Wisdom, never may we provoke Thee to wrath through the smallest transgression, neither Thee, nor Asha, Thy Divine Law, nor Vahishta Mana, Thy Sovereign Mind—we who have striven earnestly in singing Thy praises and in offering them to Thee. Thou and Thy Xshathra are most worthy to be invoked as supreme Powers.

(10) If Thou knowest those who, on account of their Righteousness and the gifts of the Good Mind, are uprightness itself in Thy eyes, O Mazda Ahura, bring Thou their desire to fruition in attainment. In truth I know that melodious hymns chanted to Thee in love are never made to come to nought.

(11) O Lord of Life and Wisdom, I will for ever uphold Thy Divine Law and Thy Good Mind. Teach me Thyself, through Thy spoken Word which springs from the Spirit, and with Thy very own Mouth, whence life first came into being.

¹ Frashaoshtra Hvogva was a minister at the Court of Vishtaspa, while his brother, Jamaspa, was Prime Minister at the same court. Their sister, Havovi, married Zarathushtra, (S.B.E., Vols. XXIII p. 207 ; XXXVII, pp. 219, 236, 406, 413).

THE CREATION

YASNA, 29. vv. 1-11

(1) The Soul of Creation cried unto God in grief,
 “ For whom hast Thou brought me into being ?
And who shaped me ? Wrath and Rapine, Insolence,
Aggression and Violence sit upon me in my affliction.
No one is my protector except Thee, O God, so reveal
Thou to me the good shepherd, the deliverer.”¹
(2) Thereupon the Architect of Creation² questioned
Asha,

“ Who will be the Ratu, the Prophet, of your creation ?
When will you grant her a ruler as the good shepherd
and diligent nourisher of the universe ? Who will be
her Lord for her joy and bliss who shall repel the
wrath of the wicked ? ”

(3) To Him Asha, who wounds not nor is hostile to
creation, made reply,

“ I know not one amongst these heavenly hosts
by whom righteous mortals might be led to the Light.

¹ Cf. the complaint of Mother Earth in the *Bhagvata Purana*, X.
1. 17-18 :

The Earth oppressed by schemes of princes proud,
Leagued in their might with countless Demon hosts,
Bowed down with this great burden, she approached
Her great Creator, seeking help from Him.
Wearing the shape of cow, two streams of tears
Flowing down her face, lamenting loud
And piteously, with heavy heart she stood,
And poured out to her Lord her suffering soul.

(Taraporewala, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8).

² Geush Tasha. See Glossary.

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He must indeed be the most powerful in uprightness if to his call the zealous shall respond.”

(4) [Asha continued :]

“ Mazda most wise, is the Supreme Knower of all actions performed in the past, and indeed of those which will be performed in the future, by Daevas¹ and by men. Of all these, He Himself is the discriminating Lord. Be it with us as He wills.”

(5) [Then the Architect of Creation prayed unto God, saying,]

“ Thus, in truth, with these uplifted hands invoking Ahura, may my soul and that of the revolving Creation reach Mazda and place before Him these puzzling questions. Does no harm ever come to those who live the Truth? Nor to those industrious workers for salvation even though they dwell in the midst of the wicked? ”

(6) Then spoke out Ahura Mazda, the Omniscient, enlivening life’s web with His all-pervading Breath :

“ Hast thou not found a single Ahu, a Spiritual Lord and Master on earth, nor yet a Ratu, a Prophet, walking hand in hand with Asha to succour thee? Was it for this that I created and moulded thee as the shepherd and preserver of My Creation? ”

(7) [One of the Divine Powers spoke :]

“ Ahura Mazda, the Glorious, of one will with His Divine Law, moulded the Holy Word of Sacrifice for the sweet nourishment of His Creation, and for the enlightened He framed His Divine Decrees. O Vohu Mana, thou embodiment of the Good Mind, whom has thou claimed to give voice to these, the Holy Word and Divine Decrees, before all mankind? ”

¹ Devil-worshippers, polytheists, and evildoers in general.

(8) [Vohu Mana replied :]

“ Here in this heavenly sphere, only one such is known to me who alone has listened to our Divine Decrees, and that one is Zarathushtra Spitama. He is eager to proclaim the Glory of Mazda and His Eternal Law in songs of praise to us, so let him be blest with sweetness of speech.”

(9) Thereupon the Soul of Creation lifted up her voice and wept, saying,

“ Now must I submit to an ineffectual leader, to the words of a man without weapons, instead of him whom I had longed for, a mighty Ruler ! When, if ever, shall he come into being who will succour me with the might of his hands ? ”

(10) [The Soul of Creation, reconciled, continued :]

“ O Lord of Life, grant unto them, [Zarathushtra and his disciples] eminence and sovereignty through Asha ; and through Vohu Mana, that whereby they may establish a joyous and blissful existence. I also, O Lord of Wisdom, look upon Thee as the Prime Giver of this gift.”

(11) [Then Zarathushtra arose and said :]

“ When will Asha, Vohu Mana, and Xshathra come to me thus ? O Mazda, and you, O Divine Powers, accept the teaching of the great Maga Brotherhood.¹ O living God, come now to us, and let us be the most humble partakers of Your Divine Consecrations.”

¹ The Magi, master adepts in things spiritual, the leaders of the Zarathushtrian Mysteries in the Circle of Contemplative Thought, and the Judges in the Trial by Ordeal of Fire and Molten Metal. See *Maga* and *Ordeal* in Glossary.

THE FIRST SERMON: ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

YASNA, 30. vv. 1-11

(1) Now I will declare to earnest listeners concerning the Twin Mainyu [the twin aspects of the human mind], the greatest boon given in truth to the wise ; and further I will declare concerning the praise and adoration due to Ahura through the Good Mind ; and lastly, of the sacred word of Asha given to those who are illumined by the Light and attain to perfect bliss.

(2) Give ear to the Highest. Look within with enlightened mind at the faith of your own selection, man by man, each one for his own self. Awake, to proclaim this, our Truth, before the great and Final Consummation is upon you.

(3) Now in the beginning, these two Mainyu, the twins, revealed themselves in thought, word, and deed as the Better and the Bad ; and, from these two, the wise chose aright, but not so the unwise.

(4) And thus, when these two Mainyu first came together, they generated life¹ and the absence of life,² and so shall human existence continue till the end of time : the worst life for the Followers of the Lie,³ but the supreme beatific vision for the Followers of Truth.⁴

¹ Gaya. See Glossary.

² Ajyaiti. See Glossary.

³ Dregvants, Followers of the Druj, the Lie. See Druj in Glossary.

⁴ Ashavants, Followers of Asha, the Truth. Whenever contrasted with the Druj, Asha is always the Truth.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

(5) Of these two mentalities, the Evil One chose to perform the worst deeds, but those who through their sincere and devoted actions rejoiced Ahura Mazda, the Most Bountiful Spirit who dwells in imperishable Light, chose Asha.

(6) Between these two even the Daevas did not discriminate aright, for confusion came upon them as they stood in doubt so that they chose the Worst Mind, whereupon they rushed together in fury towards Aeshma, Demon of Wrath and Bloodthirstiness, through whom they made the spiritual life of man diseased.

(7) So to the God-fearing man¹ come the Lord's Might and Majesty, His Good Mind and His steadfast Law, so that the strength-giving Aramaiti may grant unyielding support to his subtle body² against the on-slaughts of Wrath. Thus, he shall belong to them, the Divine Powers, and to Thee, O God, as if he stood first in Thy Ordeal of blazing fire and molten metal.

(8) And when, in truth, retribution overtakes these sinful men [who make diseased the spiritual life of man], then, O Lord of Life and Wisdom, Thy Might and Majesty will be revealed to them through the Good Mind who will teach these sinners to deliver the Lie into the hands of Truth.

(9) And thus may we be like the Lords of Wisdom and of Life³ who make ever fresh and reclaim this our life on earth. And may we become the bearers of

¹ Literally, "to him."

² Kehrpa. See *Body (human)*, in Glossary.

³ Mazda Ahura in the plural. The phrase occurs twice in the *Gathas* (Y.30.9 and 31.4), and signifies Ahura and the sum total of His Powers.

universal love through Asha, so that, in single-minded concentration, we may abide where Chisti, that Ray of Perceptive Wisdom, takes up her stand.

(10) Then, indeed, shall the support of the destruction-loving Druj be cut asunder, when no sooner those who are born in spiritual glory unite their powers in the blest abode of Vohu Mana, Mazda, and Asha.

(11) So understand, O mortal men, the Decrees which Mazda has ordained regarding happiness and misery. There will be a long period of suffering for the wicked, and rewards for the pious, but thereafter eternal joy shall reign everywhere.

THE CHOICE

YASNA, 31. vv. 1-22

(1) Bearing in mind these Divine Decrees of Yours, O God—commandments unheeded so far—we proclaim them to those who destroy the Worlds of Asha through the Decrees of the Lie ; but specially are these Divine Decrees the best for those who have given up their hearts to Mazda.

(2) Since the better path is not clearly seen by the Soul for her choice, because of those evil Decrees of the Druj, therefore have I come to you all as the Ratu, the Prophet, ordained by Ahura Mazda to judge between these two opposing parties, so that we may one and all live in harmony with Asha.

(3) To each of the two contenders Thou givest that supreme joy through the spirit of Thy Flaming Fire of Thought¹ and Thy Divine Law ; and to the discerning that which is Thy Decree. O Lord of Wisdom, with Thy very own mouth and tongue proclaim this unto us for our enlightenment so that I may lead all the living to believe in the true faith.

(4) Since, O Lords of Wisdom and of Life,² Asha and the holy Aramaiti are worthy to be invoked, I shall strive to obtain for ourselves, through Thy Sovereign Mind, the mighty Xshathra by whose growing power we may conquer the Lie.

(5) Reveal unto me for my enlightenment that which

¹ Atar. See Glossary.

² See p. 50, n. 3.

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through Asha Thou hast ordained as the better path for me to follow, so that I may know and rejoice through the Good Mind in whatsoever blessing comes to me. [And I shall continue thus rejoicing] in all these [blessings,] O Mazda Ahura, whether they do not occur or whether they do.¹

(6) May all that is best befall the wise man, the seer, who shall reveal my True and Holy Word, the Mantra, which relates to Perfection,² Immortality,³ and the Divine Law. So shall the Might and Majesty of the Lord of Wisdom grow within him through the Good Mind.

(7) [He it was, the Lord God] who, through that [Holy Word,] first thought : "Let the blessed expanses of the starry heavens be filled with Light." He Himself, in His Wisdom, is the Creator of Asha through whom He upholds His Sovereign Mind. O Lord of Life and Wisdom, increase Thou these Powers through Thy Spirit.

(8) When I held Thee in my very eyes, then I realised Thee in my mind, O Mazda, as the First and also the Last for all eternity, as the Father of Vohu Mana, as the true Creator of Asha, and Lord over the actions of life.

(9) O Mazda Ahura, in Thee was found Perfect Devotion, and in Thee, O Architect of Creation, dwelt the Wisdom of the Spirit, since to her, [the Soul of Creation,] Thou didst give the choice of a way, either to abide with the good shepherd, the deliverer, or with him who never was one.

¹ Last portion of the verse mutilated. Meaning not clear.

² Haurvatat. See Glossary.

³ Ameretatat. See Glossary.

(10) So from these two she chose for herself, as shepherd and guardian, a master in Righteousness and a benefactor of the Good Mind. O Mazda, is the false shepherd, the deceiver, not destined to share in any part of the Good Religion ?

(11) Since, O Mazda, from the beginning Thou didst fashion for us physical bodies, discerning souls, and directive intelligences through Thy own Mind ; since Thou didst infuse life-breath into mortal bones, since Thou didst grant us capacities to act and true doctrines to guide so that one could choose beliefs at will ;

(12) Since then, each lifts up his voice to proclaim his faith, whether a liar or a truthful speaker, whether learned or unlearned, according to his own heart and mind ; but Aramaiti stands by to deliberate with the spirit of whoever is perplexed by doubt.

(13) Whether she deliberates on open doubts or secret ones, O Mazda, or whether one endures severe punishment for a small fault ; perceiving all these things with a flashing eye, Thou observest them closely through Asha, Thy unerring Law.

(14) These would I ask of Thee, O Ahura : What in truth is taking place, and what is yet to be ? What rewards are granted as gifts to the Followers of Asha ? And what of those retributions set aside for the Followers of the Druj, O Mazda ? In what manner are these ordained for the final dispensation ?

(15) This I ask, O Ahura : What is the retribution he will suffer who advances the power of the Follower of the Druj, the Evildoer, who does not obtain an honourable living but is full

THE CHOICE

of malice towards the good shepherd and his innocent, human flock ?

(16) This I ask :

When he who is the wise man seeking to establish Thy Kingdom in the home, [the town,¹] the province and the country, strives earnestly for the increase of Righteousness, would he then, by such action, become one like Thee, O Mazda Ahura ?

(17) Which of the two paths does the Follower of Asha and the Follower of the Druj choose as the better one ? Let the initiated address the wise, but no longer let the uninitiated lead men astray. O Lord of Life and Wisdom, be Thou to us the Revealer of the Good Mind.

(18) Let none of you, therefore, give ear to the unholy incantations and evil doctrines of the Follower of the Druj, for in truth he will sacrifice the home, the town, the province and the country to destruction and death. So resist these with the dart² [of your spirit.]

(19) O living God, may they give ear to him who, as the enlightened one, realises Asha as the physician of life,³ with his free will controlling his tongue in the forthright utterance of the true doctrines. O Lord

¹ According to Dr. Taraporewala, the insertion of this word is necessary for the sake of the metre, and also to complete the thought. The standard regional groups in Zarathushtra's day were : the home (*demana* or *nmana*), the town (*vis*), the province (*shoithra* or *zantu*), and the country (*daxhyu*). Each had its overlord or *pati*. They were the Lords Temporal of the realm, while above them all stood the *Zarathushtratema*, the Supreme Head of Religion. (I.J.S. Taraporewala, *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra*, a Philological Study, Bombay 1951, pp. 230-231).

² Literally " weapon."

³ *Ahum bis*. The phrase is variously interpreted as " the dual life," " the two lives," and " the physician of life." The etymology is obscure. We follow Nyberg.

of Wisdom, by means of Thy Flaming Fire of Thought
Thou wouldest apportion their destinies to the two con-
tenders, the enlightened and the unenlightened.

(20) Whoever comes after the Follower of Asha,
his dwelling in future shall be the Light,¹ but for you,
O Followers of the Druj, a long period of darkness,
a murky glow, and woeful wailings—to such an
existence will your evil conscience lead you through
your own deeds.

(21) But to him who is His friend in spirit and in
action, Mazda Ahura will grant Perfection and Immor-
tality, and out of His Abundance Asha as well, and
through His own overflowing Strength His Might and
Majesty, and the firm support of His Good Mind.

(22) These things are clear to the man of wise under-
standing, as also to one who acquires the full real-
isation of the Good Mind. Such a person, through the
Lord's Might and Majesty, and in word and deed,
glorifies the Divine Law. In truth, he will be Thy most
fiery Prophet [zealously carrying out Thy behests,]
O Mazda Ahura.

¹ After the *Ur-text* of Andreas and Wackernagel.

ZARATHUSHTRA EXHORTS THE DAEVAS

YASNA, 32. vv. 1-16

(1) And so to Him, the Lord Himself, prays the Strong in Spirit. To Him prays the Fellow-worker along with the Friend.¹ To Him even the Daevas pray with the same fervour²—to Mazda Ahura, for the beatific vision. May we become Thy messengers and spokesmen, O God, repelling those who are hostile to You.

(2) To them Ahura Mazda, in intimate communion with Vohu Mana, and through His Sovereign Power, Xshathra, made reply :

“ In goodly fellowship with Asha, the Glorious, We have chosen for you both the good and holy Aramaiti.”
[Then Zarathushtra and his disciples cried out :]
“ May she be ours.”

(3) [Zarathushtra continued :]

But you, O Daevas all, you are the offspring of Ako Mana, the Evil Mind, and whoever fervently extols you is himself born of the Lie and is of perverse mind. Your deceits also are for ever increasing whereby

¹ The three grades of Zarathushtra's disciples were : the *Xvætu* or Strong in Spirit ; the *Verezena* or Fellow-worker ; and the *Airyamna* or Friend. They are mentioned together five times : Y.32. 1 ; 33.3 and 4 ; 46.1 ; 49.7.

² After the Ur-text of Andreas and Wackernagel.

you have become notorious in the seventh region of the earth.¹

(4) Thus you have corrupted these men, so that, enacting the worst, they are called "Beloved of the Daevas," and obstructors of the Good Mind, departing from the Divine Purpose of Ahura Mazda and from His Law.

(5) By this means you defrauded mankind of the good life and of Immortality just as the Most Evil Mainyu, [the Spirit of Falsehood,] beguiled you, O you Daevas, through evil thought, evil word, and evil deed, when he promised sovereignty to the Follower of the Druj.

(6) In this way, by such deceptions, the hardened sinner might strive and win renown, but still Thou, O Ahura, Keeper and Recorder of the Living, art aware of his true worth through Thy Sovereign Mind. Verily, O Lord of Wisdom, in Thy Kingdom and that of the Divine Law, Thy Doctrine in supreme command shall prevail.

(7) None of these sinners is aware of the severe test he must eventually undergo called the Ordeal from which one is proclaimed as having passed through molten metal. O Lord of Life and Wisdom, Thou art the best Knower of the final end of such sinners.²

¹ According to the *Meher* or *Mithra Yasht*, the seven regions of the earth were formed thus: first came the countries of the rising sun to the extreme East, and the countries of the setting sun to the extreme West, each separated by a mountain range; then two countries to the extreme North, two countries to the extreme South, and in the centre of all these, *Xvaniratha*, viz., *Airyana vaeja*, the "land of the Aryans," i.e. the land of Zarathushtra and his countrymen (*S.B.E.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 122-124; 146; and H. S. Nyberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 53 ff; 324).

² i.e. Ahura is the best Judge of the measure of their guilt.

(8) Among these sinners, even Yima,¹ son of Vivanghvant,² is famed, who, seeking to gratify the vanity of our people, deprecated the Lord of Creation. In Thy final Judgment of such as these, O Mazda, I bow.

(9) The false prophet distorts the Sacred Scriptures and, in truth, through his evil doctrines, the divine purpose in life as well. He robs me of my holy desire for the possession of the Good Mind, so with these anguished cries of my spirit, I wail to You, O Lord of Wisdom, and to Your Divine Law.

¹ According to Pishdadian legend, the earliest legendary history of Iran, Yima or Jamshid, son of Vivanghvant, was the third ruler of the world. Under his long reign all things prospered. He brought immortality to man and beast and freed the plants and the waters from drought. He was called Yima Kshaeta, the Good Shepherd, to whom the Kingly Glory (Xvrena) of Ahura Mazda clung "in times before his lie, before he began to have delight in words of falsehood and untruth." In the *Zamyad Yasht* it is recorded how, when Yima abandoned the truth, "the Glory was seen to flee away from him in the shape of a bird. When his Glory had disappeared, then the great Yima Kshaeta, the Good Shepherd, trembled and was in sorrow before his foes; he was confounded and laid him down on the ground" (S.B.E., Vol. XXIII, pp. 293-295). In a later Pahlavi work the *Dadistan-i-Dink* (chap. xxix, paras. 16-18), Yima is described as being "deceived by the fiend" and "thereby made eager for supreme sovereignty instead of the service of Ahurmazd." Thus Yima cut himself off from the "radiant glory by that fiendishness." His creatures and all mankind perished "from plain and hillside," but eventually, "his pardon originated from the fully persistent Creator," (S.B.E., Vol. XVIII, pp. 127-128). Yima has been compared to Yama in Vedic literature, the King of the Dead and the first man. Yima married his sister, Yimak, and the first mortal pair were born from them. (S.B.E., Vol. XVII, p. 418 ff).

² Vivanghvant was the father of three sons, Tahmurasp, Narsi and Yima, as well as one daughter, Yimak. Vivanghvant was the first worshipper of *Haoma*, the sacred plant used in Zarathushtrian ritual, and also in Vedic rites where it is known as *Soma*. As a reward from *Haoma*, Yima was born. Vivanghvant is compared to the Vedic Vivasvat, father of Yama the King of the Dead, and the first man (R.V.X 14.5 ; 17-1).

³ Gāush Bagha. See Glossary.

ZARATHUSHTRA EXHORTS THE DAEVAS

(10) Indeed, such a man distorts the Sacred Scriptures who declares it is most wicked to gaze upon the earth and sun with both eyes,¹ who gives gifts to the wicked, who desolates fields and pastures, and inflicts blows upon the righteous.

(11) Without doubt, such Followers of the Druj mutilate my inner life, who, having conspired mightily together, deprive men and women from possessing their rightful spiritual inheritance. O Lord of Wisdom, they injure the Followers of Asha who cling to the Sovereign Mind of God.

(12) By such deceitful teaching they divert men from the best course of action. Mazda has declared them to be evil, as they mutilate the life of Creation through the false glitter of widespread speech so that the greedy Grehmas,² the wilfully deaf Karapans,³ and the sovereignty of the seekers after the Lie are preferred to Asha.

(13) This power held the greedy Grehma stupefied in the Abode of the Most Evil Mind, the destroyer of his spiritual life, but yet he will long continue to ask and yearn for the message of Thy Manthra-Reciter,

¹ An allusion to the magical practices of the Daevas and their midnight orgies.

² Andreas translates as "devourers of sacrifice" referring to the false shepherds and prophets who batten themselves on their followers.

³ Karaps or Karapans were sacrificial priests of the Daevas, and their spiritual guides. They are usually coupled with the Kavayas, the ruling princes among the Daevas. Karapans and Kavayas are mentioned several times in the *Gathas* : Y.32. 12, 14, 15 ; 44.20 ; 46.11 ; 48.10 ; 51.12 and 14. Pahlavi writers speak of the Karapans as "wilfully deaf" and the Kavayas as "wilfully blind," placing them among "sorcerers, sirens, tyrants, murderous bipeds and sanctity destroyers." (*S.B.E.*, Vols. XXXI, p. 236 ; XXXVII, pp. 111-112, n. 4 297 ; XLVII, p. x).

[Zarathushtra,] who will [compassionately] protect [all such] in the sight of Asha.¹

(14) The greedy Grehma and the wilfully blind Kavayas² have long since directed their aim and energies to fetter him, [Zarathushtra,] when they resorted to the Followers of the Druj for help because life was declared [doomed] to destruction [by them, in the hope] that death-dispelling³ aid might kindle [itself for their protection.]

(15) In truth, by such devices are brought to ruin these hosts of the wilfully deaf Karapans and the wilfully blind Kavis, who would never, under any circumstances, be given independent rule over the living. But, [on learning a lesson from the destruction] of these two [evil sects], mankind will be borne aloft to the Abode of the Good Mind.⁴

¹ i.e., the Prophet will strive to lead all sinners to the vision of Asha.

² Kavi or Kavaya originally meant "wise," "one possessed with insight," and in the *Vedas* the term is always applied to poets and seers. As they were the ruling princes of the day who sided with the Daevas, in the *Gathas* the term is one of abuse, with the honourable exception of Kava Vishtaspa, Zarathushtra's patron. Ancient Iranian heroes keep the prefix Kava and are remembered to this day with reverence. Such are Kava Kavata, Kava Us (Kavi Usana of the *Vedas*, *R.V.* IV. 26. 1), and Kava Husravah (see Taraporewala, *op. cit.*, p. 296).

³ *Duraosha*, "death-dispelling" is the epithet applied in Avesta texts to Haoma, Vedic Soma, the sacred plant used in Zarathushtrian ritual. *Duraosha* occurs only once in the *Gathas*, but thrice in the *Vedas* where it means "hard to move," indestructible, unassailable, one who cannot be hurt, and hard to burn (*R.V.*, IV. 21. 6; VIII. 1. 13; IX. 101. 3. See Taraporewala, *ibid.*, pp. 297-298). The sects hostile to Zarathushtra hoped to escape the general conflagration they caused in the world through their doctrines and evil deeds by invoking the invincible quality of Haoma in the Haoma ritual, but, as the following verse reveals, they did not succeed.

⁴ Pahlavi translators interpret "these two" as Haurvatat, Perfection, and Ameretat, Immortality, the twin rewards of spiritual life, and so render the last line differently.

ZARATHUSHTRA EXHORTS THE DAEVAS

(16) The teaching of the pious is indeed all that is best for the man of wide intelligence. O Lord of Life and Wisdom, ruling at will, resolve these my remaining doubts quite openly, so that against the invectives of the Followers of the Druj I may pour forth blessings from my mouth.¹

¹ Controversial passage. Bartholomae regards the text as corrupt and does not translate the first two lines of the verse. Moulton follows suit, adding that the words *ushuriye* and *syas* "defy all reasonable analysis and appear to be corrupt." Andreas attempts no translation whatever, omits *ushuriye* in his Urtext, but keeps *syas* unchanged. Mills and Kanga translate the entire verse, basing their attempts on the Pahlavi translations and the Sanskrit of Nairyosang. Mills gives a "free translation," while Kanga gives the rendering of Darmesteter for the last two lines, not being sure of their meaning himself (see Taraporewala, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-305).

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION

YASNA, 33. vv. 1-14.

(1) Each man shall act in full agreement with these principles which are the Primal Laws of Life;¹ and so shall the Ratu behave, with the utmost circumspection, in justice towards the Follower of the Druj and the Follower of Asha, and also to those in whom falsehood and truth are exactly balanced.

(2) Hence, whoever toils with word or thought or the actions of both hands to drive out evil from the Follower of the Druj, or directs his fellowman towards the good, such accomplish the Divine Will out of love for the living God of Life and Wisdom.

(3) He who is the best for the Righteous, whether he be one of the Strong in Spirit, or a Fellow-worker or a Friend,² O Ahura, or whether he nourishes the living with zeal, such shall in truth dwell in the green pastures of the Divine Law and the Good Mind.

(4) Therefore I will pray away from Thy devotees disobedience and evil thought, O Mazda, and from the Strong in Spirit a perverse bent of mind, and from the Fellow-worker deceit from his nearest of kin, and from the Friend the slanderers, and from Life's Pasture the most wicked shepherd.

¹ This phrase occurs only twice in the *Gathas*. See Y.45.3.

² See p. 57, n. 1.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION

(5) So now I shall invoke for the final goal the most majestic of all, Thy Sraosha, Divine Obedience, obtaining a long life on earth stretching up to the Kingdom of the Good Mind along the straight paths of Asha where the most wise and living God Himself is found.

(6) I who am Thy righteous invoker in Asha, do beseech from the Supreme Spirit this, through Thy Love, that I may fulfil my mission on earth as Thou hast decreed. Therefore, O Lord of Life and Wisdom, do I long to behold Thee and have speech with Thee.

(7) Come to me in Thy purest¹ Essence and in Vision, so that through the Divine Law and the Good Mind, I may be heard beyond the limits of the Maga Brotherhood.² May the path of duty, consecrated to Thee, be clearly manifest among us.

(8) Make these matters known to me, O God, so that, with the help of the Good Mind, I may continue the worship of one like You, O Mazda. So, through Thy Divine Law, and by hymning Thy praises, grant me, Beloved, the power³ and glory of Your Sovereign Immortality and the Cup of all Perfection.

(9) In truth, Thine, O Mazda, are these twin spirits,⁴ the two great increasers of Asha, who dwell united in the dazzling light of Thy Wisdom. May Vahishta Mana, Thy Sovereign Mind, rain down upon us from

¹ Literally, "highest," "best."

² See p. 48, n. 1.

³ *Utayuiti*, in its basic sense of power, force, strength.

⁴ Perfection and Immortality mentioned in the previous verse.

on high the combined blessing of these two whose souls walk hand in hand.¹

(10) All holy lives are Thine, O Mazda, in truth, all which have been, which are and which shall be. Thou dost apportion these their reward in keeping with Thy Love. Raise up the bodily life of man to the height of bliss through Vohu Mana, Xshathra and Asha.²

(11) O Thou, who art the Almighty Lord of Life and Wisdom, and Aramaiti, and Asha who giveth increase to Creation, and Vohu Mana and Xshathra, hearken unto me, have mercy upon me while apportioning the reward of each to each.

(12) Reveal Thyself within me, O Ahura, and grant me Tevishi, the Desire for Perfection, through Divine Devotion. O gloriously radiant Spirit, Mazda, bestow upon me goodness as a reward for my prayers, a full measure of dynamic power through Asha, and spiritual lordship [over all living things] through Vohu Mana.

(13) O Lord of Life, for my joy and far-reaching vision reveal unto me those Thy incomparable gifts of Xshathra which are the blessings of the Good Mind. Illumine, O radiant Aramaiti, through the Divine Law, the visionary perceptions³ of men.

¹ Difficult verse rendered variously by Bartholomae, Spiegel, Kanga, Darmesteter and others. Geldner gives three different textual versions for this verse. Moulton follows Bartholomae's translation, but asserts it is "far from convincing when confronted with the original." The present rendering differs from those of others but is nearest to Dr. Taraporewala's literal version in his *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra*, p. 334.

² Some scholars perceive the hint of a bodily resurrection in the last sentence of this verse.

³ Daena in the plural. See Glossary.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION

(14) Therefore, as a consecration does Zarathushtra dedicate to Mazda the life-breath of his whole being, as well as the first fruits of his Good Mind. To Asha he offers his deeds and words, and his willing obedience, comprising all his power.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION (contd.)

YASNA, 34. vv. 1-15

(1) By means of that dedicated act, that dedicated word, that dedicated worship, O Mazda, Thou dost bestow upon mankind Immortality and the Law and the Power which flows from Perfection. O Living God, may we ever remain theirs and Thine foremost in our offering [of praise and adoration.]

(2) For, in truth, to Thee alone does the good spirit of the enlightened man, whose soul walks hand in hand with Asha, dedicate all these gifts through his thought and act. With hymns of praise I shall ever abide in adoration of one like You, O Mazda.

(3) Thus, with deep humility, we dedicate to Thee, O Ahura, and to Thy Law, as a votive offering, all the material creations in Thy Kingdom which fulfil themselves through the Good Mind, for upon the true visionaries descends from on high spiritual power as in one like You, O Mazda, for all time.

(4) Therefore, O Lord of Life, we long for Thy mighty Fire of Thought which is an enduring, blazing Flame bringing clear guidance and joy to the true believer, but as for the destruction-loving, this quickening Flame overcomes his evil in a flash.¹

(5) How great Thy Power ! How intense my desire

¹ Literally “ with a turn of the hand.” Cf. Y.50.5.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION

for deeds performed in Thy Service, O Mazda,^{so} that I may follow after Thee in order to protect, through the Divine Law and the Good Mind, the Drighu,¹ the poor in spirit, the meek and lowly of heart, who are Thine. For Thy sake we shall speak against all Daevas and men of destruction.

(6) Since, O Lord of Wisdom, Thou art such in very truth through Asha and Vohu Mana, therefore grant me that necessary guidance in all the stages of this earthly life that I may return to Thee adoring and worshipping within the depths of my soul.

(7) Where are Thy devotees, O Mazda, who, having full knowledge of Thy Good Mind through teachings relating to their true spiritual inheritance, make use of their understanding of soul in happiness and even in misery? We know none except Thee, O Mazda, therefore protect us through Asha.

(8) Without doubt, they² who brought ruin to many terrorise us by their actions. Since, O Mazda, the perverter of Thy Decrees is more formidable than Thy reviler, those who do not comprehend Thy Divine Law, find that the Good Mind withdraws far from them.

(9) O Lord of Wisdom, those who through their evil actions and ignorance of the Good Mind spurn Thy radiant Aramaiti, the Beloved of the Wise, from them the Divine Law cuts itself off completely, just as corrupt men of destructive tendencies do so from us.

¹ Word cognate with the Sanskrit, "Bhiku," the selfless devotee of God who takes upon himself voluntary poverty. Cf. Y.53.9.

² Referring to the Daevas and men of destruction mentioned in verse 5.

(10) But the Seer, aware of Thy radiant Aramaiti as the true core of Asha, speaks to these corrupt men concerning the inward essence of the Good Mind's workings. All these things are revealed in Thy Kingdom, O Lord of Life and Wisdom.

(11) Thus, Thy twin Powers, Perfection and Immortality, are for the spiritually enlightened. Through the Lord's Might and Majesty inherent in the Good Mind, Perfect Devotion, together with the Divine Law, increases the Desire for Immortality and the Desire for Perfection. Through these [six Powers,] O Mazda, Thou art [the Remover] of affliction from us all.

(12) What are Thy Secrets? What willest Thou? What of praise or what of worship? Announce it, O Mazda, for our enlightenment so that the blessing of Thy Commands may rest upon us. Teach us how to follow, through Thy Divine Law, Thy very own Path of the Good Mind.

(13) This is that Path of the Good Mind which Thou, O Ahura, hast shown to me, namely, the Religion of the Saoshyants¹ whose exemplary conduct on earth will be inspired by Asha alone. This will enable the wise to taste of their just reward of which Thou, O Mazda, art the final aim.

(14) That longed-for reward, O Mazda, is in truth given to life imprisoned in flesh and bone, for they who toil to make Creation prolific through the workings of the Good Mind, are Thy collaborators, O Ahura, promoting, through Asha, the divine purpose of Thy Holy Wisdom.²

¹ Future Saviours. See Glossary.

² Literally, "the good Chisti."

ZARATHUSHTRA'S DEDICATION TO HIS MISSION

(15) Hence, O Mazda, declare to me the noblest doctrines and finest acts by which I may, in truth, fulfil my earnest desire for Thy praise, achieving it through the Good Mind and the Divine Law. O living God, through Thy Power and at Thy Will, clothe us with the true and regenerated life of the spirit.

GATHA USHTAVAITI
ZARATHUSHTRA ATTAINS DIVINE
ILLUMINATION

YASNA, 43. vv.1-16

(1) Whoever brings untold bliss to others will be given that bliss by Mazda Ahura who ruleth at will. So in truth I crave from Thee Utayuiti, the Desire for Immortality, and Tevishi, the Desire for Perfection, so as to uphold Thy Divine Law. Bestow upon me, through Thy loving Aramaiti, that blessing of a perfect illumination—the life of the Good Mind.

(2) And so, to such a man¹ will be given the height of all blessedness of the blest. O most gloriously radiant Spirit, Mazda, grant me enlightenment, for Thou hast given to all, through Thy Law, the full measure of the Good Mind that each may enjoy unlimited bliss all the days of his long life.

(3) That man shall himself progress from good to greater good who instructs us concerning the straight paths of salvation in this life of the body and the mind leading up to the Worlds of Reality in which the living God Himself abides. And so Thy Lover shall become one like Thee, O Mazda, resplendent in Holy Wisdom.

(4) When the full power of the Good Mind came upon me, then did I realise Thee as the Mighty and

¹ Literally, “to him.”

ZARATHUSHTRA ATTAINS DIVINE ILLUMINATION

Most Bountiful One, O Mazda, for I saw that with the same hand with which Thou dost promote men's destinies, Thou also assignest their just dues to the Followers of the Druj and to the Followers of Asha through the energy of Thy Flaming Fire of Thought all-powerful through Thy unimpeachable Law.

(5) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when I beheld Thee as the First at the birth of life. Since Thou didst ordain that deeds and words shall bear fruit, evil comes to the evil, good blessings to the good. In Thy discerning Judgment [Thou hast thought fit to establish this order] till the Final Consummation of Creation.

(6) At that Final Consummation, O Mazda, Thou wilt come with Thy Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, with Xshathra, Thy Might and Majesty, and with Vohu Mana, Thy Good Mind, through whose workings living beings progress in Thy Law. Meanwhile, Aramaiti shall instruct them, the Prophets, in the divine purpose of Thy Creation which no man may gainsay.

(7) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely and inquired of me :

“ Who art thou ? Whose art thou ? With what divine signs shall I point to the Day of Questioning¹ as reflected over in the primal elements of thy being and in thy person ? ”

(8) Then I answered him:

¹ The Day of Questioning refers to the searchings or heart and inward probings of the mind the Prophet must undergo before he can come to the full realisation of Ahura Mazda. The clear pattern of this process is reflected in the *gaethao* or primal elements of his very being, and in his *tanwas* or person. See Body (Human), in Glossary.

In the first place, I am Zarathushtra, in very truth the subduer of the Follower of the Druj as far as I am able, but to the Follower of Asha I would be a mighty inner joy and strength. Thus may I attain to glory in the desire of Thy Sovereignty, O Mazda, so long as I praise Thee and weave my songs for Thy sake.

(9) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely. His question was: "Whom dost thou wish to know?"

[I replied :]

Henceforth, I will dedicate the consecration of my homage to Thy Flaming Fire of Thought, and, as long as I have the power, I will meditate upon Asha.

(10) Therefore grant Thou unto me Asha for whom I have yearned, following Aramaiti for that perfection. [Then Ahura Mazda and His Powers addressed Zarathushtra, saying,] "Place before us thy searching questions, for in truth by that questioning thou wilt acquire such courage as if a mighty ruler had bestowed upon thee his sovereign will."

(11) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely. When I first became enlightened through Thy Words, Thou didst teach me how hard it is to induce faith among mankind, yet will I practise what Thou declarest to me is the best.

(12) And when Thou didst command me :

"Go to Asha in fullness of knowledge," then Thou hadst not revealed to me things unheard of ; but Thou didst so when, to dispel all darkness before me, Sraosha,

Divine Obedience, came accompanied by the blessing of a mighty glory through which benedictions rain down upon the two contenders of this world for their mutual salvation.

(13) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely. To obtain the object of my desire grant me such a length of life as not one of Your devotees has yet had, viz., that most coveted existence which is renowned in Thy Kingdom.

(14) What the conquering hero, possessing knowledge and potent will, bestows upon a friend, that upon my people Thou dost lavish, O Mazda, in the shape of Thy all-sufficing Bliss which comes through Thy Might and Majesty working in harmony with the Divine Law. Let me rouse the leaders of Thy Doctrines together with all those who meditate upon Thy Holy Words.

(15) Then did I realise Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely. He declared to me that silent meditation is the best for attaining spiritual enlightenment. Let no man be a great rejoicer of the Followers of the Druj, for the Followers of Asha look upon them all as destruction-loving.

(16) Thus, O Lord of Life and Wisdom, Zarathushtra chooses for himself the Most Bountiful Spirit, indeed none other than Thyself. May the life of the flesh be vitalized by Asha. May Aramaiti ever abide with Xshathra in sun-like splendour. May she grant a blessing upon deeds inspired by Vohu Mana.

QUESTIONINGS

YASNA, 44. vv. 1-20

(1) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall I bow down in obeisance to one like You, O Mazda? One such as Thou art should instruct a friend like me thus giving us loving support through the Divine Law so that the Good Mind may come to us.

(2) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who is first in the highest spiritual life? Who earnestly seeks it in fulfilment? In truth, he is blest through Asha who is the heritage of all, the guardian in spirit, the physician of life,¹ the friend, O Mazda.

(3) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who was the first begetter and father of Asha? Who appointed the course of the suns and stars? Through whose power does the moon wax and wane save Thine? These things, indeed, I wish to know of, and others besides, O Mazda.

(4) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who sustained the earth from below, and the sky from falling down from above? Who fashioned the waters and the plants? Who gave speed to the wind and the clouds? Who, O Lord of Wisdom, was the creator of Vohu Mana?

(5) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. What wondrous workman wrought the expanses of light and the expanses of darkness? What wondrous workman wrought sleep and waking? Who is it through

¹ See p. 55, n. 3.

QUESTIONINGS

whom were fashioned dawn, noontide, and night, which are the admonishers of his duty to the wise man ?

(6) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. If what I declare is verily true, then does Aramaiti, through our deeds, prosper Asha ? Didst Thou bestow upon Thy followers Thy Might and Majesty through the Good Mind ? For whom hast Thou shaped this abundant, joy-giving creation ?

(7) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who created Aramaiti, the exalted, along with Xshathra ? Who made the son obedient to the father with his life's breath ? Through these questions I desire to approach Thee for enlightenment gained through Thy Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, O Mazda, Creator of All.

(8) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall I meditate upon that which is Thy Revelation, O Mazda, and Thy Word which I seek through Vohu Mana, and that perfection of life I desire through Asha in order to know what good my soul shall rejoice in and obtain ?

(9) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall I maintain in purity that which is my living faith which Thou, the Lord of Holy Wisdom, shalt teach me concerning the Heavenly Kingdom ? Only one such as Thou art, O Mazda, will long to dwell in Thy Abode with Xshathra the righteous, with Asha, and with Vohu Mana.

(10) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Disclose to me Thy Revelation which is the best for all the living and which, hand in hand with Asha, furthers the primal elements of my being, guiding my actions aright through the inspired words of Aramaiti.

Hence, the fervent desires of my Perceptive Wisdom shall lead to Thee, O Mazda.

(11) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall Aramaiti fully possess those to whom Thy Revelation has been vouchsafed ? I spread abroad Thy Revelation among mankind as the primal one. All others¹ I look upon with spiritual disgust.

(12) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who is a Follower of Asha, and who a Follower of the Druj among those with whom I would confer ? To which of the two, whether he leans towards evil or whether he is himself evil, should I turn ? The Follower of the Druj who sets himself against Thy Gifts to me, why is this one himself not considered evil ?

(13) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall we completely overthrow the Druj from amongst us ? These fallen ones, who are full of disobedience to the voice of God, neither shine in the pursuit of Asha, nor take delight in the questioning of Vohu Mana.

(14) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How shall I give the Druj into the hands of Asha to cleanse her thoroughly with the Holy Words of Thy Teaching, and spread complete paralysis among the Followers of the Druj so as to render ineffective their deceptions and treacheries ?

(15) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Since Thou art the Sovereign ruling this world through Asha for its preservation, when both the opposing forces come together to claim these Divine Decrees which Thou, O Mazda, dost uphold, where and to which of the two wilt Thou grant the victory ?

¹ Referring to the beliefs and ritual of the Daevas.

QUESTIONINGS

(16) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who shall smite the enemy with Thy Divine Teachings, protecting all that are? Reveal to me with visionary clarity the wise physician of life, the Prophet, and let Sraosha come to him with Vohu Mana, to whomsoever Thou dost love, O Mazda.

(17) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How may I walk in beatific joy, hand in hand with You, O Mazda, and be Your intimate companion? When shall my speech grow in power so as eventually to reach up to Perfection and Immortality through that Holy Word, the Manthra, which is the driving force radiating from Asha?

(18) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. How may I deserve, through Asha, that blessed reward, the firm control of my ten senses by the mind illumined with spiritual insight that Perfection and Immortality might be understood by me, O Mazda, so that I may lay them both at Thy feet?¹

¹ Literally, the verse runs : How may I deserve, through Asha, that blessed reward, ten mares with a stallion and a camel that Perfection and Immortality might be understood by me, O Mazda, so that I may place them both at Thy feet?

We are indebted to Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala for our interpretation of this stanza. He points out that in the *Katha Upanishad*, III, 3-5, the soul is described as riding in a chariot, the body being the chariot, the intellect the charioteer, the mind the reins, and the senses the horses (R. E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford, 1921, p. 351). In the *Bhagvadgita*, XIII, 5, the senses are divided into five of action and five of contemplation, and are said to be controlled by the "one," that is, the mind. The Avestan word for camel is *Ushtra*, derived by Dr. Taraporewala from the root *vas, ush*, to shine, to burn. Hence, in the above Gathic verse, the Prophet is adhering strictly to commonplaces of Aryan imagery when he speaks metaphorically of the ten senses as the ten mares, impregnated and controlled by the mind,

(19) Answer me aright that which I ask Thee, O Ahura. Who devotes not himself to be worthy of that reward, and who dedicates not himself to speaking the truth, what shall be his punishment for such conduct, here and now? I am aware of that which shall come to him in the end.

(20) Furthermore, I ask this, O Mazda.

How could the Daevas ever have been good rulers who fight for gainful lust with these through whom the Karapan¹ and the Usikhsh² have handed over Creation to Aeshma, Demon of Wrath and Blood-thirstiness? And through the Kavaya³ is she made to groan in submission; nor do they cultivate her pasture through Asha for her increase.

represented as a stallion, which in turn is guided by the camel of illumination. In the *Gathas*, Haurvatat and Ameretatata (Perfection and Immortality), are the twin awards acquired by man at the end of a life lived spiritually on earth. The possession of ten mares, a stallion, and a camel would not, therefore, help Zarathushtra to understand Haurvatat and Ameretatata, nor induce him to dedicate these Powers to the service of Ahura Mazda. The key to the imagery employed is found in the *Katha Upanishad* and the *Bhagvadgita*.

¹ See p. 60, n. 3.

² Usikhsh or Usig is mentioned only this once in the entire *Avesta*. The Iranian tribe of Usikhsh has been compared to the Vedic Usigs, a family of priests who first established Agni (fire) on earth. Hence, Agni is called the "Usig of the gods" (*S.B.E.*, Vol. XLVI, pp. 52 ff. 233, 261, 297; *K. R. Cama Memorial Volume*, Bombay, 1900, pp. 7, 8, 10; M. Haug, *Essays on the Religion of the Parsis*, London, 1883, p. 289; and J. Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology*, London, 1903, p. 328).

³ See p. 61, n. 2.

THE SECOND SERMON : ON THE MANTHRA, THE HOLY WORD

YASNA, 45. vv. 1-11

(1) Thus will I proclaim. Hearken now with your outward ear. Pay heed now with your inward hearing, both you who from near and you who from afar have yearned to know. Now in very truth engrave deeply and clearly in mind all these matters so that the false teacher may not, a second time, destroy your spiritual life. Through his evil choice, the Follower of the Druj has run amok with his tongue.

(2) Thus will I proclaim from the beginning concerning the Twin Mainyu of Life of whom the more benevolent thus addressed him, the Evil One :

“ Neither our minds, nor doctrines, nor directive intelligence, nor choice of faith, neither words nor deeds, neither our consciences nor souls agree.”

(3) Thus will I proclaim concerning the Primal [Laws] of this Life¹ which the Omniscient Mazda Ahura has declared to me. Whoever among you will not thus put into practice this Holy Word, the Manthra, as I proclaim it and voice it, for such the end of life will be woe.

(4) Thus will I proclaim concerning the highest good of this life which Mazda, who knows all things, has established in harmony with Asha. He, the living

¹ See p. 63, n. 1.

ON THE MANTHRA, THE HOLY WORD

God, is the Father of the industrious Vohu Mana, and His daughter is Aramaiti full of good deeds. Not to be deceived is the all-seeing Lord of Life.

(5) Thus will I proclaim what the Most Blessed One said unto me.

“The Word which is the best for mortals to hear—they who will offer to this My Word Divine Obedience and reverence shall advance towards Perfection and Immortality and, through the deeds of the Good Spirit, towards Mazda Ahura Himself.”

(6) Thus will I proclaim concerning the Most Glorious of All, praising, through Asha, Him Who pours out His Holy Wisdom on every thing that lives. May Mazda Ahura hearken unto me through His Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, in whose adoration I would ask the Good Mind to participate. May He, in His Wisdom, teach me of the Highest.

(7) It is the Lord Whose Grace His devotees most earnestly long for, all those indeed who are, who were and who shall be. The soul of the just aspires after Immortality, whereas the torments of wicked men ever continue. Indeed, Mazda Ahura Himself is the Creator of these Laws through His Might and Majesty.

(8) Him will I seek to turn towards us with hymns of adoration, for now in truth have I beheld Him clearly in my mind’s eye. Knowing through Asha of the Good Spirit in word and deed, I can now see Mazda Ahura Himself, so let us treasure up His praises in Garo Demana, the House of Heavenly Song.

(9) Him will I seek to rejoice together with the Good Mind for our sakes,¹ Who, in His Providence, created

¹ Literally, “for us.”

for us both the translucent and the opaque.¹ May Mazda Ahura, through His Might and Majesty, grant us strength to prosper our human flock through the Divine Law and the profound wisdom of the Good Mind.

(10) Him will I seek to magnify in our worshippings of Perfect Devotion, Who in His unbending might is known as Mazda Ahura, for, through His Divine Law and His Good Mind and under His Sovereign Power He has assigned to man Perfection and Immortality. May He grant us in this life the Desire for Perfection and the Desire for Immortality.

(11) Whoever among those Daevas and inferior men who condemned Him with derision may be, such are different from those who look up to Ahura with awe. These are the enlightened Saoshyants protecting the Holy Revelation, and to them Mazda Ahura is Friend, Brother, nay Father.

¹ Literally, “the shining and the not-shining,” referring to that freedom of choice which enables man to dwell in spiritual light or spiritual darkness, good or evil, blessedness or misery.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH THE FAITH

YASNA, 46. vv. 1-19

(1) To what land shall I bend my steps? Whither shall I turn for homage? They have separated me from the Strong in Spirit and the Friend.¹ Neither does the Fellow-worker seek to rejoice me, nor, by any chance, the cruel despots of the country who are Followers of the Druj. How then shall I rejoice Thee, O Mazda Ahura?

(2) I know that by which I am helpless, O Mazda. Mine is a scanty flock, and I have still fewer men as disciples. So I cry unto Thee, do Thou see to it, O Ahura, for I am searching after that joy which the Beloved grants to His Lover. Teach me, through the Divine Law, concerning the riches of the Good Mind.

(3) When, O Mazda, those who are the Refreshers of the Days² shall come forth to uphold the spiritual life of Asha through the powerful teachings of the Saoshyants and their divine plans for salvation, then shall the Good Mind come to them for inspiration. As for me, O Ahura, I choose Thee alone as Master.

(4) But the Follower of the Druj prevents those who support Asha from furthering the progress of the world, the province or the country, being an invoker of evil defrauding the people through his own actions. Whoever deprives him of power or of life, O Mazda, that

¹ See p. 57, n. 1.

² *Ukhshano Asnam.* See Glossary.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH THE FAITH

individual¹ shall lead the world and mankind² along the paths of Thy Holy Wisdom.³

(5) If any man, though a stony-hearted unbeliever, now comes for enlightenment to Your Sovereign head of Religion who is a man of wisdom enacting Your Divine Decrees and Covenants, and a Follower of Asha, he will impart a living rectitude to this Follower of the Druj. Being discerning, he will claim this fallen one as his own, thus raising him from violence to spiritual exaltation, O Mazda Ahura.

(6) But the man who does not come to him with intense longing for religious conversion shall himself, of a certainty, fall among the companions of the Druj ; for he is wicked who most furthers the wicked, and he indeed is holy to whom the Follower of Asha is a friend. Such is the rule ever since Thou didst create these Primal Laws of Conscience,⁴ O Ahura.

(7) What man hast Thou appointed protector over me, O Mazda, when the Followers of the Druj, in violence, shall threaten to overpower me, what other than Thy Flaming Fire of Thought and Thy Mind, by the workings of which two the Eternal Law is fulfilled, O Ahura ? Declare to me, with visionary clarity, that Sacred Doctrine as a Holy Revelation.

(8) Whoever surrenders to violence these which are my spiritual possessions shall bring down no destruction upon me through the deeds of his flaming wrath. On the contrary, that flame will recoil upon him with a vengeance and prevent his person from attaining

¹ Literally, "himself."

² Literally, "them."

³ Literally, "the Good Chisti."

⁴ *Daena* in the plural. See Glossary.

that which is the good life, but not in the least from following, with a vengeance, the evil life, O Mazda. (9) Who is he, in very truth the foremost devotee, who shall teach me how we may glorify Thee as most worthy to be loved, as radiant in action, as Lord of Life and Truth? Whatever is Thine through Asha, whatever the Architect of Creation has declared to Asha, with that all men¹ seek after Thee through the Good Mind.

(10) Whichever man or woman, O Mazda Ahura, who would give to me the life of the spirit which Thou knowest to be the best, will receive the blessing of the Divine Law and the Lord's Might and Majesty through the Good Mind. And those whom I shall draw towards Your adoration, forth with them all will I cross the Bridge Chinvat.²

(11) The Karapans³ and the Kavayas⁴ combine their powers to destroy the spiritual life of man through their evil acts. But their own soul and their own conscience will torment them when they draw near to where the Bridge of Judgment stands. For all time will they be dwellers in Drujo Demana, the House of the Lie.

(12) When, through Asha, forth from among the more vigorous kindred and progeny of the Turanian Fryana⁵

¹ Literally, "they."

² Bridge of Judgment, and of discriminative choice between good and evil.

³ See p. 60, n. 3.

⁴ See p. 61, n. 2.

⁵ The Turanians were a border tribe converted to the Zarathushtrian faith, and so were the Fryanians (*S.B.E.*, Vol. XXXI, p. 141, n. 3; XXIII, p. 216). The Fryana mentioned in the above verse is usually taken to be Afrasiab whose grandson, Kai-Khusrav, was one of the greatest Kayanian Kings (see Firdausi's *Shahnameh*).

ZARATHUSHTRA'S STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH THE FAITH

there shall have arisen the advancement of life through their zeal for Aramaiti, then shall he, the Fryana, unite them together through the Good Mind, and the Lord of Life and Wisdom be revealed to them for their delight.

(13) Whoever amongst men is seeking to rejoice Spitama Zarathushtra by fulfilling his mission, that man shall be renowned as upright, and Mazda Ahura shall grant him the life of the spirit, and increase his possessions through Vohu Mana. We look upon him as the intimate companion of Thy Law, O God.

(14) O Zarathushtra, who is thy friend, the Follower of Asha, who indeed seeks to be renowned in the great Maga Brotherhood ?¹ In truth, he is the valiant Kava Vishtaspa² himself. O Lord of Life and Wisdom, I shall invoke, in the words of the Good Mind, those whom Thou hast established in Thy blest Abode.

(15) O descendants of the Haechataspan Spitamas,³ to you I will proclaim [“ all those things which are the best for you to hear ”]⁴ so that you may discriminate between the wise and the unwise. You hold Asha as your own by those actions which are in keeping with the Primal Laws of Ahura.⁵

¹ See p. 48, n. 1.

² See p. 44, n. 1.

³ Haechataspa was the fourth and Spitama the ninth ancestor of the Prophet according to Pahlavi tradition. Spitama was the family name of Zarathushtra and of his first cousin and first disciple, Maidhyomaongha (*S.B.E.*, Vols. XLVII, pp. 34, 139-140; XXXVII, p. 299, n. 1).

⁴ Conjectural line added by Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala for the line missing in the text.

⁵ This phrase occurs only once in the *Gathas*, but ten times in the *Behram Yasht*, without explanation or comment. See Y.14.5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27; *S.B.E.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 232, para. 5 ff. where the phrase is translated, “ according to the primitive ordinances of Ahura.”

(16) O Frashaoshtra Hvogva,¹ come hither to the faithful with these for whom we both wish an eternal beatitude in this life, that beatitude where Perfect Devotion blends with Truth,² where the desirable kingdom of the Good Mind is found, where the Lord of Life and Wisdom abides in the Heaven of His Choice.

(17) Since I chant the Gathic Songs in measured and not in unmeasured verse, addressing them to you, O wise Jamaspa Hvogva,³ therefore, with Divine Obedience standing firm within you, you seek the Lord's adoration. He who discriminates between the wise and the unwise is Mazda Ahura, alone the Discerner through the circumspect working of His Law. (18) He who brings me sanctity, to him would I assign the best of my gifts through the Good Mind. Afflictions upon him who would deliver us to affliction. O Lord of Wisdom, I seek but to fulfil Thy Will through Asha. Such is the discernment of my understanding and intellect.

(19) In truth, whoever will accomplish for me, Zarathushtra, my most cherished desire, upon him the Divine Powers⁴ shall bestow, from the prolific Creation, the reward of the life beyond together with all his mind's yearnings. This also, O Mazda Most Wise, Thou didst reveal to me.

¹ See p. 45, n. 1.

² Literally, "where Aramaiti clasps Asha."

³ See p. 45, n. 1.

⁴ Literally, "they."

GATHA SPENTA MAINYU
THE THIRD SERMON : ON SPENTA MAINYU,
THE HOLY SPIRIT

YASNA, 47. vv. 1-6

(1) Through His Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, and Vahishta Mana, His Sovereign Mind, Mazda Ahura will grant Perfection and Immortality to him whose words and deeds are in harmony with the Divine Law, with the Lord's Might and Majesty, and with His Loving Devotion.

(2) Through this Most Holy Spirit, the best life will be cultivated by him who speaks with the words from the mouth and tongue¹ of the Good Mind, and whose actions are performed by the hands of Aramaiti. Mazda Himself is the Father of Asha because of this, His Perceptive Wisdom.

(3) Through this Holy Spirit Thou art indeed He who, for man's sake,² moulded this joyous Creation, and when, O Mazda, man took counsel with the Good Mind, then didst Thou grant her³ for her pasturage the joy-giver Aramaiti.

(4) Through this Holy Spirit the Followers of the Druj are perpetually wounded, O Mazda, but not

¹ Technical term used in the Zarathushtian Mysteries. See p. 22.

² Literally, "for his sake."

³ Creation.

ON SPENTA MAINYU, THE HOLY SPIRIT

so the Followers of Asha. The just man shall love the Follower of Asha even though of scanty means. But he shall destroy the Follower of the Druj even if he be a man of wealth and power.

(5) For, through that Holy Spirit, O Mazda Ahura, Thou hast assigned to the Follower of Asha whatever is, in truth, the best for him. The Follower of the Druj, far from Thy Love, receives the just reward of his own actions which are steeped in the Evil Mind.

(6) Through that Holy Spirit, O Mazda Ahura, and through Thy Flaming Fire of Thought, Thou metest out impartial justice to the two contenders, the Followers of Asha and those of the Druj. With the growth of Aramaiti and Asha [in men's hearts], Thy Primal [Sovereignty] will indeed be fully accepted by all seekers [after Truth].

THE CONQUEST OF THE DRUJ

YASNA, 48. vv. 1-12

(1) Through such Divine Dispensations will the Druj be overcome by Asha, and when the deceits perpetrated by Daevas and by men are laid bare for all eternity, then shall love of Thee increase, O Ahura, and bring in its wake all blessings.

(2) Before these my struggles overwhelm me, tell me that which Thou knowest, O Ahura. What! Shall the Follower of Asha not conquer the Follower of the Druj? This indeed is looked upon as the crowning achievement of the spiritual life.

(3) So to the enlightened is given the best of the Sacred Doctrines which Ahura, the Giver of all Good, teaches through Asha. The blessed saints, the seers, and those too who have knowledge of the Secret Mysteries, are aware of this truth. By acquiring the wisdom of the Good Mind one becomes like Thee, O Mazda.

(4) He who devotes his mind, for better and for worse, to Thee, O Mazda, also devotes his conduct, in word and deed, to Thee. His will is knit with his earnest strivings and choice of faith. In the end, he will hold¹ a distinct place in Thy Divine Plan.

(5) O Aramaiti, let good rulers rule through actions inspired by the Good Chisti, but let not wicked rulers rule over us. Purity from birth is best for man. Let

¹ Literally, "shall be."

THE CONQUEST OF THE DRUJ

him toil for the Creation cultivating her for our glory.
(6) She indeed will give us good shelter, rousing in us the Desire for Immortality and the Desire for Perfection—she, the Beloved of Vohu Mana. Hence, for her did Mazda Ahura, through Asha, make plants flourish in the birth of primeval life.

(7) Wrath must needs be suppressed, Jealousy cut asunder by those who would maintain, through Asha, the widespread penetration of the Good Mind in whose company walks the just man. Hence, I would assign his abode in Thee, O Ahura.

(8) What is the prime wish and purpose of Thy good rule, O Mazda? What blessing of Thine will flow from Thee to me, O Ahura? Which of Thy ardent devotees shall I seek out through Asha so that I may further the workings of the Good Spirit?

(9) When shall I know whether you rule over each one of us, O Mazda, O Asha? Resolve these my doubts quite openly and hasten to let the Saoshyant know from me words of equity woven into the very fabric of the Good Mind so that his blessing shall rest upon all men.

(10) When, O Mazda, will the true men amongst men come? When will they remove the use of urine from the ritual of these Daevas Magas¹ through whose wickedness the Karapans cause widespread distress, and through whose evil designs corrupt rulers hold sway over entire countries?

¹ Some *Yasna* mss. read “madha” for Maga, so that an alternative rendering would be: “When will they remove the impurity of intoxication due to which the Karapans cause widespread distress . . .” The reference is to the heady Soma juice (Gathic Haoma) used to excess by the Karapans, sacrificial priests of the Daevas, and which caused intoxication.

(11) When, O Mazda, will Asha together with Aramaiti of good shelter and rich pasturage¹ come with Xshathra ? Who will bring us peace from the cruelty of the wicked ? To whom will the Perceptive Wisdom of the Good Mind come ?

(12) Indeed, these will be the Saoshyants of all countries for their spiritual insight will accompany the Good Mind, their actions be performed through Asha, and Thy Teachings, O Mazda, be widely taught, for in truth these men are destined to be the smiters of Wrath.

¹ Cf.Y.47.3 ; 48.5 and 6, where Aramaiti is given to Creation for her pasturage, and where Creation gives "good shelter" to man. Already Aramaiti is becoming identified with the fruitful Creation. In the *Later Avesta*, Aramaiti is the guardian of Mother Earth.

THE CONQUEST OF THE DRUJ (contd.)

YASNA, 49. vv. 1-12

(1) Thus has the Bendva,¹ my greatest enemy who is full of evil intent, long since oppressed me. I seek to rejoice Thee, O Mazda, through Thy Law. Come to me with Thy good gift, and grant me, through Vohu Mana, the power to conquer his destructiveness.

(2) But the lying creed of this Bendva makes me think seriously—deceiver as he is, far removed from Asha, and wounding the just. He does not strengthen the blessed Aramaiti in this life, nor does he commune with the Good Mind, O Mazda.

(3) For this reason, O Mazda, is Asha given us for our choice, the support of our faith, and the destruction of Falsehood.² Therefore I pray for the leadership of the Good Mind, and renounce all the Allies of the Followers of the Druj.

(4) They who through evil intent increase Wrath and Jealousy with their own tongues—the unprogressive among the progressive—these are the evildoers whose desire is not towards righteous deeds. They will give to the Daevas the faith which belongs to the Followers of the Druj.

(5) But that man,³ positively anyonesoever, who has mastered the true faith by praise and invocation

¹ A powerful border chief hostile to Zarathushtra and his teachings, (*S.B.E.*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 160-161).

² Druj.

³ Literally, “ he himself.”

THE CONQUEST OF THE DRUJ

of Vohu Mana, can become, through Asha, a good companion of Aramaiti, and with the help of them all dwell in Thy Kingdom, O Ahura.

(6) So now I lift up my voice and call upon Thee, O Mazda, and thee, O Asha, to reveal, by the power of Mind, what is Your Divine Purpose for this Creation so that we may choose the right and proclaim it, making renowned that Revelation which is Thy very own, O Ahura.

(7) And let every man¹ hear of that Revelation through the Good Mind, O Mazda, and let him hear of it through the Divine Law. O Living God, hearken Thou to me. Who will be the Friend, and who the Strong in Spirit, legally, who will give good counsel to the Fellow-worker?²

(8) May Thou grant the exalted leadership of Asha to Frashaoshtra,³ this I beseech from Thee, O Mazda Ahura, and to me and my followers that good which characterises Thy Might and Majesty. May we be at all times the most loved by Thee.

(9) Let the zealous reformer created for the good of the world listen to the Divine Precepts. The speakers of truth shall not share their leadership with the Followers of the Druj. Just as the character and conduct⁴ of the righteous are united with the highest heavenly reward, so the valiant Vishtaspa⁵ and the wise Jamaspa are united through Asha.

¹ Literally, "him."

² See p. 57, n. 1.

³ See p. 45, n. 1.

⁴ *Daena* in the plural. See Glossary.

⁵ As the adjective, *yahi*, valiant, is applied to Vishtaspa in Y.46.14, we presume that when the same adjective occurs in this verse, without the proper noun following it, the reference is to Vishtaspa.

(10) And these, O Mazda, I shall place in Thy Keeping—the Good Mind and the souls of the pious, and our homage and invocation of Aramaiti, so that Thou mayest strengthen them through Xshathra the mighty, the deathless.

(11) But evil rulers, evildoers, evil speakers, those of evil conscience, and evil thinkers, the souls of such Followers of the Druj, because of the fouling of their original lustre, will return to Drujo Demana, the House of the Lie, where, in truth, their existence shall be.

(12) Where is thy protection for thy invoker, Zarathushtra, O Asha? And where thy protection, O Vohu Mana? O Lord of Life and Wisdom, who will rejoice Thee with songs of praise beseeching for that which is Thy Sovereign Will?

ZARATHUSHTRA COMMUNES WITH GOD AND HIS POWERS

YASNA, 50. vv.1-11

(1) What help shall I seek, O my soul, and from whom ? Who is known as the manly¹ protector of my flock and of me, who other than Asha and Thee, O Mazda Ahura, most honoured, most invoked, and Vahishta Mana, Thy Sovereign Mind ?

(2) O Mazda, how may one who desires her to be rich in pasture during this life seek the best for the joyous Creation ? The just, who follow Asha, dwell in the innumerable Heavens of the Sun.² Grant me these Thy countless gifts without concealment.

(3) So these gifts, O Mazda, which the Lord's Might and Majesty and His Good Mind bestowed upon Creation,³ come from the Divine Law. Whoever prospers for us the neighbouring settlements which the Follower of the Druj has annexed, shall receive the strength of Asha's blessing.

(4) O Mazda Ahura, thus in praises will I worship Thee, with the Divine Law and the Sovereign Mind

¹ Literally, " male, man."

² In the Pahlavi Texts, four heavens are mentioned in the following order :

i. *Satar Paya*, Star-studded Heaven, where good thoughts dwell ;
ii. *Mah Paya*, Heavens of the Moon, where good words dwell ;
iii. *Khurshed Paya*, Heavens of the Sun, where good deeds dwell ;
iv. *Anaghra-Raochao*, Heavens of Boundless Light, identified with Garo Demana, the House of Heavenly Song, the abode of Ahura.

³ Literally " upon her."

ZARATHUSHTRA COMMUNES WITH GOD AND HIS POWERS

and the Lord's Might and Majesty through whom the seeker after Thee is firmly set upon his path. Let me listen clearly to Thy Glories in Garo Demana, the House of Heavenly Song.

(5) In very truth I will arouse Thy Devotee, O Mazda Ahura, through Thy Law, for Thou dost gladden Thy Manthra-Preacher, [Zarathushtra,] with evident and far-reaching support by means of which he will lead us to bliss with a turn of the hand.¹

(6) O Mazda, he who through Asha, and with humility, spreads abroad in his speech the Manthra, the Holy Word, is a friend to Zarathushtra. Grant him in this life the path of the tongue² of wisdom so that he may proclaim my secrets through the Good Mind.

(7) O Mazda, O Asha, O Vohu Mana, for You and Your adoration will I yoke the strong and most swift steeds of devotion so as to reach the Bridge of Judgment. Be there my help and guide through these steeds.

(8) With uplifted hands and with Thy ordered verses welling up from the fullness of my heart, I would encircle Thee, O Mazda, and Thee, O Asha, with humility and devotion, and thee, O Vohu Mana, with nobility in virtue.

(9) With these songs of praise ever on my lips, may I return to Thee, O Mazda, through the Divine Law and the workings of the Good Mind. So long as Thou rulest over my destiny at will, till then, I shall be a crying suppliant of Thy Holy Wisdom.

(10) Thus, whatever devotional acts I may perform

¹ See p. 67, n. 1.

² See p. 88, n. 1.

in future, and whatever deeds encircled with these [hymns were performed in the past,] and whatever is deemed precious in the eyes of the Good Mind—[all such are enacted] by the stars, the suns, the dawns, the Refresher of Days,¹ who run their courses in harmony with Thy Law, and in adoration of Thee, O Mazda Ahura.

(11) So I shall call myself a singer of Thy praises and be one as long as I have the will and strength to work through Asha. May the Giver of Life further its progress through the Good Mind. Such is the prime wish of the servers of truth.

¹ See p. 83, n. 2.

GATHA VOHU XSHATHRA ON THE GOOD KINGDOM

YASNA, 51. vv. 1-22

- (1) The goodly power of free choice is a divine dispensation surpassing all others. By means of man's discriminating acts, it fulfils even his deepest desire through Asha. From this very moment, O Mazda, I will practise that which is the best for us.
- (2) O Lord of Life and Wisdom, because of that free choice I looked upon Thee as the First to work through Asha, and through thee, O Aramaiti. Reveal to me the most desirable kingdom by means of the Good Mind and grant me Thy blessings for adoration.
- (3) Give ear now. They hold communion with Thee, O Ahura, who consider Thee as Master through their deeds, through Asha, through the words and tongue¹ of the Good Mind whose Primal Guide Thou art, O Mazda.
- (4) Where is the exalted protector of the animal kingdom? Where is Mercy stationed? Where are they who seek Asha? Where is the holy Aramaiti? Where is Vahishta Mana, (Thy) Sovereign Mind? Where is Thy Kingdom, O Mazda?
- (5) All these I ask for so that man may further the Creation in harmony with the Divine Law. The

¹ See p. 88, n. 1.

ON THE GOOD KINGDOM

industrious individual, just in action, full of godly wisdom in humility, who is dedicated to the upright prophet, becomes the blessed ruler of the world through Chisti, his Perceptive Wisdom.

(6) Better than the good is granted to him who dedicates his faith to Ahura Mazda because of His Sovereignty. But worse than evil at the last turning point of life to him who does not so dedicate his faith.

(7) O gloriously radiant Spirit, Mazda, Thou who hast moulded the Creation, the waters and the plants, grant me Perfection and Immortality through Tevishi, the Desire for Perfection, and Utayuiti, the Desire for Immortality, unfolding the Divine Teaching through the Good Mind.

(8) Then indeed, will I preach the Doctrine for Thee, O Mazda, when man shall, in truth, proclaim to the wise that evil comes to the wicked but bliss to him who upholds Asha. He who expounds to the wise the Manthra, the Holy Word, is indeed blest.

(9) Such blessedness Thou wouldest bestow upon both contenders, the enlightened and the unenlightened, O Mazda, through Thy Ordeal of blazing fire and molten metal to be held up as a sign in the two existences of this world and the next. Destruction upon the Followers of the Druj. Blessings upon the Followers of Asha.

(10) But whoever seeks to destroy me other than this one,¹ is himself the scion of an evil creation, O Mazda, such as are perverted in knowledge. As for myself, I invoke Asha. May he come through Thy good blessing.

¹ Allusion incomprehensible. Hiatus in text.

(11) What man is the friend of Spitama Zarathushtra, O Mazda ? Who is Thy Seeker through Asha ? Who through the Holy Aramaiti ? What upright man is known to Thee to devote himself to the Magian Cause through the Good Mind ?

(12) Indeed, these two, the Vaepaya¹ and the Kavaya,² do not rejoice Spitama Zarathushtra, who is the mature Messenger of God, when they meet him at the Bridge of Life; for both attack and destroy him through their impious might³.

(13) The faith of the just in truth crushes that of the Follower of the Druj whose soul visibly trembles at the Bridge of Judgment because his own evil deeds and evil tongue destroyed the Paths of Asha for him.

(14) And therefore, the Karapans⁴ are not friendly with the law-abiding. They hinder the cultivation, peace, and perfection of Creation through their own deeds and doctrines. In the end, through these very doctrines, they will be dragged into Drujo Demana, the House of the Lie.

(15) The reward which Zarathushtra previously assigned to the Magas is Garo Demana, House of Heavenly Song, wherein Ahura Mazda dwelt from the first. In harmony with the Good Mind and the Divine Law, that heaven will be given to you, the law-abiding, in blessings.

(16) Through the power of the Magas, and by means of the sacred verses inspired by the Good Mind, Kava

¹ Paederast.

² See p. 61, n. 2.

³ This verse seems to be a later interpolation.

⁴ See p. 60, n. 3.

ON THE GOOD KINGDOM

Vishtaspa¹ attained to that Perceptive Wisdom which is apprehended through the Divine Law. Thus has Ahura Mazda, the Glorious, achieved bliss for us.

(17) Frashaoshtra Hvogva² has promised me an exalted lady of graceful form³. May Mazda Ahura, ruling at will, grant that cherished one of His for the Good Religion. Pray for the attainment of Asha all you who are here.

(18) The sage, Jamaspa Hvogva,⁴ by means of Asha, chooses that Perceptive Wisdom which is a coveted glory, and that power which is the possession of the Good Mind. O Ahura Mazda, grant me that which is Thy Joy.

(19) That man shall himself be dedicated to our Maidhyomaongha the Spitamid⁵ who, well versed in the Faith, aspires after the highest life of the spirit. He shall proclaim the Laws of Mazda having bettered material existence through his deeds.

(20) You,⁶ who are all of one mind with us, do You grant that blessing of Asha and the prayers of Vohu Mana through which Aramaiti arises. In humility we bow before you, O Honoured Powers, seeking the Joy of Mazda.

(21) A man of perfect devotion is himself blest with Perceptive Wisdom which inspires his words and deeds.

¹ See p. 44, n. 1.

² See p. 45, n. 1.

³ Taken to be a reference to Havovi, daughter of Frashaoshtra, and wife to Zarathushtra.

⁴ See p. 45, n. 1.

⁵ First cousin to Zarathushtra and his first disciple according to Pahlavi tradition. Maidhyomaongha is mentioned only this once in the *Gathas*.

⁶ Ahura Mazda and His Powers are being addressed.

His true faith furthers God's Law and the Kingdom of the Good Mind. O Lord of Life and Wisdom. I beseech Thee, grant him that goodly blessing.

(22) Whoever being devoted to me follows Asha is looked upon as the best in worship. Mazda Ahura knows the Saints who have been and those who are. I invoke them by name and encircle them completely with love.

GATHA VAHISHTOISHTI¹

FULFILMENT

YASNA, 53. vv. 1-9

(1) The supreme wish of Spitama Zarathushtra has been fulfilled. May Ahura Mazda in truth grant him, in harmony with the Divine Law, the blessings of the beatific life for all time, for even those who opposed him have now learnt to follow the words and deeds of the Good Religion.

(2) And so may Kava Vishtaspa the Zarathushtrian, and Frashaoshtra the Spitamid, seek in thought, word and deed His Fullness of Wisdom, having faith in the adoration and worship of Mazda, and establishing the straight paths of salvation—viz. that Revelation which Ahura grants to the Saoshyants.

(3) And him, O Paoruchista,² thou descendant of the Haechataspan Spitama,³ and the most devout among the daughters of Zarathushtra, may He give thee as lord who is a constant companion of Vohu Mana, Asha and Mazda. So commune with him

¹ The most difficult Gatha of the five to translate, the text being corrupt in many places, and hiatuses occurring between the verses.

² According to Pahlavi tradition, Paoruchista is the youngest of the daughters of Zarathushtra, and wife to Jamaspa, Prime Minister at the court of Kava Vishtaspa. She had two sisters, Freni and Thirthi, and three brothers, Isatvastar, Urvatatnar, and Khurshid-Chihar. (*S.B.E.* Vol. XXIII, p. 224).

³ See p. 86, n. 3.

through thy holy and innate wisdom, and pour upon him the nectar of the most radiant Aramaiti.

(4) Him, indeed, will I emulate and love who is appointed as the father and master of the industrious, and also as a friend. May the glories of the life of the Good Mind come to me as a holy woman dwelling among the holy. May Mazda Ahura dedicate me to the Good Religion for all time.

(5) I address words of advice to the brides, and to you, O bridegrooms, so pay heed to these my words. Being well versed in religious doctrines, learn to value the life which belongs to the Good Mind. May each of you love the other through Asha, for that shall indeed be to him or her a blessed existence.

(6) So these, O men and women, are in truth [the temptations you will find] on the path of the Druj whose progress you must hinder. Disassociate your person from the worship of the Lie. Infamy and misery shall befall the Followers of the Druj who spread desolation and intentionally destroy righteousness. Through these evils you imperil intellectual and spiritual life.

(7) And so the blest recompense of adhering to this Maga Goal shall be yours when heartfelt love is rooted in the wedded pair. Then the Spirit of Evil,¹ moving back and forth, vanishes completely. Press forward to success in that Maga Goal or else your last cry shall be uttered in woe.

(8) In truth, by means of such actions all evil-doers will be foiled, derided, and ultimately abandoned to ruin. Through such a wise rule may peace be given to men and women in their homes and their sur-

¹ Ako Mainyu. See Glossary.

roundings. Let man¹ cast away these deceptions, and may he soon become the mightiest conqueror of death.

(9) Men of evil faith are distilling poison into Thy devoted workers. I declare them to be Truth-subverting sinners. Where is the Living God of Righteousness who would deprive them of life and freedom ? That, O Mazda, is Thy Sovereignty by which Thou dost give the greater² glory to the upright Drighu,³ who are the poor in spirit and the meek and lowly of heart.

¹ Literally " him."

² Literally " better."

³ See p. 68, n. 1.

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GLOSSARY

Abbreviations: S.B.E.—Sacred Books of the East.
Y.—Yasna.

AESHMA. Demon of Wrath and Bloodthirstiness generated by evil men when making the wrong moral choice between the Twin Mainyu. *See* Y.30.1-11; and **MAINYU** (TWIN).

AHU. (a) Spiritual Lord and Master. *See* Y.29.6. Works with the Ratu or Prophet to protect and nourish the Creation.
(b) Spiritual Existence or being, one of the parts of the human body. *See* **BODY** (HUMAN).

AHUM BIS. Dual life, two lives, or physician of life. *See* p. 55 n. 3.

AHURA. Lord of Life.

Primal Laws of. Mentioned once in the *Gathas*, Y.46.15. *See* p. 86, n. 5.

AHURA-MAZDA. Lord of Life and Wisdom.

AIRYAMNA. Friend, the third of the three grades of Zarathushtra's disciples. *See* p. 57, n. 1.

AIRYANA VAEJA. Land of the Aryans. *See* p. 58, n. 1.

AJYAITI. Absence of life, spiritual death, generated by the evil one of the Twin Mainyu. Opposite of **GAYA**. *See* Y.30.4.

AKEM. The Bad, epithet applied to the Evil One of the Twin Mainyu. *See* p. 31; and Y.30.3.

AKO MANA. Evil Mind, being the collective evil minds of evil men who labour under the influence of the Druj.

AKO MAINYU. Spirit of Evil, generated by the Druj. *See* Y.53.7.

AMERETATAT. Immortality. Twin of Haurvatat. Given as a reward to man at the conclusion of a spiritual life lived on earth. *See* pp. 34, 40.

AMESHA SPENTA. Blessed Immortals or Immortal Shining Ones. *See* Introductory Verse, n. 2.

GLOSSARY

ANAGHRA RAOCHAO. Heavens of Boundless Light, the last of the four Heavens described in Pahlavi literature. Identified with Garo Demana. *See* p. 96, n. 2.

ARAMAITI. Divine Devotion, firm, unflinching faith in the love of God.

ASHA. Divine Law and Order, Righteousness, Truth, Holiness.

ASHAVANTS. Followers of Asha. *See* Index.

ATAR. Flaming Fire of Thought implanted in every man, his intellectual honesty. Closely associated with Manangha, the Pure Mind (Y.46.7). Upholds Asha, works with Spenta Mainyu to discriminate between the Ashavants and Dregvants, and is the invisible Divine Power sitting in judgment at the Trial by Ordeal. *See* ORDEAL and MAGA.

BODY (HUMAN). Made up of nine parts according to *Yasna*, 55.1 : three purely gross or material, three a mixture of the gross and the subtle, and three purely spiritual.

PARTS. (a) *Purely Material:*

Gaethao, the Primal Elements;

Tanwas, the entire physique, the person;

Astavant, *Azdebish* or the bony substance including flesh, blood and tissues;

(b) *Mixture of the gross and the subtle:*

Ushtana, the life breath ;

Kehrpa, the form, outline, hence the subtle body beneath the fleshy covering;

Tevishi, Desire for Perfection, the upward striving faculty in man which reaches towards perfection;

(c) *Purely spiritual:*

Baodha, the discerning intellect;

Urvana, the soul;

Fravashi, the Pure Spiritual Essence in man, described in the *Fravardin Yasht* as a mysterious, inconceivable, incorruptible, limitless, all-pervading, universal Divine Light of vast and far-illumined vision (*Fravardin Yasht*, 30, 32, 34). It arises from Ahura Mazda's two most intimate Powers, Spenta Mainyu, His Holy Spirit, and Vahishta Mana, His Sovereign Mind. The Soul and Intellect in man strive to unite themselves to his Fravashi, a process which continues after physical death has taken place. In later times, two more faculties were added to the purely spiritual parts, *Ahu*, spiritual existence or being ; and *Daena*, visionary perception, thus bringing the total number of parts in the body to eleven. In ancient Hindu Literature,

GLOSSARY

the body is described as a city with nine or eleven portals (S.B.E. Vol. VIII, p.65 ; XV, p. 18). In the *Gathas*, all nine parts are not mentioned together, *Baodha*, only once, and *Fravashi* not at all.

CHINVAT. Bridge of Judgment, or discriminative choice between good and evil. According to Pahlavi tradition, for the righteous dead this bridge becomes a broad, smooth path for them to traverse and reach Garo Demana. For the wicked dead the bridge turns into a razor's edge from which they fall into the abyss below.

Chinvato Peretu. Bridge of the Separator. *See* p. 24.

CHISTI. Ray of Perceptive Wisdom which illuminates the whole mind. *See* Y.30.9.

Hu Chisti. The Good Chisti, so described when God's Holy Wisdom is meant. *See* Y.34.14; 46.4; 48.5.

DAENA. Used in the following varied senses:

- (a) Visionary perception in man;
- (b) Divine Revelation;
- (c) Faith, religion; the Zarathushtrian Faith being called "Daena Vanguhi", the Good Religion;
- (d) Conscience in man, good or evil;
- (e) Character and conduct, behaviour good or bad.

DAEVA. Polytheists, black magicians, evildoers in general who were hostile to Zarathushtra's teaching. *See* pp. 27-28.

DAXHYU. The country, the last of the four regional groups into which society was divided in Zarathushtra's day. *See* p. 55, n. 1.

DEMANA OR NMANA. House, home, the first of the four regional groups into which society was divided in Zarathushtra's day. *See* p. 55, n. 1.

DREGVANTS. Followers of the Druj. Always contrasted with the Ashavants. Mankind divided by Zarathushtra into these two categories, Ashavants and Dregvants.

DRIGHU. The poor, the needy, and the oppressed, bearing the additional sense of the poor in spirit, the meek and lowly of heart, denoting especially those who take upon themselves voluntary poverty in order to become selfless devotees of Ahura Mazda. *See* Y.34.5; 53.9.

GLOSSARY

DRUJ. Lie, Deceit, Falsehood, Untruth, originating in the dual nature of the human mind and the wrong moral choice of the individual between the Twin Mainyu, *See* Y.30.1-11; and MAINYU (TWIN). The Druj was personified in later Avestan writings as a foul, stinking hag, a female demon.

DRUJO DEMANA. House of the Lie, the Zarathushtrian conception of Hell where the wicked dead dwell in "a murky glow" and with "woeful wailings" eating the wormwood and gall of their own thoughts and acts because they "fouled" their "original lustre." *See* p. 23; and Y.31.20; 46.11; 49.11; 51.13, 14.

DURAOSHA. Death-dispelling, an epithet applied to Haoma. *See* p. 61, n. 3.

GARO DEMANA. House of Heavenly Song, the Zarathushtrian conception of Heaven, synonymous with the Light, the Abode of Ahura Mazda, the Ashavants and the Magas. *See* p. 23; and Y.28.2; 29.3; 30.1; 31.20; 45.8; 50.2, 4; 51.15.

GAUSH BAGHA. Lord of Creation, i.e., Ahura Mazda. *See* Y.32.8.

GAYA. Life, generated by the "better" of the Twin Mainyu. *See* Y.30.4; and AJYAITI.

GEUSH TASHA. Architect of Creation. Considered by some to refer to Ahura Mazda, and by others to a separate Divine Power of that name. *See* Y.29.1-11; 46.9.

GEUSH URVA. Soul of Creation. *See* Y.28.1; 29.1-11.

GREHMA. "Devourer of Sacrifice" (Andreas). False spiritual guides. *See* p. 60, n. 2.

HAOMA. Sacred plant whose juice is used in Zarathushtrian ritual to this day.

HAURVATAT. Perfection. Twin of Ameretat. Given as a reward to man at the conclusion of a spiritual life lived on earth. *See* pp. 34, 40.

KARAPS or KARAPANS. Sacrificial priests among the Daevas, hostile to Zarathushtra's teachings. *See* p. 60, n. 3.

KAVAYAS or KAVIS. Ruling princes in Zarathushtra's day who sided with the Karapans against Zarathushtra. *See* p. 61, n. 2.

KHURSHED PAYA. Heavens of the Sun where good deeds dwell, the third of the four Heavens mentioned in Pahlavi Literature. The Gathic equivalent of *Khurshed Paya* is *Havare pishyasu*. *See* Y.50.2.

GLOSSARY

MAGAS. Magi, master adepts in the things of the Spirit, leaders and initiators in the Zarathushtrian Mysteries, and the judges at the Trial by Ordeal. *See ORDEAL.*

MAH PAYA. Heavens of the Moon where good words dwell, the second of the four Heavens mentioned in Pahlavi Literature. *See p. 96, n. 2.*

MAINYU (TWIN). Twin Spirits or Mentalities, through the parable of which Zarathushtra explains the dual nature of the human mind and the origin of evil, *See Y.30.1-11; and p. 31 ff.*

Of Life. See Y.45.2.

MANANGHA. The Pure Mind, to be distinguished from Vohu Mana, the Good Mind, and Vahishta Mana, God's Sovereign Mind. Closely associated with Atar. *See Y.46.7; and p. 33.*

MANTHRA. The Holy Word through which the act of Creation took place (Y.31.6 and 7), and also the Word of Salvation (Y.45.5).

MAZDA. Lord of Wisdom.

MAZDA AHURA. Lord of Wisdom and Life. Phrase occurs twice in the plural when it means Mazda Ahura and the sum total of His Powers. *See p. 52, n. 2.*

NMANA. *See DEMANA.*

ORDEAL (FIRE AND MOLTEN METAL). Earliest legal system round which the Gatha community centred its religious and social laws. Presided over by the Magas, and made use of to judge avengers and criminals. Atar said to control the Ordeal and separate the Ashavants from the Dregvants with the help of Spenta Mainyu.

PATI. Overlord of the regional groups into which society was divided in Zarathushtra's day. *See p. 55, n. 1.*

RATU. Prophet, but literally, the very essence of a thing, all living creatures, including plants, having their own "ratu" (*Visperad* I.1; *S.B.E. Vol. XXXI*, p. 335).

SAOSHYANTS. The Future Saviours of Mankind destined to crush Aeshma. The word has a future participle ending and is used both in the singular and the plural by Zarathushtra who prays that his blessings may rest upon one and all the Saoshyants who are to follow him.

SATAR PAYA. Star-studded Heaven where good thoughts dwell, the first of the four Heavens mentioned in Pahlavi Literature. *See p. 96, n. 2.*

GLOSSARY

SHOITHRA OR ZANTU. Province, the third of the four regional groups into which society was divided in Zarathushtra's day. *See* p. 55, n. 1.

SPENTA MAINYU. The Holy Spirit, closely associated with Vahishta Mana, Ahura's Sovereign Mind, these two being the most intimate of His Powers. Leads man to salvation and works with Atar to separate the Ashavants from the Dregvants.

SRAOSHA. Divine Obedience. *See* pp. 33, 37-38.

TEVISHI. Desire for Perfection. Twin of Utayuiti. Closely linked with Haurvatat. One of the nine parts of the human body. *See* BODY (HUMAN).

UKHSHANO ASNAM. Refreshers of the Days. Literally, "the light of days," or "the increasers of the days." The phrase occurs once in the plural, Y.46.3, and once in the singular, Y.50.10, where it refers solely to the dawn. No explanation of the phrase is given in the *Gathas*, but, judging from Y.46.3, it may refer to the harbingers of a new dawn of the spirit.

UTAYUITI. Desire for Immortality. Twin of Tevishi. Closely linked with Ameretatat.

VAEPAYA. Paederast. Occurs once, Y.51.12.

VAHISHTA MANA. Ahura's Sovereign Mind, which, with Spenta Mainyu, constitute His two most intimate Powers. Protects man from all evil and leads him to salvation.

VAHYO. The Better, epithet applied to the benevolent one of the Twin Mainyu. *See* p. 31; and Y.30.3; 45.2.

VEREZENA. Fellow-worker, the second of the three grades of Zarathushtra's disciples. *See* p. 57, n. 1.

VIS. Town, the second of the four regional groups into which society was divided in Zarathushtra's day. *See* p. 55, n. 1.

VOHU MANA. The Good Mind, the most frequently mentioned of the Divine Powers together with Asha. Protector and nourisher of Creation which is described as "the Beloved of Vohu Mana" (Y.48.6), leads man to the ecstatic beholding of Ahura, perfect illumination being "the life of Vohu Mana" (Y.43.1), and protects the just from all harm.

Mouth and Tongue of. Technical term used in the Zarathushtrian Mysteries, where ecstasy was induced through chanting the *Gathas*. *See* pp. 21-22.

GLOSSARY

XSHATHRA. Ahura's Might and Majesty, His Kingdom and Power, the most fiery of the Divine Powers which strikes at the root of all evil, destroys the Druj, and sets the just man upon the righteous path.

XVAETU. Strong in Spirit, the first of the three grades of Zarathushtra's disciples. *See* p. 57, n. 1.

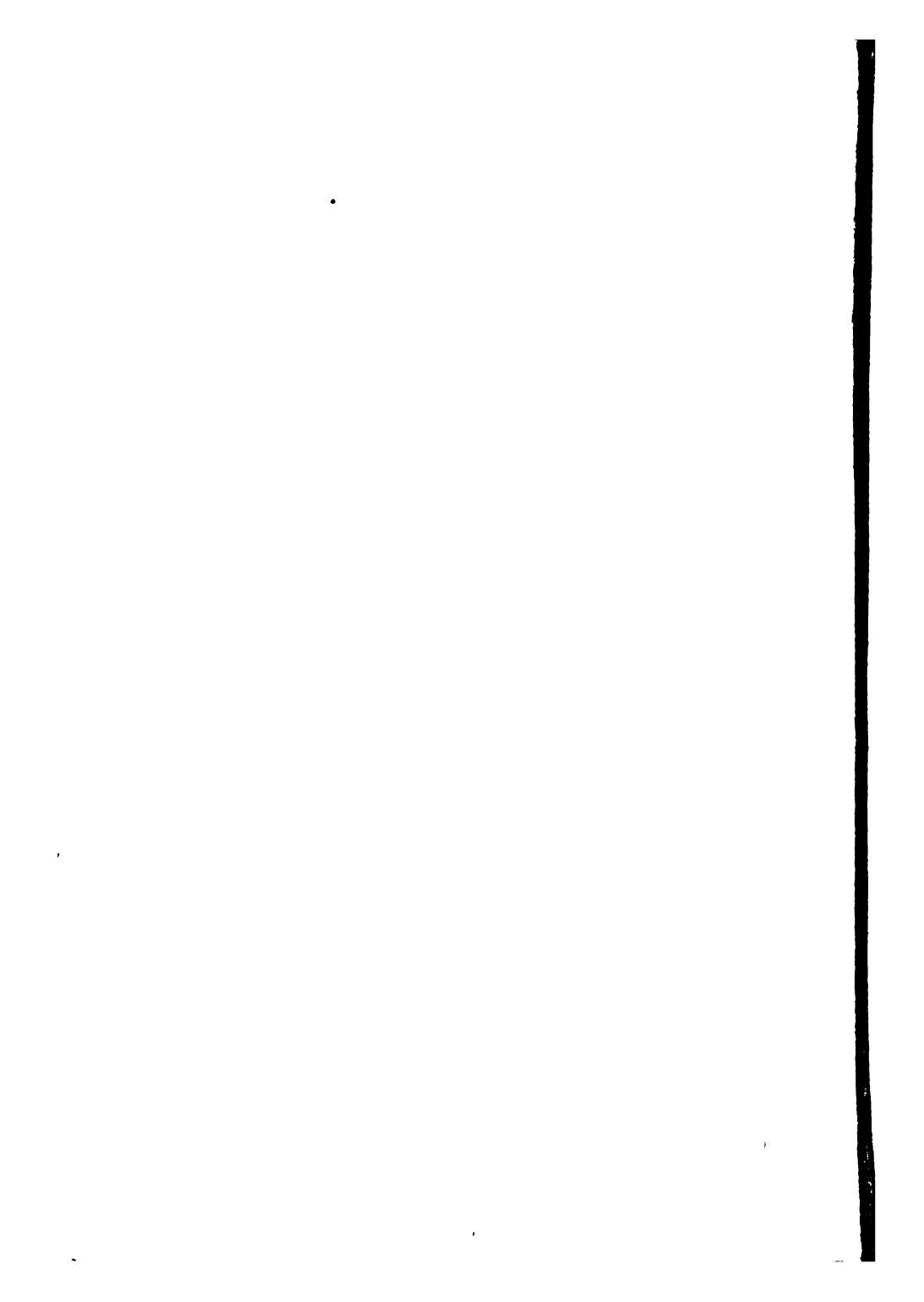
XVANIRATHA. One of the seven regions of the earth lying in the centre. *See* p. 58, n. 1.

XVRENA. Glory, radiance.

YAZATA. Personified Divine attribute, usually translated as Angel.

ZANTU. *See* SHOITHRA.

ZARATHUSHTROTEMA. Supreme Head of Religion, above both the Lords Spiritual and Lords Temporal of the Realm. *See* pp. 20, 55, n. 1.



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